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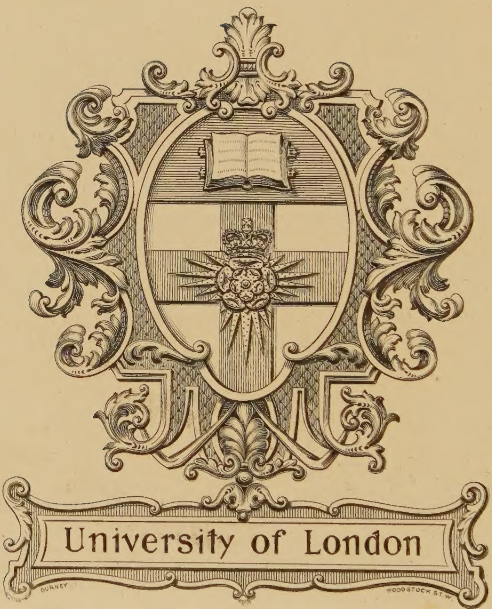

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Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [20th February],

"That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, to be the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members,"—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

And which Amendment was,

To leave out from the first word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "no Rules of Procedure will be satisfactory to this House which confer the power of closing a Debate upon a majority of Members,"—(*Mr. Marriott,*)—instead thereof.

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———:o:———

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SUPPLY—REPORT—Resolution [24th March] *reported* 152

Said Resolution read a second time.

Amendment proposed, to leave out "£3,631,600," in order to insert "£3,630,100,"—(*Mr. Mac Iver,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That '£3,631,600' stand part of the said Resolution:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

After further long debate, Resolution *agreed to.*

It being now five minutes to Seven of the clock, the House suspended its Sitting.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

MOTION.

ECCLESIASTICAL AND MORTUARY FEES—MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE—

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the Law which authorizes the demanding of Mortuary Fees, and into the Ecclesiastical Fees levied by Ministers of Religion upon the occasion of Burials and the erection of Monuments in Cemeteries and Parish Churchyards; and to report to the House whether any legislation is desirable with a view to their regulation or reduction,"—(*Sir Alexander Gordon*) 211

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

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ARMY—CONDITION OF THE ARMY—Observations, Colonel Barne .. 221

[House counted out.]

LORDS, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29.

Their Lordships met;—And having gone through the Business on the Paper, without debate— [House adjourned.]

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Agricultural Holdings, Notices of Removal (Scotland) Bill—

Moved "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir Alexander Gordon*) 223

After debate, Motion *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

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Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. John Talbot.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After debate, it being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow.*

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Militia Storehouses Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Hastings, Sir Matthew Ridley*): *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 116] 272

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REPRESENTATIVE PEERS OF IRELAND—

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had received (by post) from the Clerk of the Crown and Hanaper in Ireland (pursuant to order of Monday last) Return respecting the election of Representative Peers of Ireland: Ordered, That the said Return be *printed.* (No. 54.)

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After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Correspondence ordered to be laid before the House.

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PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (PUTTING THE QUESTION)—RESOLUTION. ADJOURNED DEBATE. [FIFTH NIGHT]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [20th February]:—Question again proposed, "That the words "when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker," stand part of the Question:"—Debate *resumed* 314

After long debate, Question put, "That the words 'when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker,' stand part of the Question:—The House *divided;* Ayes 318, Noes 279; Majority 39.

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Main Question again proposed:—Debate *further adjourned* till *Monday* next.

Bills of Sale Act (1878) Amendment Bill [Bill 108]—

Order for Third Reading read 427

Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

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Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Earl Granville*) .. 428

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Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir Charles Forster*) 462

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is not desirable to proceed with a Bill which unnecessarily interferes with the Cathedral Precincts at Norwich, and with the ancient historical gateway there,"—(*Mr. E. Stanhope*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn:*—Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

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Ecclesiastical Commission—Motion for a Select Committee—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the position of the Ecclesiastical Commission with reference to the Lands and other Property vested in the Commissioners, and also into the work, in connection with real property, of the Church Estates Commissioners and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England and Wales,"—(*Mr. Arthur Arnold*,)—instead thereof 495

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Herring Brand Committee—Resolution—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, effect should be given without delay to the recommendations of the Report of the Herring Brand Committee,"—(*Mr. Duff*,)—instead thereof 518

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, [House counted out.]

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INDIA—THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE—SALARIES OF THE JUDGES—Question, Mr. Pugh; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 559

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Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*The Judge Advocate General*) 560

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

PROVINCIAL ART GALLERIES AND MUSEUMS—RESOLUTION—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, grants in aid of Art and Industrial Museums should not be confined to London, Edinburgh, and Dublin, but that a special grant should be made to the Science and Art Department, South Kensington, to enable them to supply Provincial Art Galleries and Museums with original examples and reproductions of Industrial Art adapted to their special local acquirements, and also to maintain and to still further develop the circulation system now administered by the Department; that gifts or loans of such articles and works as may be available from the National Art Collections, and from the British Museum, should be made to Provincial Art Galleries and Museums; and that such aid be confined to those towns or localities which are rated under the Free Libraries and Museums Act, and that the amount of such aid be proportioned to the sum raised and spent in each locality; and that, in order to give due effect to these proposals, it is desirable to place the whole of the National Art and other Collections, including the National Gallery and British Museum, under the direct control and administration of a Department of the Government,"—(*Mr. Jesse Collings*,)—instead thereof 576

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—THE NEW CODE—Observations, Sir John Lubbock; Reply, Mr. Mundella:—Debate thereon 598

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(1.) £2,199,863, to complete the sum necessary for Public Education (England and Wales).—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 648

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Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £291,400, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Science and Art Department, and of the Establishments connected therewith" 656

After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* 17th April; Committee to sit again *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

MOTIONS.

Electricity Supply Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Ashley*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 122] 658

Militia Acts Consolidation Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Secretary Childers, The Judge Advocate General, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 123] .. 658

Reserve Forces Acts Consolidation Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Secretary Childers, The Judge Advocate General, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 124] 658

Artillery Ranges Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Secretary Childers, The Judge Advocate General, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Trevelyan*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 125] 658

PARTNERSHIPS BILL—

Select Committee *nominated* :—List of the Committee 658

COMMONS, TUESDAY, APRIL 4.

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STANDING ORDER 167—

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PRIVATE BILLS—

Ordered, That Standing Orders 129 and 39 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, be extended to Monday the 17th instant.

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PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—JOHN O'BRIEN—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland 663

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CRIMINAL LAW—THE CONDEMNED CONVICT LAMSON—Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 670

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Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881—The Labourers—Question, Mr. A. Moore; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 675

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Asiatic Turkey—Smyrna Quay—The Papers—Question, Mr. M'Coan; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 679

MOTION.

Parliament—Adjournment of the House—The Easter Recess—

Moved, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn until Monday 17th April,"—(*Mr. Gladstone:*)—

Crime (Ireland)—Observations, Mr. Gorst 680

After long debate, Motion *agreed to:—Resolved,* That this House, at its rising, do adjourn until Monday 17th April.

COMMONS, MONDAY, APRIL 17.

QUESTIONS.

Army Organization—Colonels of the Ordnance Corps — Question, Mr. George Russell; Answer, Mr. Childers 731

Army—The Revised Army Warrant — Article 23—Question, Lord Eustace Cecil; Answer, Mr. Childers 732

Army Organization—Uniforms of Scotch Regiments—Question, Colonel Milne-Home; Answer, Mr. Childers 732

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Mr. Parnell—Question, Mr. Lewis; Answer, The Attorney General .. 733

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Army (Annual) Bill [Bill 105]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 733

After some time spent therein, Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

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SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

SOUTH AFRICA (ZULULAND)—CETEWAYO (RELEASE FROM CAPTIVITY)—MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that Her Majesty will be graciously pleased to release Cetewayo, the Zulu King, from the unjust captivity in which he is now held,"—(*Mr. Gorst,*)—instead thereof .. 756

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

FIRES IN THEATRES (PREVENTION)—RESOLUTION—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in view of the great danger to the Theatre-going public from the insufficiency of powers under existing Acts relating to Theatres, and the laxity with which such powers, conferred by various Acts of Parliament, have been exercised, and that any day, unless some steps are taken to insure proper exits and necessary appliances against fire, a calamity may happen which may cause as terrific a loss of life as that which lately occurred at the Ring Theatre at Vienna, a Select Committee be appointed to investigate the state of the exits, and what appliances exist for the prevention or extinction of fires in Theatres and Music Halls, and to report the result of their investigations and recommendations thereon,"—(*Mr. Dixon-Hartland,*)—instead thereof 788

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

WOODS AND FORESTS—FIRES IN WOOLMER FOREST—Observations, Mr. Sclater-Booth; Reply, Mr. Childers 801

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—ARMY ESTIMATES.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £2,966,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Provisions, Forage, Fuel, Transport, and other Services, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883" 802

After long debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Secretary Childers:*)—Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

Electric Lighting Bill [Bill 122]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Chamberlain*) 867

Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.

And, on April 19, *Ordered,* That the Select Committee do consist of Fifteen Members, Nine to be nominated by the House and Six by the Committee of Selection:—Committee *nominated:*—List of the Committee .. 868

COMMONS, TUESDAY, APRIL 18.

QUESTIONS.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—CAPTAIN T. BOLTON JONES—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland 868

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—THE LAND COURT, NEW ROSS—Questions, Mr. Redmond; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 869

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Poor Law (Ireland)—Election of Poor Law Guardians—Mr. O'Halloran, a Suspect—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 870
Prisons (Ireland)—Enniskillen Gaol—Regulation as to Visitors to Prisoners on St. Patrick's Day—Questions, Mr. Redmond; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland 871
State of Ireland—Alleged Outrage in Wexford County—Questions, Mr. Barry, Mr. Healy; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 871
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Criminal Law—The Condemned Convict Lamson—Questions, Mr. Lewis; Answers, Sir William Harcourt 872
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MOTIONS.

PAPAL SEE (DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS)—RESOLUTION—
Moved, "That, while recognising the value of a good understanding between this Country and the Papal See, this House is of opinion that all communications between any of Her Majesty's Ministers and the authorities of the Vatican should be placed on official record in accordance with the constitutional practice in diplomatic affairs, and should be conducted with the cognizance of Parliament,"—(*Sir Henry Wolff*) 887
After debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 1) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*) 911

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Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*) 911

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill [Bill 7]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Leahy*) .. 924
Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Tottenham.*)
Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 95, Noes 31; Majority 64.—(Div. List, No. 64.)
Main Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

Parliamentary Elections Expenses Bill [Bill 34]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Ashton Dilke*) 944
After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 87, Noes 85; Majority 2.—(Div. List, No. 65:)—Bill *committed* for *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

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Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Editors of Newspapers arrested under the Act—Questions, Mr. Lalor; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 986

Post Office (Ireland)—"Pat"—Question, Mr. Lalor; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 987

Army—Payment of Pensions—Questions, Mr. O'Shea, Mr. Gorst; Answers, Mr. Childers 987

Ireland—Mr. Clifford Lloyd—Circular by the Inspector of Police, County Clare—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 988

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

Mr. Redmond, Member for New Ross, having been named by Mr. Speaker as disregarding the authority of the Chair—

After debate, *Moved*, "That Mr. Redmond be suspended from the service of the House during the remainder of this day's sitting,"—(*The Marquess of Hartington*) .. 1016

Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 207, Noes 12; Majority 195.—(Div. List, No. 66.)

Mr. Speaker then directed Mr. Redmond to withdraw, and he withdrew accordingly.

Question again proposed, "That this House do now adjourn:"—After further debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Persons Claiming to be American Citizens detained under the Act—Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Joseph Cowen; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1029

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Coal Mines—Recent Colliery Explosions—Question, Mr. Burt; Answer, Mr. Hibbert 1034

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Parliament—Business of the House—Tuesdays—Questions, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Gorst, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington 1036

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Supply—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

Navy—Strength of the Navy—Resolution—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "owing to the enormous increase in the Ironclad Navies of the World, the Trade and Commerce of the Empire is endangered, and that it is desirable that steps should be at once taken to make an adequate addition to the strength of the Navy,"—(*Lord Henry Lennox,*)—instead thereof 1037

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Motion, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," by leave, *withdrawn:*—Committee *deferred* till *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

Water Provisional Orders Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Ashley, Mr. Chamberlain*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 135] 1081

Gas Provisional Orders Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Ashley, Mr. Chamberlain*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 136] 1081

Turnpike Acts Continuance Act, 1881, Committee—

Ordered, That it be a further Instruction to the Committee to take into consideration the several Acts relating to the Shrewsbury and Holyhead Turnpike Road, and to report to the House whether such Acts should be scheduled in the annual Turnpike Continuance Bill of the present year with a view to the repeal of the said Acts after a stated date,—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

CANALS—

Select Committee *appointed*, "to inquire into the condition and the position of the Canals and internal navigation of the Country, to report thereupon, and to make such recommendations as may appear necessary,"—(*Mr. Salt.*)

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Stolen Goods Bill—

Bill to amend the Law respecting the recovery of Stolen Articles—*Presented* (*The Lord Chancellor*); read 1ª (No. 64) 1082

CRIMINAL LAW—THE CONDEMNED CONVICT LAMSON—Question, Observations, The Earl of Milltown, Earl Granville 1082

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PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Walton Vicarage Bill (*by Order*)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir Charles Forster*) 1084

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months," —(*Mr. Caine.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:" —After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 160, Noes 76; Majority 84.—(Div. List, No. 67.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

QUESTIONS.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. J. O'KEANE AND OTHERS—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1097

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POST OFFICE—TRANSMISSION OF LAND LEAGUE PORTRAITS—Question, Mr. Redmond; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 1098

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LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—EXPENSES OF CROWN WITNESSES—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 1099

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MAJOR WALLER ASHE—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1100

PRIVATE (HYBRID) BILLS—FORTH BRIDGE RAILWAY BILL—Question, Mr. Bolton; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1101

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ANDREW AND PATRICK GALLAHER—Question, Mr. Lalor; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1101

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THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS—Question, Mr. Molloy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1102

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PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—PERSONS CLAIMING TO BE AMERICAN CITIZENS DETAINED UNDER THE ACT—Questions, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, Mr. Mitchell Henry; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1109
PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—TUESDAYS—THE SETTLED LAND BILL—Observations, Sir R. Assheton Cross 1110
PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—TUESDAYS—THE JESUS COLLEGE STATUTES—Observations, Mr. Hussey Vivian 1110

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

COOPER'S HILL COLLEGE—RESOLUTION—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working and expense of Cooper's Hill College, and to report if it is desirable, for the public service, to retain the present system, or whether any and, if so, what changes and modifications should be made,"—(*Mr. Gibson,*)—instead thereof 1111

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 78, Noes 27; Majority 51.—(Div. List, No. 68.)

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

POLICE PROTECTION TO PUBLIC SERVANTS—Observations, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Reply, Sir William Harcourt; Observations, Mr. Roberts 1130
LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CASE OF PETER DUNNE—MR. JUSTICE FITZGERALD—Observations, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Reply, The Attorney General for Ireland:—Short debate thereon 1138
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SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(1.) £33,361, to complete the sum for Royal Palaces.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1159

(2.) £2,178, to complete the sum for Marlborough House.

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £90,921, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens" 1159

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £73,241, be granted, &c.,"—(*Mr. Labouchere* :)—After debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 44, Noes 139; Majority 95.—(Div. List, No. 69.)

Original Question again proposed 1170

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £90,000, be granted, &c.,"—(*Mr. Healy* :)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn:* —Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £31,110, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883, for the Buildings of the Houses of Parliament" 1182

Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Cavendish Bentinck* :)—Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next; Committee also report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

Municipal Corporations (*re-committed*) **Bill** [Bill 113]—

Order for Committee read:—*Moved,* "That this House will, upon Tuesday next, at Two of the clock, resolve itself into the said Committee,"—(*Lord Richard Grosvenor*) 1183

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "Two of the clock,"—(*Mr. Chaplin*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 100, Noes 50; Majority 50.—(Div. List, No. 70.)

Main Question proposed 1202

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Earl Percy* :)—Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to*:—Committee *deferred* till *Tuesday* next, at Two of the clock.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Lord Frederick Cavendish*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 138] .. 1202

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The Right Honourable Sir George William Wilshere Bramwell, Knight, late a Lord Justice of Appeal, created Baron Bramwell of Heyer in the county of Kent 1203

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Army (Annual) Bill (No. 65)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Earl of Morley*) .. 1236

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House *To-morrow.*

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—:o:—

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered* in Committee—FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

(In the Committee.)

Moved, "(1.) That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, there shall be charged, collected, and paid for the year which commenced on the sixth day of April, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-two, in respect of all Property, Profits, and Gains mentioned or described as chargeable in the Act of the sixteenth and seventeenth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-four, the following Duties of Income Tax (that is to say):

For every Twenty Shillings of the annual value or amount of Property, Profits, and Gains chargeable under Schedules (A), (C), (D), or (E) of the said Act, the Duty of Five Pence;

And For every Twenty Shillings of the annual value of the occupation of Lands, Tenements, Hereditaments, and Heritages chargeable under Schedule (B) of the said Act,—

In England, the Duty of Two Pence Halfpenny;

In Scotland and Ireland respectively, the Duty of One Penny Three Farthings;

Subject to the provisions contained in section one hundred and sixty-three of the Act of the fifth and sixth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-five, for the exemption of persons whose income is less than One Hundred and Fifty Pounds, and in section eight of "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1876," for the relief of persons whose income is less than Four Hundred Pounds,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 1273

After long debate, Resolution *agreed to.*

Other Resolutions *moved,* and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock; Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Bill [Bill 21]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Attorney General*) 1327

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "considering no corruption has been proved to exist in the larger town constituencies, or in any county constituency, it is inexpedient to adopt such uniform restrictions and punishments as will render the fair conduct of an election in a great constituency perilous and penal,"—(*Mr. Robert Fowler,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour:*)—After further debate, Question put, and *agreed to:*—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

Arklow Harbour (*re-committed*) **Bill** [Bill 137]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 1365

After short time spent therein, Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

Bankruptcy Law Amendment Bill [Bill 87]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Barran*) .. 1366

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Chamberlain:*)—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 34, Noes 37; Majority 3.—(Div. List, No. 71.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

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Army (Annual) Bill (No. 65)—
Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee,"—(*The Earl of Morley*) 1371
After short debate, Motion *agreed to* :—House in Committee accordingly.
After further short debate, Bill *reported,* without Amendment; and to be read 3^a on *Thursday* next.

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Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for copies of all the correspondence that has taken place with the United States Government on the subject of the postponement of the execution of the sentence passed upon the convict Lamson,"—(*The Earl of Milltown*) 1383
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STATE OF IRELAND—COUNTY WICKLOW—Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1406

MEDICAL GRANT (SCOTLAND) — Question, Mr. Ramsay; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish 1407

TURKEY—MIDHAT PASHA—Question, Mr. M'Coan; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1407

IRELAND—POTATO CROP COMMITTEE, 1880—Questions, Colonel Nolan, Mr. Healy, Mr. Mitchell Henry; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 1408

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE—Question, Sir Massey Lopes; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 1409

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

WAYS AND MEANS—REPORT—Resolutions [April 24] *reported* .. 1410

After debate, Resolutions *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Playfair, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Frederick Cavendish*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 140.]

Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Bill [Bill 21]—ADJOURNED DEBATE. [SECOND NIGHT]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [24th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—Debate *resumed* 1421

After debate, it being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *this day.*

The House suspended its Sitting at Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

MOTION.

LUNACY LAWS—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That all lunatics ought to be committed to the keeping of the State,"—(*Mr. Stanley Leighton*) 1446

After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 34, Noes 81; Majority 47.—(Div. List, No. 72.)

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Places of Worship Sites Bill [Bill 97]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 1476

After short time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday.*

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26.

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Land Law (Ireland) Act (1881) Amendment Bill [Bill 2]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Redmond*) .. 1478
After long debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Justin M'Carthy:*)—After further short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

Bankruptcy Bill [Bill 37]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Dixon-Hartland*) 1554
Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

LORDS, THURSDAY, APRIL 27.

Army (Annual) Bill (No. 65)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3^a,"—(*The Earl of Morley*) .. 1555
Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 3^a accordingly, and *passed.*

Army (Alternative Punishment) Bill (No. 68)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Lord Denman*) .. 1555
On question, *resolved* in the *negative.*

COMMONS, THURSDAY, APRIL 27.

QUESTIONS.

Prisons (Ireland)—Limerick Gaol—Putting Untried Prisoners to Work—Question, Mr. O'Sullivan; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1557
The National Defences—Chatham Dockyard—Questions, Mr. W. H. James, Colonel Stanley; Answers, Mr. Childers 1558
Western Australia—Free Emigration—Question, Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1558
Russia—Persecution of the Jews—Questions, Baron Henry De Worms; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1559
Customs—Penalties for Smuggling—Question, Mr. Joseph Cowen; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish 1560
Gibraltar (Religious Dissensions)—Dr. Canilla—Questions, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, Colonel Colthurst; Answers, Mr. Courtney .. 1561
Post Office (Ireland)—Milford Post Office—Question, Mr. Leamy; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 1562
Army—Staff Appointments—Question, Colonel Alexander; Answer, Mr. Childers 1563
Navy—The Shipbuilding Programme—Question, Captain Price; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1563
Royal Passengers—The "Albert Victor" Channel Steamer—Question, Mr. Arthur Arnold; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish .. 1564
Ways and Means—The Financial Statement—The Revenue—Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish .. 1564
Police (Scotland)—Disturbances in the Island of Skye—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, The Lord Advocate 1565
Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Prisoners detained under the Act—P. and W. M'Quinlan—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 1566
Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Treatment of Prisoners under the Act—Armagh Gaol—Question, Mr. Redmond; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1566

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARRESTS IN CO. TIPPERARY—Question, Mr. Redmond; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1567

IRISH FISHERIES—FRENCH FISHING VESSELS—Questions, Mr. O'Shaughnessy, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 1568

EVICTIONS (IRELAND) — LONGFORD WORKHOUSE — Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 1568

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ENNISKILLEN GAOL—MR. J. P. QUINN—Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1569

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—PRISONERS DETAINED UNDER THE ACT—MR. P. ARNOLD—Question, Mr. Edward Sheil; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1570

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARMS LICENCES—Questions, Mr. Edward Sheil; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 1570

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS—RIVERS CONSERVANCY AND FLOODS PREVENTION BILL — Question, Sir Baldwyn Leighton; Answer, Mr. Hibbert 1571

EJECTMENTS (IRELAND)—THE RETURNS—THE CIVIL BILL COURTS—Question, Mr. Gibson; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 1571

SOUTH AFRICA—ZULULAND—Question, Mr. R. N. Fowler; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1572

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—PRISONERS DETAINED UNDER THE ACT—MR. T. RYAN—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1572

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—TELEGRAMS TO CORONERS—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1573

STATE OF IRELAND—THE POLICE AT CAPPOQUIN—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland 1573

MOTION.

PARLIAMENT—GLOUCESTER WRIT—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown to make out a new Writ for the Election of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the City of Gloucester, in the room of Thomas Robinson, esquire, whose Election has been declared to be void,"—(*Mr. Lewis*) 1574

After debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Bill [Bill 21]—ADJOURNED DEBATE. [THIRD NIGHT]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [24th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—Debate *resumed* 1581

After long debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

QUESTION.

PARLIAMENT—ARRANGEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS—Questions, Mr. R. N. Fowler, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Childers, Mr. Speaker, Lord Frederick Cavendish 1631

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Commonable Rights Bill [Bill 23]—
Bill *considered* in Committee 1631
After short time spent therein, Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

Judgments (Inferior Courts) Bill [Bill 44]—
Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 25th April*] 1632
After short time spent therein, Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

Places of Worship Sites Bill [Bill 97]—
Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 25th April*] 1635
After short time spent therein, Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

Tramways Provisional Orders Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Ashley, Mr. Chamberlain*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 141] 1635
Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Ashley, Mr. Chamberlain*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 142] 1635
Documentary Evidence Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. John Holms, Lord Frederick Cavendish*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 143] 1636
Civil Imprisonment (Scotland) Bill—
Ordered, That the Select Committee do consist of Seventeen Members:—Committee *nominated*:—List of the Committee 1636

LORDS, FRIDAY, APRIL 28.

Egypt and Italy—Assab—Question, Earl De La Warr; Answer, Earl Granville 1636
Evictions (Ireland)—The Return, to December 31, 1881—Question, Observations, Lord Monteagle of Brandon; Reply, Lord Carlingford; Observations, Lord Oranmore and Browne 1637
Army (Auxiliary Forces)—The Easter Volunteer Review—Observations, Viscount Bury; Reply, The Earl of Morley:—Short debate thereon 1639

Claims of Peerage, &c.—
The Earl of Milltown, the Lord Kintore, and the Lord Oxenfoord added to the Select Committee in the place of the Marquess of Abercorn, the Earl of Mansfield, and the Lord O'Hagan.

COMMONS, FRIDAY, APRIL 28.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Central Metropolitan Railway Bill (*by Order*)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Dodds*) .. 1644
Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)
Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:" —After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*
Words *added*:—Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to*:—Second Reading *put off* for six months.

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QUESTIONS.

Ireland—Abolition of the Vice Regal Office—Notice, Mr. Heneage; Question, Mr. R. Power; Answer, Mr. Speaker 1656
Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881—The Sub-Commissioners—Mr. Headech—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1656
Prisons (England) Act—Gaol Dietary—Question, Mr. R. N. Fowler; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1657
Law and Police—Crimes of Violence—Question, Mr. R. N. Fowler; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1657
Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Prisoners detained under the Act—Mr. John M'Carthy and Others—Questions, Mr. Healy, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Redmond, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster; Question, Mr. O'Donnell; [No answer] 1658
Poor Law (Ireland)—Death in Naas Workhouse—Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1663
State of Ireland—County Wicklow—Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1663
Friendly Societies—The Quinquennial Returns—Report of the Registrar—Question, Mr. W. H. James; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish 1664
Fisheries—Trawling—Legislation—Question, Mr. Sykes; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1664
Post Office Annuities—Legislation—Question, Mr. H. G. Allen; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 1665
Central Asia—Russian Advance—Question, Sir Eardley Wilmot; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1665
The Irish Land Commission—The Galway Sub-Commissioners—Questions, Mr. Healy, Mr. Callan; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 1665
Evictions (Ireland)—Evicted Labourers at Rhode, King's County—Question, Mr. Molloy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1666
The Magistracy (Ireland)—Major Traill, R.M.—Questions, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 1667
Private (Hybrid) Bills—The Forth Bridge Railway Bill—Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1668
Carriage Roads (Metropolis)—Question, Sir Eardley Wilmot; Answer, Mr. Dodson 1669
Endowed Schools Acts—The Charity Commission—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Mundella 1669
The Ladies' Land League—Imprisonment of Miss Kirk—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1670
State of Ireland—The Magistracy—Mr. Clifford Lloyd—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1671
Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Mr. William Abraham—Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. O'Shea; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 1672
Law and Police—The Riots at Camborne, Cornwall—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1673
Landlord and Tenant (Scotland)—Evictions in the Island of Skye—Questions, Mr. Macfarlane, Mr. Dick-Peddie; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1675
Ways and Means—The Financial Statement—The Carriage Duties—Questions, Sir Baldwyn Leighton, Mr. Schreiber, Mr. Pennington; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 1676
Evictions (Ireland) — Arrears — Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1677
Northampton Borough—Question, Mr. Firth; Answer, Mr. Gladstone .. 1678
County Government Bill—Local Option—Question, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1678

GENERAL PRISONS (IRELAND) ACT—CONVEYANCE OF PRISONERS—Questions, Mr. O'Connor Power; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1678

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MEMBERS OF THIS HOUSE DETAINED UNDER THE ACT—Question, Mr. Joseph Cowen; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1679

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—TUESDAY SITTINGS—Questions, Mr. Macfarlane, Mr. R. N. Fowler, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Chaplin, Mr. Joseph Cowen; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1680

ENGLAND AND FRANCE—THE CHANNEL TUNNEL SCHEME—Question, Mr. O'Shea; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1682

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

£1 BANK NOTES—RESOLUTION—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, the prohibition of the issue of bank notes of £1 each in England and Wales is unreasonable and ought to be removed, and that all needful steps should be forthwith taken to authorise the issue of such notes,"—(*Mr. William Fowler*,)—instead thereof 1682

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

SLAVERY—THE SLAVE TRADE IN ASIA AND AFRICA—Observations, Mr. Labouchere; Reply, Sir Charles W. Dilke:—Debate thereon .. 1711

CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS—PRIVATE SECRETARIES TO MINISTERS—Observations, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Reply, Lord Frederick Cavendish:—Debate thereon 1728

Motion, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," by leave, *withdrawn:*—Committee *deferred* till *Monday* next.

Municipal Corporations (*re-committed*) **Bill** [Bill 113]—

Order for Committee read:—*Moved,* "That this House will, upon Tuesday next, at Two of the clock, resolve itself into the said Committee,"—(*Lord Frederick Cavendish*) 1752

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "at Two of the clock,"—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. R. N. Fowler:*)—After further short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 36, Noes 90; Majority 54.—(Div. List, No. 73.)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question" 1777

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Biggar:*)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to:*—Committee *deferred* till *Tuesday* next, at Two of the clock.

QUESTIONS.

CORRUPT PRACTICES (DISFRANCHISEMENT) BILL—Question, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1784

WAYS AND MEANS—Question, Mr. R. N. Fowler; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish 1784

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Patents for Inventions (No. 2) Bill [Bill 104]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir John Lubbock*) 1785

Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* 22nd May.

Judgments (Inferior Courts) Bill [Bill 44]—

Bill, as amended, *considered* 1785

After short debate, Further consideration, as amended, *deferred* till *Thursday* next.

LORDS, MONDAY, MAY 1.

STATE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS—THE IRISH POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT—THE LORD LIEUTENANCY OF IRELAND—Observations, The Marquess of Salisbury; Reply, Earl Granville 1787

OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION — THE STATUTES — RELIGIOUS TEACHING AND WORSHIP — Observations, The Earl of Carnarvon:—Debate thereon 1788

TUNIS — BOMBARDMENT OF SFAX — INDEMNITY TO BRITISH SUBJECTS — ADDRESS FOR PAPERS—

Moved, That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for papers and correspondence relating to the International Commission held at Sfax in August 1881 to inquire into the pillaging and destruction of property after the entry of the French troops; also for the reports of M. Galea and M. Leonardi on the same subject; and for papers and correspondence relative to the affairs of Tunis since the last papers were presented,—(*The Earl De La Warr*) 1801

After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

THEATRES AND MUSIC HALLS (METROPOLIS)—PRECAUTIONS IN CASE OF FIRE—ADDRESS FOR PAPERS—

Moved, That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for copies of the Report made to the Home Office by Captain Shaw, chief officer of the London Fire Brigade, with regard to the dangers to which the public are exposed from fire in the Metropolitan theatres, and as to the means of exit provided for them,—(*The Earl of Milltown*) 1806

After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

Pluralities Acts Amendment Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Bishop of Exeter*); read 1ª (No. 74) 1807

COMMONS, MONDAY, MAY 1.

QUESTIONS.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. HENRY O'MAHONY, AN AMERICAN CITIZEN DETAINED UNDER THE ACT — Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 1808

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—SEARCH FOR ARMS—Question, Mr. Callan; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1809

INTERNATIONAL FISHERY CONFERENCE—POLICE OF THE NORTH SEA—Question, Mr. Birkbeck; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1809

MAIN ROADS (ENGLAND)—LEGISLATION—Question, Sir Massey Lopes; Answer, Mr. Dodson 1810

PUBLIC HEALTH—SHEFFIELD SMALL-POX HOSPITAL—Question, Mr. W. Lowther; Answer, Mr. Dodson 1810

POOR LAW (ENGLAND)—OLDHAM BOARD OF GUARDIANS—Question, Mr. W. Lowther; Answer, Mr. Dodson 1811

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Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Mr. Michael Ryan-Wall—Question, Mr. Redmond; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1812

Ways and Means—Resolution 3—Coffee—Question, Mr. Stewart Macliver; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish 1813

The Royal Irish Constabulary—Co. Monaghan—Questions, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Callan, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster; Questions, Mr. Macfarlane, Mr. Healy [No answers] 1813

The Royal Irish Constabulary—Pensions—Question, Mr. Lewis; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1814

Merchant Shipping Act, 1854—The Channel Steamer "Albert Edward"—Question, Captain Price; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain .. 1815

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881—Sec. 10—Question, Mr. Fitz-Patrick; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland 1815

Merchant Shipping Act, 1876—Emigrant Ships—Question, Mr. A. Moore; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1816

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881—Labourers' Cottages—Questions, Mr. Villiers Stuart, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 1817

Russia—Persecution of the Jews—Question, Baron Henry De Worms; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1817

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Michael Whittaker and Thomas Dunphy—Question, Mr. Lalor; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1818

The Parks (Metropolis)—Richmond Park—Question, Mr. Molloy; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 1818

Criminal Law (Ireland)—Charge of Conspiracy to Murder—Question, Mr. Callan; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 1819

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Rules relating to Visits to Persons detained under the Act—Question, Mr. Redmond; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1821

Peace Preservation (Ireland) Act, 1881—Rev. Thomas Feehan—Question, Mr. Marum; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1821

Landlord and Tenant (Scotland)—Evictions in the Island of Skye—Questions, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh, Mr. Dick-Peddie; Answers, The Lord Advocate 1822

England and France—The Channel Tunnel Scheme—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1823

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Mr. Molloy—Question, Mr. Redmond; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 1824

The Magistracy (Ireland)—Captain Plunket, R.M.—Question, Mr. Redmond; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster; Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor [No answer] 1824

Law and Police—The Salvation Army—Riots at Oldham—Question, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1826

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Mr. Luke Armstrong—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 1826

University Reform (Scotland)—Question, Mr. Dick-Peddie; Answer, The Lord Advocate 1827

Evictions (Ireland)—Erection of Huts for Evicted Labourers at Rhode, King's Co.—Questions, Mr. Molloy, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 1827

Turkey—Administrative Reforms—Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1829

The Revenue—The Wine Duties—Question, Earl Percy; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1829

Inland Revenue—Railway Passenger Duty—The Cheap Trains Act, 1844—Questions, Mr. Buxton, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Thorold Rogers, Mr. R. Biddulph Martin; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 1830

Ireland—Address of the Dominion House of Commons—Questions, Mr. Callan, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, Mr. Gladstone .. 1832

The Land Commission (Ireland)—Decision under the Land Act—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1833

State of Public Affairs—The Irish Policy of the Government—Questions, Mr. Gorst, Mr. J. Lowther, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Gladstone; Observations, Sir John Hay 1835

State of Public Affairs—The Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland—Earl Cowper—Question, Mr. Onslow; Answer, Mr. Gladstone .. 1838

The Liberal Association of Ipswich and Irish Landlords—Question, Mr. Bellingham; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1838

Oxford and Cambridge Universities Commission—The Oxford Statutes—Question, Mr. Thorold Rogers; Answer, Mr. Gladstone .. 1840

Parliament—Business of the House—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, Lord Frederick Cavendish 1840

State of Ireland—Alleged Riot at Frankfort, King's Co.—Question, Mr. Gibson; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1840

Law and Police—The Salvation Army (Hampshire)—Question, Mr. Caine [No answer] 1841

Tunis—Bombardment of Sfax—Indemnity to British Subjects—Question, The Earl of Bective; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke .. 1841

Prisons Board (Ireland)—Captain Barlow—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1841

State of Ireland—Alleged Murders—Question, Mr. Lewis; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1842

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Parliament—Business of the House (Putting the Question)—Resolution—Adjourned Debate [Sixth Night]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [20th February]: Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1842

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, after the words "Mr. Speaker," to insert the words "after an appeal to his judgment by a Minister of the Crown,"—(*Mr. O'Donnell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment,

To add, at the end thereof, the words "or by the Member in charge of the subject under discussion,"—(*Lord George Hamilton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After long debate, Amendment to the proposed Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.* Question put, "That those words be there inserted:"—The House *divided;* Ayes 164, Noes 220; Majority 56.—(Div. List, No. 74.)

Main Question again proposed:—*Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff:*)—Motion *agreed to:*—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

Military Manœuvres Bill [Bill 134]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Childers*) .. 1900

After short debate, Motion *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

Turnpike Roads (South Wales) Bill [Bill 101]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read the third time,"—(*Mr. Dodson*) .. 1901

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "now read the third time," and add the word "re-committed,"—instead thereof,—(*Mr. Hussey Vivian.*) ..

Turnpike Roads (*South Wales*) *Bill*—continued.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Hibbert:*)—After further short debate, Question put, and *agreed to:*—Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* 15th May.

Militia Storehouses Bill [Bill 116]—
Bill *considered* in Committee 1915
Bill *reported*, without Amendment; to be read the third time *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

Educational Endowments (Scotland) Bill—
Motion for Leave (*Mr. Mundella*) 1916
After short debate, Motion *agreed to:*—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Mundella, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 147.]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 145] 1917

Local Government (Gas) Provisional Order Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 144] 1917

County Courts Act (1867) Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Monk, Mr. Reid*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 146] 1918

LORDS, TUESDAY, MAY 2.

OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION—LINCOLN COLLEGE (OXFORD) STATUTES — Observations, Question, The Earl of Camperdown; Answer, The Lord Chancellor 1918

STATE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS—THE IRISH POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT—Questions, The Marquess of Salisbury, The Earl of Carnarvon; Answers, Earl Granville 1919

Payment of Wages in Public-houses Prohibition Bill (No. 41)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Earl Stanhope*) .. 1925
After short debate, Motion *agreed to:*—Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Tuesday* the 16*th instant.*

COMMONS, TUESDAY, MAY 2.

QUESTIONS.

STATE OF IRELAND — DISTURBANCES IN BALLINTUBBER — Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1928

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—RELEASE OF PRISONERS UNDER THE ACT—Question, Mr. O'Connor Power; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1929

MINES (COAL) REGULATION ACT, 1872—ABRAM COLLIERY EXPLOSION—Question, Mr. Burt; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1929

PRISONS (IRELAND)—MR. EAGAR, GOVERNOR OF LIMERICK PRISON — Questions, Mr. O'Sullivan, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 1930

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND)—THE MARQUESS OF ELY'S ESTATE—INTERFERENCE OF THE POLICE—Questions, Mr. Redmond; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 1931

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ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—CAMPS OF INSTRUCTION—Question, Mr. A. Grant; Answer, Mr. Childers 1931

IRELAND—MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD, R.M.—CIRCULAR BY THE INSPECTOR OF POLICE, CO. CLARE—Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Healy, Mr. Redmond; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 1932

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE MAGISTRACY—SUMMARY JURISDICTION Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 1934

CRIME (IRELAND)—ARSON—Question, Mr. Sidney Herbert; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1935

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—CO. KERRY—SEARCH FOR ARMS—Question, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1935

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE—Questions, Mr. Blennerhassett, Mr. Chaplin; Answers, Mr. Mundella .. 1936

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARRESTS UNDER THE ACT—Questions, Mr. Gibson, Lord Arthur Hill; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 1938

IRELAND—IRISH POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT—ALLEGED NEGOTIATIONS—Question, Colonel Walrond; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 1939

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE—THE FINANCE ACCOUNTS—Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish 1939

CRIME (IRELAND)—ALLEGED OUTRAGES, COUNTY LIMERICK—Question, Mr. Tottenham; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1940

LAW AND POLICE—THE SALVATION ARMY AT WHITCHURCH—Question, Mr. Caine; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1941

PRISONS (ENGLAND)—TOTHILL FIELDS PRISON—Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1942

SOUTH AFRICA — CETEWAYO, EX-KING OF ZULULAND — VISIT TO THIS COUNTRY—Question, Mr. Onslow; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney 1942

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND)—THE EARL OF KENMARE'S ESTATE—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1944

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1945

IRELAND—IRISH POLITICAL PRISONERS—SIR JOHN HAY'S MOTION—Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, Mr. Speaker 1945

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. P. L. WHITE—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 1945

POST OFFICE—THE AMERICAN MAILS—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 1946

MOTION.

PARLIAMENT—WIGAN NEW WRIT—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery to make out a new Writ for the election of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the Borough of Wigan, in the room of Francis Sharp Powell, esquire, whose election has been declared to be void,"—(*Mr. Lewis*) 1946

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "no Writ be issued to fill up any vacancy occasioned by corrupt practices until this House has disposed of the Corrupt Practices (Disfranchisement) Bill,"—(*Baron de Ferrieres,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 142, Noes 220; Majority 78.—(Div. List, No. 75.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

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STATE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS—THE IRISH POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT—Ministerial Statement, Mr. Gladstone 1965
After debate, *Moved,* "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Chaplin:*)
After further debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

The House suspended its Sitting at Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

MOTION.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY (JESUS COLLEGE STATUTES)—MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS—
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty that She will be graciously pleased to withhold her consent from the Statutes proposed by the University of Oxford Commissioners for Jesus College, which Statutes were laid upon the Table of this House on the 7th of February last,"—(*Mr. Hussey Vivian*) 1997
After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Distress Amendment Bill [Bill 73]—
Order for Committee read:—*Moved,* "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Sir Henry Holland*) 2010
Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill *considered* in Committee.
Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Tuesday* next.

Metropolis Management and Building Acts Amendment Bill [Bill 107]—
Order for Committee read:—*Moved,* "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Sir James M'Garel-Hogg*) 2010
Amendment proposed,
To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House will, upon this day six months, resolve itself into the said Committee,"—(*Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence,*)—instead thereof.
Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*
Bill *considered* in Committee 2029
After short time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday.*

Sunday Closing (Ireland) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Richardson, Mr. Ewart, Mr. Corry, Mr. Redmond, Mr. Thomas Dickson, Mr. Meldon, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Blake*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 148] 2030

HANSARD'S

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

IN THE

Third Session of the *Twenty-Second Parliament* of the
United Kingdom of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*,
appointed to meet 29 April, 1880, in the Forty-third
Year of the Reign of

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1882.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Saturday, 25th March, 1882.

MINUTES.]—Public Bill—*Second Reading—Committee negatived — Third Reading* — Consolidated Fund (No. 2), and *passed.*

Their Lordships met at half past Twelve o'clock;—

CONSOLIDATED FUND (NO. 2) BILL.

Read 2ª (according to order); Committee *negatived:* Then Standing Order No. XXXV. *considered* (according to order), and *dispensed with;* Bill read 3ª, and *passed.*

And having gone through the Business on the Paper, without debate—

House adjourned at a quarter before
One o'clock, to Monday next,
Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 27th March, 1882.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Metropolitan Commons Supplemental * (38); Drainage (Ireland) Provisional Order * (51).

TUNIS—CESSION OF ESPARTO GRASS DISTRICTS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

EARL DE LA WARR rose to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If a copy of the Concession to M. Réné Duplessis of the Esparto fibre districts in the Regency of Tunis between Sfax and the Tripolitan frontier can be laid upon the Table of the House; also any correspondence which may have taken place on the subject? The noble Earl observed that, although, perhaps, it might not be correct to say in so many words, as did the late Prime Minister of France,

M. Gambetta, that England had "recognized the Bardo Treaty," which had been obtained from the Bey of Tunis by France, he feared that facts of almost daily occurrence proved that, in practice, it was so. The instance to which he was about to refer, and the Papers which he was about to ask the noble Earl opposite to lay upon the Table of the House, formed, he might say, a convincing proof of the position occupied by this country at the present time as regarded trade and commerce. It appeared that a concession for a considerable number of years of the principal Esparto grass districts in the Regency of Tunis had been granted to a French house under the name of M. Réné Duplessis. The districts granted, as he was informed, comprised all the best parts of the country, and those which remained were comparatively unimportant. It appeared that the British trade in Esparto grass, recently discovered as being of great value in the manufacture of paper, had been of considerable importance; and in the Return of 1880 the quantity exported from Tunis and Tripoli to Great Britain amounted in value to £477,000. Now, it was quite clear that if what was virtually a monopoly had been established in favour of a French house, British merchants would be placed at a considerable disadvantage, and the Treaty of 1875 between this country and Tunis, so highly favourable to British trade, practically became of no effect. He would remind their Lordships that since the late unhappy events in Tunis, not only had they to regret the loss of that close and ancient alliance which had for so many years existed between this country and the Beys of Tunis, and which the present Bey had so earnestly desired to maintain, and which the Governments of Lord Palmerston and Lord Russell were so careful to uphold, but also there were now in the Regency of Tunis not fewer than 10,000 British subjects who would severely suffer unless more protection was afforded them than had hitherto been given since the occupation of the country by the French. He would now beg to ask the noble Earl the Question of which he had given Notice.

Earl GRANVILLE: In answer to the Question of the noble Earl, I have to state that Her Majesty's Government have received a telegraphic communication, but no copy of the concession referred to. It would not be convenient to lay upon the Table any of the Correspondence relating to this matter while communications are taking place with the French Government.

REPRESENTATIVE PEERS OF IRELAND.

RESOLUTION.

The Earl of BELMORE moved—

"That the Clerk of the Crown and Hanaper do make a return of the dates of the issue of the writs for the election of all Representative Peers of Ireland who have been elected since the year 1850; and also of the dates of the receipt of the latest return in each case which has been sent in to the Hanaper Office in obedience to such writs."

The LORD CHANCELLOR was understood to suggest an amendment of the Motion, by adding, after "Hanaper," the words "in Ireland."

Motion, as amended, *agreed to.*

House adjourned at half past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 27*th March*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Second Reading*—Duke of Albany (Establishment) * [112].

Committee — Places of Worship Sites [97], *deferred.*

Committee — *Report* — Municipal Corporations [61-113]; Partnerships * [27-114], re-committed to a Select Committee.

Considered as amended—Bills of Sale Act (1878) Amendment [108].

Third Reading—Drainage (Ireland) Provisional Order * [94]; Metropolitan Commons Supplemental * [92], and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

LAW AND JUSTICE — CASES OF SUSPECTED POISONING.

Mr. ST. AUBYN asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in cases of suspected poisoning, when an analysis is directed to be made, he would consider whether it would not be more satisfactory that the suspected persons should have an opportunity of being represented professionally at such analysis?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I have considered this matter, and am clearly of opinion that it never would do to allow a delicate process of this kind to be conducted by a combination of persons, who might be acting in adverse interests, and thus defeat the object of the experiments, which are necessarily delicate. I quite understand the sentiment, that the persons who carry out the experiments should not be appointed by the Crown, so as to be considered parties in the prosecution. Therefore, I propose to ask the Presidents of the College of Surgeons and of the College of Physicians yearly to appoint two independent, experienced men of science to refer to in cases of this kind for the purposes of performing these experiments. That would secure what we want — namely, undisturbed action of impartial persons. In making this statement, I wish it distinctly to be understood that there is no hesitation whatever as to the entire ability and impartiality of the persons who have hitherto been employed by the Crown.

TURKEY (ALBANIA)—THE DEATH OF CAPTAIN SELBY.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with reference to the unfortunate circumstances that resulted in the death of Captain Selby at the hands of an Albanian shepherd, Whether he will take any action on the following passage in Lord Dufferin's letter to Earl Granville, as printed in the Parliamentary Paper just issued,

> "In talking over the matter with Mr. Wrench (Her Majesty's Consul at Constantinople) and with Hobart Pasha, who has often shot over the locality where the attack was made, I am inclined to think the Albanians were irritated at their flocks being disturbed by the noise of the guns and by the dogs of the shooting party;"

and, whether he will inquire if any application was made to the Albanians for leave to shoot over their land; and, if it should be found that no such application was made, and that the shooting party were consequently there as trespassers, whether he will ask the Turkish Government to deal leniently with the Albanian shepherds, who are charged with having taken part in the attack?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Her Majesty's Government do not propose to take any action on the passage quoted by the hon. Member. They are informed that there is no law in Turkey by which the owner of land can prevent persons from walking or shooting over his property unless it is surrounded by a wall or fence; and that the plea of trespass has not been raised at the trial of the persons implicated in the assault on Captain Selby, which is being conducted very correctly and without pressure from Her Majesty's Embassy. The locality where the assault took place is stated to have been frequently visited by sportsmen, and on the previous day the party were assisted in their search for game by some of the shepherds. It would, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, who has been consulted on the point, be altogether premature to address the Turkish Government in reference to the shepherds now undergoing their trial.

POST OFFICE—PARCELS POST.

Mr. MONK asked the Postmaster General, Whether he is now in a position to state the intentions of the Government with respect to the introduction of a Parcels Post into this Country?

Mr. FAWCETT: When my hon. Friend asked me a Question on this subject at the beginning of the Session, I stated that I was about shortly to submit certain proposals to the Treasury for the establishment of a parcels post. These proposals have now been sanctioned by the Treasury, and the House may, I think, be interested to hear their character. It is proposed that parcels should be posted at any post-office of the United Kingdom where letters are received, and that, the postage being prepaid, they should be delivered free of further charge wherever letters are delivered. The maximum weight will be 7 lbs., for which the proposed charge will be 1*s.*, less rates of postage being charged for parcels of lower weight. If this inland parcels post is established, it will immediately be linked with the international parcels post which is now in operation. This will enable parcels to be posted from any part of the United Kingdom to every other country in Europe except Russia, and to Egypt and Asiatic Turkey. I will not trouble the House by giving details of the rates of this international parcels post; but I may state, as an illustration, that if our arrangements are carried out, a parcel not exceeding three kilogrammes (about 6½ lbs.) in weight may be posted from any part of the United Kingdom to any part of France for a charge which cannot exceed 1*s.* 9*d.* I believe great advantages will result to the entire community from the establishment of a parcels post; and I am glad to think that the rural districts will largely participate in these advantages, because, at the present time, if it be desired to send a parcel to some village away from a railway station, it is often impossible to ascertain beforehand when the parcel will arrive, and how much the person who receives it will have to pay for its delivery. I will only further add that steps have been already taken to put the Post Office in communication with the Railway Companies, with the object of giving effect to the scheme. It will be obvious to the House that time will be required to complete the necessary arrangements for introducing so important an extension of the present postal system as a parcels post. I will, however, give an assurance that no effort shall be wanting on the part of the Post Office to bring the scheme into operation with the least practicable delay.

INDIA (FINANCE, &c.)—IMPORT DUTIES ON INDIAN PRODUCTS.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether, in consideration of the recent abolition of Indian Import Duties on English cottons, the Government of India will urge upon the Home Government the propriety of reciprocally acting up to the principles of free trade, and abolishing the English Import Duties upon Indian tea, coffee, and other products?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I should be very glad, in the interest of the British consumer as well as of the Indian producer, if the Government could remove the duties, not only on Indian, but on all tea, coffee, and similar products. But I cannot admit that the fact that the Indian Government have been able to remit duties to the amount of more than £1,000,000 which pressed on the Indian consumer is any reason why I should ask the Government to reduce duties on Indian tea and coffee which are still levied on those articles coming from other countries and Colonies, and thus to establish a system of protection in favour of India.

MR. O'DONNELL gave Notice that, on an early day, he would call attention to the duties levied in this country on Indian products, and also to the manner in which Chinese tea was admitted duty free into India, while Indian tea was taxed on its admission to this country.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MICHAEL CONOLLY.

MR. O'DONNELL asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If he will consider the case of Mr. Michael Conolly, farmer, near Athenry, who has been confined as a suspect, in Galway Gaol, since 9th July 1881, although the suspects arrested on the same day and same charge have been liberated four months ago; and, whether he has been informed that the continued imprisonment of Mr. Conolly will result in extreme loss or ruin to his family, who depend on him for the management of the farm?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Before the hon. Member placed this Question on the Paper, Mr. Conolly's case had been re-considered by the Lord Lieutenant pursuant to the Statute, and his release ordered.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PERSONS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT—GALWAY GAOL.

MR. SEXTON asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, What accommodation is afforded to the suspects in Galway Gaol for association; whether it is true that the suspects complained of the accommodation, and asked to be allowed to remain in the open air during the two hours of association; whether the medical officer of the gaol made any representation to the Prisons Board on the unsuitableness of the association rooms; and, whether any notice has been taken of the complaint of the suspects or the representations of the medical officer?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): In reply to the hon. Member's first inquiry, I am informed that persons detained under the Protection Act in Galway

Prison have the following accommodation for association—namely, three rooms, a large covered shed, and two exercise yards, in each of which is a ball alley. As to the rest of the Question, I am informed by the Prisons Board that no such complaint or application was made. The prison was inspected on Friday last, and no complaint was then made of the arrangement.

Mr. SEXTON inquired, if there was not a certain portion of the day when those places could not be utilized?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, that was not an inquiry as to a fact which he could answer without Notice.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE CORK GRAND JURY.

Mr. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the report of the proceedings of the Cork Grand Jury, in the "Cork Herald" of 17th instant, in the matter of Hayes' claim of £80 for malicious injury, in which the conduct of Captain Somerville is impugned, Mr. Barry having said he was not very well satisfied with the malice:

> "Mr. Dunlea said that where a grand juror had said that he did not consider the injury jury malicious, he would ask that his evidence as to the value should be heard. Captain Somerville—If you interfere any further we will make it £80. Mr. Dunlea—Well, if a grand juror choose to hold out a threat of that kind to an attorney who appears here in the interests of the public, the Grand Jury can now do what they like in the matter; I will retire from it. The Grand Jury then passed the sum of £54 compensation for the injuries done, the amount to be levied off the parish;"

whether it is the fact that grand jurors have to pay none of the money they thus vote away; that the Presentment Sessions only passed £10, where the Grand Jury gave £54; if the Government can hold out any hope that the taxpaying classes in Ireland may speedily expect to see the present Grand Jury system exchanged for representative County Boards; whether his attention has been drawn to the report of a case in the same paper, which imputes improper language to Captain Somerville, J.P. in addressing a witness; and, if the reports are substantially true, whether the Government intend to retain, in the Commission of the Peace, a magistrate who has spoken and acted as Captain Somerville has done in these two cases?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): I have seen the report in *The Cork Herald.* It is not the fact that a grand juror does not pay county cess. Each barony in the county must be represented on the Grand Jury by a freeholder to the yearly value of £50, or leaseholder to the yearly value of £100 over the rent, and must be resident in the barony. He pays the entire county cess on all land in his own hands, and when not excluded by express contract, half the county cess of all his agricultural tenancies created since the 1st of August, 1870. Hayes, who is referred to in the Question of the hon. Member, was what is, unhappily, known as a "Boycotted" farmer. He had a well-bred mare, nearly three years old, which was maliciously stabbed. The presentment sessions found that the outrage was malicious, and assessed the value of the animal at £10, which was increased by the Grand Jury to £54. This presentment has been traversed, and the traverse will be tried by a jury before the Judge of Assize. While the Grand Jury were discussing the amount, the solicitor for the ratepayers interrupted, and Captain Somerville, one of the grand jurors, is reported to have said—"If you interfere any further we will make it £80." Of course, neither that nor another observation referred to in the Question was seriously meant, and might just as well not have been noticed. As to the last paragraph in the hon. Member's Question, it is the Lord Chancellor, and not the Government, who appoints and removes county magistrates in Ireland. The inquiry whether it may be expected that the Grand Jury system will be speedily changed for County Boards should, I apprehend, be addressed to the Prime Minister.

Mr. HEALY asked, whether it was a fact that the expression used by Captain Somerville was so indecent that the Clerk at the Table would not put it upon the Paper; and, whether, if that was the fact, it was necessary to ask the Lord Chancellor to remove Captain Somerville's name from the list of magistrates?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, he was not acting as a magistrate on this occasion, but in the capacity of a grand juror discharging fiscal duties. He thought an expression of this kind should not be used at all; but he scarcely knew whether it was more improper to use it than to have it noticed in the papers.

Mr. SEXTON asked, was it for any act of his, as a magistrate, that Mr. Parnell had been removed from the Commission of the Peace?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, he did not know; but as there was a warrant for treasonable practices against the hon. Member for Cork City, it was impossible for him to remain upon the Commission of the Peace.

Mr. SEXTON: Suspicion.

Mr. HEALY gave Notice that he would ask the Attorney General for Ireland, at an early date, whether the Government had any intention of removing Captain Somerville from the Commission of the Peace?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, he might as well answer the Question at once. The Government did not intend to take action in the matter. Anyone who thought fit could put the Lord Chancellor in motion on the subject.

CROWN RENTS (IRELAND).

Mr. GIBSON asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If he has given instructions not to press the landlords, whose rents have been withheld, for immediate payment of quit and Crown rent; and, whether he is aware that the collector of quit-rent in Wexford has refused to make any such allowance, and has intimated that he will take proceedings for quit-rent in arrear, including that due on the 25th March, if not then paid?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Where the persons liable for quit rent in Ireland have given satisfactory evidence of inability to pay, or have tendered a portion of the arrears due, the time for payment has been extended. But in cases where more than two years' arrears were due, and where, after repeated applications for payment, no satisfactory explanation of the default has been given, and also in cases where the Crown claim is disputed, instructions have been given for the recovery of the amount due. Nothing is known at the Office of Woods of the case in Wexford referred to in the Question; but if the right hon. and learned Gentleman will supply me with particulars, I will have immediate inquiry made.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked, whether the Government would make this conditional on landlords ceasing to press for immediate payment of rents from tenants whose rents were exorbitant?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH wished for Notice of the Question.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, whether the Government had not asked for these rents until they were at least two years due?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, in certain cases where the landlords were not able to pay, in consequence of their own rents not being paid, such a course was adopted.

STATE OF IRELAND—TIPPERARY—CONDUCT OF THE POLICE.

Mr. SEXTON asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether it is true that on or about the 11th instant, Constable Kennedy, and a party of the Royal Irish Constabulary stationed in the town of Tipperary, tore down a number of placards calling upon the ratepayers of the local electoral divisions to vote for the popular candidates for the office of poor law guardians; whether the Executive justify the conduct of the police; and, if not, whether they will take any steps to prevent a recurrence of it; whether, on the same day, Constable Kennedy stopped in the streets of Tipperary, a man who was distributing the placards in question, deprived him of all the placards in his possession, and took his name; and, whether the police were justified in thus confiscating private property, and what charge, if any, can be made against the man who was engaged in distributing the placards?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): The hon. Member now asks me as to the contents of the placards referred to in his Question; but as I have not seen the placard I am unable to answer the Question with which he now supplements his Question in the Paper. My reply to that Question is that anonymous inflammatory placards to intimidate voters for Poor Law Guardians having been posted up in the town of Tipperary were removed by the Constabulary, as was their duty. They also took similar placards from a bill-man who was distributing them, and they have summoned him. I should add that on the hearing of that summons the contents of the placards will be considered by the magistrates.

MR. SEXTON said, that in consequence of the answer he had received, he would take the earliest opportunity of calling attention to the outrage perpetrated by the police on this occasion.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION — ESTATE OF MR. TALBOT-CROSBIE.

MR. SEXTON asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, if he can state why the cases of the tenants of Mr. William Talbot Crosbie, of Ardfert Abbey, county Kerry, whose rents were last increased in 1880, are not listed for hearing at the second sitting of the Sub-Commission at Tralee, although the originating notices were served in the first week of last November; whether it is true that, after the service of the originating notices, the landlord changed his name from William Talbot Crosbie to William Talbot Crosbie Talbot, with the object of placing the cases lower in alphabetical order than they otherwise would have been, and thus postponing their hearing for a considerable time; whether he is aware that, at the opening of the Sub-Commission at Tralee, on the 6th of last December, a local solicitor, concerned for a large number of tenants, complained that the case of one of his clients, of whom Mr. Crosbie was the landlord, had been wrongfully removed from the position it occupied at the beginning of the list, and placed at the end, without any intimation to the tenant of its removal, and of the consequent impossibility of having it heard for more than a year, although the landlord must have been aware that the tenant had incurred considerable expense in preparing his case for trial at that sitting; and, whether the solicitor publicly charged Mr. Denis Godley, the secretary to the Land Commission, with having acted in collusion with Mr. Talbot Crosbie, to whom he was known, in effecting this alteration in the position of the case as it originally stood upon the list?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): I am sorry that my reply to this long Question will be very long. In reply to the first inquiry, I have to state that the cases are sent to the Sub-Commission for trial in the order of their receipt in the Land Commission Office, and for this reason the cases of Mr. Talbot-Crosbie's tenants could not have been listed for hearing without taking them out of their turn. As to the second and third inquiries in this Question, I am informed that one case of Mr. Talbot-Crosbie was placed in the list under the letter "C;" but that, on his representation that his surname was Talbot-Crosbie, and not Crosbie.—[Mr. SEXTON: Talbot-Crosbie Talbot.] I am informed it is Talbot-Crosbie, and for this reason the case was removed to the letter "T." No delay, however, was thus occasioned beyond that involved in the adjournment from Tralee to Killarney, which was one week. The solicitor for the tenants, it is true, objected to the change; but as notice of the alteration had issued, the Land Commission declined to make further change. As to the rest of the Question, I understand that, according to the newspaper report of the proceedings, the tenants' solicitor charged Mr. Godley with having been in collusion with Mr. Talbot-Crosbie. Of course, there was nothing in it, and the newspaper also reports that the same solicitor withdrew the charge, which shows it ought not to have been made.

MR. O'DONNELL: Am I to understand from the right hon. and learned Gentleman that the Land Courts take the cases, not in the order of priority of application, but in the order of the alphabetical position of landlords' names?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): I suppose the hon. Member refers to the Sub-Commissioners. If so, the Sub-Commissioners take the cases in the order in which they are sent down by the Land Commissioners.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PRISONERS UNDER THE ACT.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the following statement in the "Galway Observer" of Saturday March 18th:—

> "On Sunday night last the chief warder, when going his rounds, found an empty pipe in the cell of Mr. Lydon, a highly respectable and independent merchant from Ballaghadereen, county Mayo. Although he explained satisfactorily how it came by being there, not for the purpose of smoking through, which he can swear on oath, he was taken next morning before the Governor, and sentenced to six days' solitary confinement, deprivations of visits, and refusals of all communications to or from friends, no matter how urgent his business. Already he is undergoing this sentence, which will not expire until Saturday next;"

whether he has also seen other statements in the same paper of alleged arbitrary and unjust treatment of suspects; and, whether he will order an inquiry to be made as to the truth of these allegations?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): The same inquiry was made by the junior Member for County Galway some days ago. I have not yet received a reply to the Question which he put; and I must ask the hon. Member to postpone this Question.

THE JUDICATURE ACT—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE.

Mr. GREGORY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, having regard to the importance of the new Rules of Procedure which are under the consideration of a Committee of Judges, and the alteration which they will effect in the administration of the Law, provision can be made for suspending the operation of them until there has been an opportunity for the consideration of them by this House?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that he was in communication with the Lord Chancellor on the subject, and he understood from him that no new Rules had yet been made, although the Judges had held meetings and passed resolutions upon which Rules would be framed. The only provision to meet the case referred to in the latter part of the Question was contained in the 25th section of the Judicature Act.

INDIA—THE INDIAN COUNCIL—THE VACANCY.

Mr. ONSLOW asked the Secretary of State for India, If he could state to the House the reasons why the vacancy in the Indian Council, caused by the retirement of Sir Erskine Perry some months ago, has not been filled up; and, whether he has considered the suggestion that the Government of India could be just as well administered if there were no further addition made to the number of Councillors at present existing?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON, in reply, said, that he had stated, in answer to a Question the other day, that he did not think it desirable, and that the House would not consider it necessary, that he should enter into an explanation of the reasons why there had been a delay in filling up the resignation of Sir Erskine Perry. He could only repeat that the appointment would be shortly made, and he hoped within a few days. With reference to the latter part of the Question, he did not know by whom the suggestion had been made, nor did he think it necessary to state whether the number of 15 was absolutely necessary for conducting the affairs of the Government of India. The hon. Member must be aware that the number had been fixed by Act of Parliament, and he had no power to alter it.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—EDUCATION GRANTS UNDER THE NEW CODE.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked the Vice President of the Council, If he can give any estimate as to what the rate of grant paid per average attendance will be under the new Code; and, whether he thinks it will exceed or be less than the sixteen shillings estimated by the Education Office to be the sum earned this year under the present Code?

Mr. MUNDELLA: The net earnings for 1880-1, ending the 31st of August last, were 15*s.* 8¼*d.* per day scholar in average attendance. Up to the close of the present financial year the grant will average 15*s.* 10*d.* per scholar; and in preparing the Estimates for 1882-3, we have calculated for a further increase of 2*d.* per head, raising the grant to 16*s.* We have examined more than 200 schools of every description simultaneously under the new and the existing Codes, and it gave a result of about 2*d.* per head in favour of the schools examined under the new Code. But as the new Code is based on average attendance, it is quite possible that the ratio of average attendance to the number on the books may be considerably increased. This will, no doubt, be the case if managers are better supported by School Boards, School Attendance Committees, and the magistrates. In that event, the attendance of the children and the amount of the grants will be proportionately increased. As the noble Lord is aware, increased encouragement is given under the new Code for better teaching in infant schools and night schools.

ARMY ENLISTMENT—RE-ENGAGEMENTS.

COLONEL COLTHURST asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the case of private soldiers who enlisted prior to the 8th August 1870, and under the conditions laid down in the Act of 1867 for twelve years, and who are now desirous of re-engaging to complete twenty-one years' service, will be taken into consideration with a view of relaxing in their regard the provisions of paragraph 59, section XIX. Queen's Regulations, 1881, namely, that re-engagements will only be allowed in special cases?

MR. CHILDERS: Under the paragraph of the Warrant of June last to which my hon. and gallant Friend refers, commanding officers are at liberty to recommend the re-engagement of privates in the 12th year of their service; but they must do so on special grounds, which, however, are interpreted liberally. I have already approved the re-engagement of nearly 200 men; but I do not propose to relax the practice in this respect.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PERSONS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT—LIMERICK GAOL.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If he can state the reason why the "Kerry Independent" newspaper of the 13th instant, posted in the usual manner, in time for the morning delivery, to the Kerry "suspect" prisoners in Limerick, was not delivered by the gaol officials till 3 p.m. on the 17th, and then only after a portion had been removed, containing a Ladies' League meeting held in Tralee on Sunday the 12th; and, whether it is in accordance with his instructions that the newspaper in question should be always detained two or three days before the delivery?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): There was no mutilation or delay in Limerick Prison of the newspaper referred to in the hon. Member's Question. In giving the paper—which appeared to be a second-hand copy—to the person to whom it was addressed, the warder very properly called attention to its condition. The simple explanation appears to me to be that the condition of the paper and its delay in posting were due to the person who had the first reading of it before he posted it.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: The right hon. and learned Gentleman has not answered the last Question.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): The answer, Sir, is No. I did not think it pertinent to the inquiry, otherwise I should have answered it.

NAVY—THE DOCKYARDS—THE BANK HOLIDAYS.

MR. GORST asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty will, this year, observe the bank holidays in Her Majesty's Dockyards?

MR. TREVELYAN: The workmen in the Dockyards have holidays on Good Friday, Christmas Day, the Queen's Birthday, and Coronation Day. Some of these are enjoyed by no other workmen in the Kingdom, and they are paid for these holidays just as if they were at work. They likewise work considerably shorter hours than in private yards. They get a half-holiday after each annual visitation of the Board of Admiralty, and a half-holiday occasionally when a large ship is launched in the middle of the day, for which they receive wages. Under these circumstances, it would not be fair to the taxpayer to add the Bank holidays to the list. Each holiday would be equivalent to making a present to the men of £4,000, besides the much more serious question of the delay of the all-important national work on which they are engaged.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF inquired whether a holiday would be given to the Dockyard workmen to attend the Volunteer Review?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Arrangements will be made to enable the usual Dockyard workmen to attend the Review, and they will make up the time on other days.

Mr. GORST inquired whether the men could legally work on Good Friday and Christmas Day?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Two of the holidays which I mentioned are Coronation Day and the Queen's Birthday. If there were a general wish in the Dockyards to exchange these two days for the Bank holidays, Her Majesty's Government would consider it; but Her Majesty's pleasure would have to be specially taken.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PERSONS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT—MR. P. CAHILL.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, What facilities will be afforded to Mr. Patrick Cahill, LL.B., at present imprisoned in Naas Gaol, for doing his work in connection with the "Leinster Leader" newspaper, of which he is proprietor and editor?

Mr. SEXTON: Does the right hon. and learned Gentleman know whether the Executive refused to allow this gentleman to have the use of a harmonium offered him by some ladies?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): I cannot answer the latter Question without Notice. My reply to the Question of the hon. Member for Queen's County is the very suitable one that Mr. Cahill has made no application with reference to his duty as newspaper editor.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: May I ask what facilities will be afforded?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): If Mr. Cahill should apply I shall be able to inform him.

STATE OF IRELAND—MR. CARTER, J.P. —POLICE PROTECTION.

Mr. ION HAMILTON asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether it is the case that Mr. Tilson Shaen Carter, J.P., recently applied to the Government for police protection; and, if so, whether he will state upon what grounds such protection was refused?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): I must ask the hon. Member to postpone this Question. I have telegraphed today twice for the purpose of getting clearer information; but on neither occasion did I obtain such information as would enable me to give him a satisfactory answer.

CRIMINAL LAW—CASE OF JANE M'EVOY.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to the case of a woman named Jane M'Evoy, who was charged before Mr. Slade with having neglected, she being a person under police supervision, to report herself to the police; and, whether, if the facts are as stated by the prisoner, that she did "not think she had occasion to report herself after her term had expired," he will remit the whole or part of the sentence of one year's imprisonment imposed by the magistrate?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, he had inquired into this matter. The magistrate informed him that this woman was represented as a woman of the worst character, and it was also stated that she had been sentenced to several terms of imprisonment after she was released on licence, and this was confirmed by the police reports. It thus appeared that she was a person whom it was necessary to keep under police supervision; but she, after sufficient warning, refused to report herself, and the magistrate said that, in such circumstances, he must award the sentence provided by law for such cases.

STATE OF IRELAND — THE LADIES' LAND LEAGUE—JUDGE BARRY AND MISS M'CORMACK.

Mr. J. R. YORKE asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the following extract from the "Daily Express" of last week:—

> "A deputation of the citizens waited on Judge Barry, at his lodgings, Barrington Street, Limerick, this morning, for the purpose of requesting his Lordship to use his influence with the Government to have Miss McCormack, a member of the Dublin Ladies' Land League, released from the County Prison, where she is

detained on a waraant issued by Mr. Clifford Lloyd, special resident magistrate, in default of finding sureties of 'good behaviour;'

"Judge Barry, in reply, said that, as a judge, he could not interfere in any way whatever with the matter, and could not receive the deputation in his judicial capacity, but, as Charles Barry and a citizen of Limerick, he was always glad to see his fellow townsmen, and in that capacity alone he would use any private influence he had in forwarding the object of the deputation, and would write a private note to-day to the Chief Secretary, requesting, if it were possible to do so, that Miss McCormack should be released. The deputation thanked his Lordship for the courteous manner in which they were received, and withdrew;"

whether he had yet received the private note from the learned judge; and, if so, what answer has been returned?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): The Question I am asked to answer is, I understand, whether a certain private note has been received by the Chief Secretary. That is a matter I cannot answer.

MR. REDMOND: Will the Prime Minister state whether the Chief Secretary will be in his place at the Morning Sitting to-morrow, as that is one of the questions we are anxious should be considered before the Vote on Account is passed?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have every reason to expect that the Chief Secretary will be in his place then.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—SUB-CONSTABLE WALSH.

MR. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether, if ex-sub-constable Walsh forwards to the proper authority the certificate which he holds from the Crown Solicitor at Cork, dated the 21st December, for his expenses as witness from the 5th to the 21st December, he will receive the usual allowance; if he will now state why Walsh was ordered from Cork on 10th February, at his own expense, to Kanturk, where he was informed of his discharge, when he might have been informed of his discharge in Cork, and save the expense of such transfer, having been at the time stationed at Tuckey Street Station, Cork; and, whether any instructions will be given to make good what the man was out of pocket?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): If ex-Sub-Constable Walsh has not received his expenses from the Crown Solicitor, the Inspector General will order him the regulation travelling expenses and extra pay while absent on duty from his station. He was ordered, according to the Rules of the Force, back to his station at Kanturk, to give up his arms and other public property, to receive his pay from his own officer, and to take away his effects.

In reply to a further Question from Mr. HEALY,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) was understood to say that Sub-Constable Walsh would be allowed the regulation expenses for his journey from Cork to Kanturk.

NAVY—TROOPSHIPS.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, To state roughly the amount of first class accommodation on board the "Serapis," or any other of the five great troopships; if he can state roughly the percentage of non-combatants, other than medical officers or those of the pay department, who are carried in these vessels; also the percentage of officers not belonging to the regiments or troops on board who are generally carried on such vessels; if any great public or private inconvenience would be caused if the passage of one such non-combatant or unattached officer were paid by some other route, and if a Catholic chaplain were occasionally permitted to avail himself of the vacancy in accommodation thus created; and the average number of days the troopships take in performing the voyage to India, and if any considerable increase in speed has been attained since the pledge given on this subject by the late Government on the 1st August 1879?

MR. TREVELYAN: There is accommodation for 73 officers in cabin berths in each of the Indian troopships, which is in excess of the number required to do duty with the troops. The details as to the percentage of non-combatants cannot be given without a considerable amount of labour; but it may be assumed that it would seldom be an inconvenience to afford the accommodation of a berth in a cabin to an additional chaplain if the India Office and War Office wished that a chaplain should be embarked for the voyage. The voyage is short, being only 28 days—that is, three days less than in 1879. The voyage was accelerated in 1880.

RUSSIA—PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, since the Government decline to call on Her Majesty's Consuls by despatch to report specially on each Jewish outrage mentioned in any journal, he would state the reason why a different course should be followed in this respect than that urged upon the late Government by members of the present Government, in the case of the Bulgarian outrages; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will instruct Her Majesty's Consul at Moscow to inquire into and report on the outrages stated by the Moscow correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph" to have been committed in that city during the present month?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I have nothing to add to what the Prime Minister said on this subject in the debate lately raised by the hon. Member. As regards the second part of his Question, I have nothing to add to what I said on Thursday last.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS: May I ask the hon. Gentleman, whether it is the intention of the Government not to instruct Her Majesty's Consuls to inquire and report upon the alleged outrages?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I must repeat what I said last Thursday—namely, that it is not thought desirable to call on the Consuls to report with regard to each statement that appears in a newspaper; but that they are in the habit of making Reports without being instructed.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS: Will they report?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I can only say that Reports from Consuls have been laid before the House up to a month ago. Should any further Reports be received on the question, they will be laid on the Table in due course.

NAVY—NAVAL BARRACKS AT PORTSMOUTH.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it is the intention of the Admiralty to erect Naval barracks at Portsmouth upon the site already selected; and, if he can state the causes of the delay which has occurred in proceeding with the construction of them?

Mr. TREVELYAN: No final decision has been arrived at with reference to the construction of Naval barracks at Portsmouth. The Board wish to see the barracks at Keyham in a more forward state before they proceed to a final determination with regard to those for Portsmouth.

IRELAND — LOCAL CONTRACTS FOR UNIFORMS FOR ARMY AND OTHER SERVICES—MANUFACTURE OF UNIFORMS IN IRELAND.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Postmaster General, Whether, since the rule requiring the made up clothing to be sent over here from Ireland for inspection and approval is no longer insisted on, the Contract recently entered into has been given to an Irish firm; and, if not, whether the rejection of all tenders from Irish firms is caused by the question raised as to the hardship of requiring the clothing to be sent to London for inspection?

Mr. FAWCETT, in reply, said, he thought it right to state that, finding these matters were all managed at the War Office, he wrote to the hon. Member requesting him to put the Question to the Secretary of State for War. No doubt, the right hon. Gentleman would be able to answer it.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PERSONS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT—MICHAEL VEAL.

Mr. R. POWER asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If it is true that Michael Veal, at present a prisoner in Naas Gaol under the Coercion Act, has been prohibited receiving certain books, among others "The Life and Speeches of Daniel O'Connell" and Mr. A. M. Sullivan's "Story of Ireland;" and, if he will give instructions that these books, which are the private property of Mr. Veal, may be given to him?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): I am informed, Sir, that the Governor of the prison detained two volumes of the select speeches of O'Connell, considering them "political." I do not myself see why Mr. Veal should not have these books, and will inquire about it. No other books were detained, so far as I am informed.

MR. HEALY: What about the other book?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): No other books were detained at all.

MR. R. POWER: In consequence of that answer, may I ask the Prime Minister, If he will allow, or give instructions, that the Governor will allow Mr. O'Connell's speeches to be given to Mr. Michael Veal, remembering the fact that the Prime Minister declared on the 8th of last October—

> "That O'Connell professed his unconditional and unswerving loyalty to the Crown of England;"

O'Connell desired—

> "Friendly relations with the people of this country." "Friendship with England was the motto of O'Connell." "O'Connell on every occasion declared his respect for property."

MR. GLADSTONE: I should not like to give a positive pledge in regard to a matter of prison regulation without first having an opportunity of making inquiry. I may state, however, that there are many of O'Connell's speeches which I should very strongly recommend to the attention of hon. Gentlemen opposite from Ireland.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—CONSTABLE FORBES.

MR. METGE asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether he is aware that in the case of Constable Forbes, who was fined £3 at a court of inquiry at Kells, county Meath, for being drunk, and, consequently, lost all chance of future promotion, seven witnesses swore to his being sober, while only two witnesses swore to the contrary; whether two of the seven witnesses above mentioned were Doctors Ringwood and Sparrow, physicians of high standing; whether it is true that Dr. Sparrow swore on his oath that he "had not a doubt on his mind as to the defendant's sobriety." That "it was utterly impossible for the defendant," if drunk, "to have got sober in the time" (viz. the time which elapsed between his arrest and that at which Dr. Sparrow examined him), and, further, that, "if suffering from 'ear vertigo,' he would have all the appearance of a drunken man;" whether Dr. Ringwood swore on his oath—

> "That the defendant was suffering from 'ear vertigo,' which would cause him to sway to and fro;" "that the symptoms came on suddenly;" "that the defendant could not have stated the symptoms of 'ear vertigo' more clearly if he was a medical man;" "that the symptoms could not possibly have been caused by intoxication,"

but that, if "he had met him in the street," he might, as the head constable had done, have "mistaken his case for one of intoxication;" whether, in pursuance of Section 1,637 of the Code of Regulations, which states that

> "In cases where the Court records a finding contrary to the greater weight of the evidence, their reasons for discrediting such evidence should be stated,"

the court stated their reasons for having decided against the weight of the evidence; and, whether, seeing the hardship entailed by Constable Forbes, by reason of the record against his character, he will grant him a new trial before the bench of magistrates of Kells?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, I must apologize to you and the House for necessarily a somewhat long reply to this very lengthy Question. I am aware that seven witnesses, including two doctors, deposed to the constable's sobriety; and that two constables, by whom he was removed from duty, deposed to his insobriety. The rule of evidence is *testes ponderantur, non numerantur*, and observing that rule, no doubt, the Court acted on what they considered the reliable evidence. Neither of the doctors gave precisely the evidence attributed to him in this question. Dr. Sparrow—who saw the constable one hour and 25 minutes after the charge was made—deposed that he "examined the man by smelling his breath and walking him up and down the room," and concluded his evidence by stating that he "believed the constable was perfectly sober then." Dr. Ringwood—who saw the constable two hours after the charge was made—deposed that—

> "From the symptoms he observed, and from the unprompted history given him by the constable, he was of opinion that the swaying motion and staggering gait were caused by 'ear vertigo,' and that such symptoms come on suddenly, and have often been mistaken for the effects of drink."

The Court did not decide against the

weight of evidence. On the contrary, they decided according to the weight of the evidence, and not according to the number of witnesses examined on each side, and they pointed out that they believed the insobriety was slight in the first instance, and that in the interval the constable had recovered sobriety. In my opinion, this is entirely a matter of the discipline of the Force, which does not call for any interference by the Chief Secretary; but I am informed by the authorities that Sub-Constable Forbes does not by the fine on this occasion lose all chance of future promotion.

NAVY — PORTSMOUTH DOCKYARD — DISCHARGE OF WORKMEN.

MR. T. C. BRUCE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it is true that a large number of men were temporarily discharged from Portsmouth Dockyard last Saturday, and a further number on Thursday; and, if so, what is the reason of this measure?

MR. TREVELYAN: No men have been actually discharged from the books of Portsmouth Dockyard; but 210 men who had been entered for temporary service, and who had, when entered, been informed that they would probably be discharged at the end of the financial year, were told that they would not be required in the Yard from the 20th to the 25th instant. To-day the whole of the men will resume work. The reason for their suspension was that the Yard was £300 to £400 short of money. Orders will be given that in future the Admiralty should be specially informed from the Dockyards, at the end of the financial year, whether a discharge of workmen is in contemplation, so that the Board may use its discretion, as it has done this year in the case of Sheerness.

NAVY—THE TROOPSHIP "ASSISTANCE."

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If his attention has been drawn to the misery and discomfort attendant on the recent sea voyage of the 1st battalion Scots Guards from Dublin, lasting from 4 p.m. on the 18th instant to 3 p.m. on the 22nd instant; if it is correct that out of a total of 628 non-commissioned officers and men, 580 men were packed on the troop deck, and 48 compelled to find space where they could; if it is true that, during the whole of the voyage, not a single hammock was served out to these men; if it is also true that the washing accommodation for these 628 men was ten basins, to which access was only allowed for one hour and a-half in the morning; and, if, in addition to the above, 42 women and 95 children were packed in a space, in another part of the vessel, totally inadequate to receive them, and were subject, with the rest, to a condition of things during two days' rough weather which was neither decent nor humane?

MR. TREVELYAN: In 1875 the usual Committee of Naval and Military officers, including an officer of the Quartermaster General's Department and of the Army Medical Department, surveyed Her Majesty's ship *Assistance*, and fixed her capacity at 810 men and 142 women and children. On the occasion to which the noble Lord refers she carried 633 men and 127 women and children. It is a regulation that there should always be a guard on deck, and probably the 48 men referred to were the guard in question. Hammocks were available, and would have been issued if they had been asked for. The Quartermaster was offered to have blankets served out, but declined the offer. There were 15 basins in the troops' wash-places, which were open eight hours in the day. No complaint has ever before been received of the insufficiency of the accommodation on the *Assistance* for such numbers as were embarked on this occasion. The captain of the vessel reports, by telegraph, with reference to the voyage under consideration, that—

> "The colonel, on leaving, took the opportunity of thanking me for all the comfort on board the ship; and, being asked by me if he had any complaint, said, 'No; only regretted passage was so short.'"

PARLIAMENT — PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—THE CLOCK TOWER.

MR. SPENCER asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether, having regard to the fogs that have prevailed, he would take into consideration the advisability of having an electric instead of a gaslight in the Clock Tower?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said, that an experiment was made some time ago with the electric light at the House, with a result which was well known to them all. As the change suggested would involve some expense, and as experiments were still being made, he did not think it would be worth while to proceed with the alteration till the whole question of lighting the Houses of Parliament came up for consideration.

Mr. HEALY asked, whether it was not a fact that gas was best seen in a fog?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that was a moot point; but he thought the general belief was that the electric light was seen best in foggy weather.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT —RETURNS OF INFECTED AREAS.

Mr. HUSSEY VIVIAN asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether he will direct that the weekly Returns of infected areas under the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, which are printed for the use of the central office, shall be forwarded to the clerks of the local authorities, in order to enable them to make adequate rules for the protection of their districts, without the necessity of constantly obtaining copies of, and searching through, the London Gazette?

Mr. MUNDELLA: The Returns of infected areas are advertised in *The London Gazette* for the convenience of local authorities. It would unnecessarily increase the trouble and expense if we were to undertake to furnish printed copies of these weekly Returns to the various committees, which number some thousands.

SPAIN—COMMERCIAL TREATY—NEGOTIATIONS.

Mr. O'SHEA asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether there is truth in the statement that Her Majesty's Government have lately made serious proposals to the Cabinet of Madrid as to a Commercial Treaty, and that the Cabinet of Madrid have, in reply, proposed that city as the place of negotiation?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: In answer to the hon. Member, I have to say that the Government of Spain have expressed a wish to discuss the commercial relations of the two countries at Madrid.

TURKEY—THE HARBOUR OF SMYRNA.

Mr. W. H. SMITH asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he is now able to state the result of the negotiations with the Porte for the retrocession of the hundred pico of free landing space in the harbour of Smyrna, which were reserved to the commercial community of that port in the original concession to the Smyrna Quay Company; and when the papers which have been promised on the subject will be laid upon the Table?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The negotiations with the Porte on the subject of the free landing space in the harbour of Smyrna are not yet concluded; but Papers will be presented to Parliament in the course of the present week, and distributed early next week.

INDIA—CONVEYANCE OF STORES.

Mr. CODDINGTON asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether a Departmental Committee of the India Office recently recommended the system of public tender in respect of shipments made by the Indian Guaranteed Railways; and, if so, on what principle it has now adopted a secret system in obtaining freights for the conveyance of Government stores?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: About three years ago the system of public tender, which was already in force for India Office shipments, was recommended by a Departmental Committee for shipments, made by the Guaranteed Railways. Subsequent experience, however, had shown, as I stated last Monday, that there are objections to this system; and the change in the India Office arrangements, which I then explained, has, therefore, been made. The new system is not a secret one, and is that adopted by many large mercantile firms, as well as by other Government Departments concerned in the freight of stores. I see no reason to doubt its continuing to be satisfactory and economical.

STATE OF IRELAND — MR. MASSY, OF SUIR CASTLE.

Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If his attention has been called to the position and case of Mr. F. Massy, of Suir Castle, Golden; whether it is true that, at the request of the Government, Mr. Massy gave a piece of ground for the erection of a police hut; whether, in consequence of this loyal act, he has been Boycotted, and deserted by his domestic servants and farm labourers; and, whether the Government intend to take any steps for the relief of Mr. Massy, and to supply him with assistance to work his farm, now out of cultivation owing to his loyal aid offered to the Government?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): The Chief Secretary requests me to inform the right hon. Baronet that his attention has been given to the position and case of Mr. Massy, of Suir Castle; that it is the fact that Mr. Massy, at the request of the Government, gave a site for the erection of a police hut; and that, in consequence of this act in the interests of law and order by Mr. Massy, he has been "Boycotted," and has been deserted by his domestic servants and by his farm labourers. I have only to add that the Chief Secretary will see that anything in the power of the Government shall be done to alleviate Mr. Massy's position.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MEMBERS OF THIS HOUSE ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT.

Mr. HEALY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is a fact that a number of suspects, at present confined in Irish gaols, have been liberated on parole, in order to attend to their private affairs; and, whether he will recommend the Irish Government to release on parole the honourable Member for Cork, the honourable Member for Tipperary, and the honourable Member for Roscommon, in order that they may vote on the Clôture Resolution?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, it is a fact that certain of the prisoners in Ireland have been set at liberty in order to attend to their private affairs; but that has been done with great care, and after strict investigation. I think the House will perceive that that can constitute no precedent whatever for the liberation suggested in the Question of the hon. Member. If that liberation were granted for the division on Thursday night, there is no reason why it should not be granted for every division which takes place in this House.

NAVY—ROMAN CATHOLIC CHAPLAINS FOR TROOPSHIPS.

Colonel NOLAN asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If his attention has been called to the declaration on the 1st August 1879 of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the then First Lord of the Admiralty had a difficulty in promising to meet the wishes of the Catholic Members on the subject of Catholic Chaplains for troopships, because this subject required the authority of departments other than the Admiralty, but that he, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, speaking for himself and his colleagues in the Government, would do their best to get carried out the proposal made with regard to the appointment, in certain cases, of Catholic Chaplains to troopships; and, if the present Chancellor of the Exchequer would do his best to get carried out the promise made by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer in his official capacity?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Gladstone), in reply, said, that neither the attention of the Secretary of State for War nor of the First Lord of the Admiralty had been drawn to this subject until the Question of the hon. and gallant Member appeared. All he could say at present was that he believed there was no difficulty in providing accommodation for Catholic chaplains; and his right hon. Friend at the head of the War Department and his noble Friend at the head of the Admiralty would carefully consider the best course to be adopted.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE—THE CHANNEL TUNNEL SCHEME.

Mr. GREGORY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is understood by the promoters of the Channel Tunnels that they are proceeding with their respective undertakings entirely at their own risk, and that they will have no claim for compensation in case it should be considered necessary, for the defence of the Realm, to stop or suspend their works, or at any time to take possession of them, or of the Tunnel, when constructed, for such purpose?

Mr. GLADSTONE: In answer to this Question, I have to state that a letter was addressed on the 6th of March to Sir Edward Watkin, as Chairman of the Company which is now engaged in certain works with a view to the execution of the Tunnel, and in this letter those who are spending money on the works—that is to say, the shareholders of the Company—are informed that the Government reserves its right to use any power which it may possess in any way that may seem to be for the best interests of the country. That, I think, is the only manner in which the question can be dealt with at present. In regard to the latter part of the Question—namely, whether there is power at any time to take possession of the Tunnel when constructed—that rather presumed that arrangements have been made for the construction of the Tunnel, which at present is not the case.

MR. GREGORY: Would the Government exercise that power without the compensation?

MR. GLADSTONE: I apprehend there is no doubt of that as to the present works.

MR. O'SHEA: Has Sir Edward Watkin been informed whether he has a right to go beyond the foreshore?

MR. GLADSTONE: I believe Sir Edward Watkin is very well informed as to all matters connected with the Company over which he presides, and it is not at all necessary for us to inform him on these matters.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—THE LAND COURTS—LEGAL EXPENSES.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been directed to the letter of Mr. Bence Jones in the "Standard" of Tuesday, complaining of the excessive legal expenses incumbent upon even the most necessitous applicants to the Land Courts; whether the Government is aware that the services of a solicitor can only be secured by a payment of from £3 to £5 for the first stage of the tenant's case, and that the fee charged by valuators, whose evidence is so necessary in all contested claims, varies from £3 to £10 a day; whether this outlay is incurred even though the block in the Land Court leaves the tenant without a hearing of his case for an indefinite period of time; and, whether the Government will propose any remedy?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have obtained certain information on this matter, and the state of the case is this. The statement is that there has never been anything like the pains taken, or, I may say, the pecuniary sacrifice made, in order to cheapen litigation which have been taken by the Commissioners under the Land Act. The Commissioners have laid down a scale of fees to be paid to solicitors for work done in Court; but, of course, they cannot control payments which parties may think fit to make to their solicitors for work not directly done in Court. They have likewise thrown no difficulty whatever in the way of those tenants who may be disposed to conduct their own cases. There is no impediment thrown in their way with regard to valuators. The Commissioners state that there is a good deal of exaggeration about the fees, as they believe, that are paid by tenants to valuators. What they have to say is, in the first place, that they do not require a litigant to employ a valuator; and, in the second place, they do everything in their power to supply the place of valuators by making the personal inspection of the holding in every case they have to decide.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE—THE REPORT.

MR. JAMES HOWARD asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can give information as to the time when the Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture may be expected to be in the hands of Members?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, he had himself no information as to the time at which the Report might be expected. The Clerk of the Commission, who had no information, was, so far as he knew, the only gentleman officially connected with the Commission who was in town. That gentleman informed the Government that the Chairman and the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary were all out of town, and he had been unable to obtain any information in regard to the Report. There were, he believed, several Members of the Commission in the House, and he should therefore recommend his hon. Friend to address his Question to one of these hon. Gentlemen.

STATE OF IRELAND—MILITARY RIOTS AT GALWAY.

MR. SEXTON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to the report of a riot which is stated to have occurred in the city of Galway between soldiers belonging to the 84th and 88th (Connaught Rangers) Regiments; whether the riot has resulted in serious injury to the combatants and others; and, if he will take any special measures for the better protection of life and property in Galway?

MR. CHILDERS: From information we have received, I believe that the accounts in the newspapers have been greatly exaggerated. What has happened is that a man of the depôt of the Connaught Rangers was arrested by a picket of the detachment of the York and Lancaster Regiment now at Galway, and rescued by some men of the depôt and some civilians. In the excitement which ensued a soldier was wounded. The General commanding the district has gone to Galway to investigate the matter.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (PUTTING THE QUESTION).

RESOLUTION. ADJOURNED DEBATE.

[FOURTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [20th February],

> "That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, to be the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

And which Amendment was,

> To leave out from the first word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "no Rules of Procedure will be satisfactory to this House which confer the power of closing a Debate upon a majority of Members,"—(*Mr. Marriott,*)

—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words 'when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker,' stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

Mr. Sexton

SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD said, that he hoped the House would allow him to recall to them the exact question which was before it. Some hon. Members approached—conspicuously the Home Secretary and the hon. Member for Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey Vivian)—the question under debate as if it was a question of getting rid of those persons who wantonly placed impediments in the way of the discharge of Public Business. That, however, was not the question. The question under debate was whether a mere majority of the House should have the power to put an end to debate which was neither obstructive nor unduly repeated. If they wanted an illustration of the importance of keeping that distinction in view, they could not do better than to refer to the speech of the Prime Minister. It was idle to suppose that hon. Members on that side of the House were not heartily in accord with the Prime Minister in wishing to get rid of Obstruction. The right hon. Gentleman had pointed out the increase which had taken place in Public Business, and the necessity of devising some scheme for preventing wanton waste of time caused by repeatedly moving the adjournment and other obstructive tactics. But all these things were provided for by special Resolutions; and, therefore, do not let it be suggested and put before the country that the House was now discussing the question of whether or not the Forms of the Procedure of the House should or should not be altered, or whether they should prevent the adjournment of the House before the beginning of Public Business, or of continual Motions for the adjournment of the debate and of the House. The particular Resolution they were now engaged in discussing did not touch any of these things. Neither did it touch the question of a particular Member disregarding the authority of the Chair, or the question of a Member wantonly consuming time by tedious repetitions. All these things were specially provided for, as well as the question of Motions upon going into Committee of Supply. He had remarked, having the Paper in his hand as the Home Secretary spoke on Thursday night, that every one of the suggested cases which he gave the House as a possible course which might be pursued, and which this Rule was intended to prevent, were provided for in the other Rules which the House would hereafter have to discuss, and were not touched by this Rule. The question, therefore, which the House was now discussing, and the question which alone, it ought to be understood, was to be raised upon this debate and by this division, was that in a debate which was not obstructive, and which had not called for the intervention of the Chair, or in which no Member had continued speaking irrelevant matter, a single vote might put an end to debate, however orderly conducted. All this was to be done by the vote of a single Member. On reading through this Code of Procedure he confessed he was somewhat puzzled to know how the 1st Resolution got into its place, or how it got into the Code at all. It seemed to him as if some person had, with great care and skill, considered every form of Obstruction with which the House was familiar, and had carefully—and it might be wisely—provided for each one of them, and then that some stronger and different hand had come and placed this 1st Resolution in front of them all. He wished to say one word upon the safeguard which was supposed to be involved in the intervention of the Chair. In touching on the subject he was somewhat in a difficulty; for while what he said might be no more than justice, yet, addressed to the Chair itself, it might seem to amount to adulation. Yet for himself, and, he believed, many others, he believed that as long as the present Speaker occupied the Chair it would be very much better, in the view of great many Members of the House, that the Speaker should have the absolute decision of the question rather than leave it to that mixture of incongruous authorities by whom the suggested Resolution would be put in force. A great Party might recognize its responsibility; a single man might do so, but this system seemed ingeniously contrived to leave responsibility on neither one nor the other. No doubt anomalies might exist in any system without that system being bad. Whenever the Legislature determined to bestow the franchise, a line more or less arbitrary was drawn. But there was always a principle which dictated the point at which the division was made. What principle, however, could have suggested that 201 persons should have the power to close a debate which 200 desired to continue? But, to return to the Resolution itself, the hon. and learned Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had relied on the safeguard to be derived from the Speaker's authority, which was only to be exercised after the evident sense of the House had been shown. But how would that evident sense be apparent? Would it not be by cries from one side of the House or the other? An evident sense, it had been argued, would clearly not be that of a bare majority. But was that majority to be a majority of Members present, or what? What discretion, also, was to be allowed to the Speaker in putting the question? Upon the true construction of the Resolution he held that he had none. The words were that "Mr. Speaker may," and so on. His hon. and learned Friend, as a member of the Legal Profession, would know that the word "may," when so used in Acts of Parliament, was equivalent to the word "must," and the Speaker's discretion, therefore, amounted to nothing; otherwise, when invested with the power of closing debate Mr. Speaker deliberately refused to do so, Mr. Speaker would be acting in defiance of the evident sense of the House. He would suppose that in a particular case the Speaker, in the exercise of his discretion, came to the conclusion that it was the evident sense of the House that the debate should close. In the division, 201 voted for the closing of the debate, and 200 for its continuance. In that case the Speaker would have intervened in a mistake; because, in such a closely-balanced state of opinion, it was evidently not the sense of the House that the debate should close. The Speaker had intervened on one hypothesis, and the debate had closed on another. They would have attempted to ascertain whether the Speaker was right; they would find out that he was wrong; and then they would confirm his decision. The Home Secretary had told the House the other night that everything was decided by a majority; and the Prime Minister had said that a Government might be turned out, or a Bill passed, by a majority of 1. The hon. Member for Aylesbury (Mr. George Russell) went further, and declared that you could prevent even the introduction of a Bill by a majority. True; but not without debate. In this case the majority prevented the minority from exercising their right of discussion—a principle absolutely unconstitutional. The Home Secretary had also said this must necessarily become a Party question, and the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India also admitted it must become a Party question; but that was not what the House had been told by the Prime Minister, and was absolutely inaccurate in one view of the Rule. The Prime Minister had described the Rule to be for the purpose of regulating debate, and maintaining order, and decency, and decorum. He (Sir Hardinge Giffard) knew of no reason why, with regard to such a question as that, any political Party should refuse their acquiescence. The Government had a right to call upon the Members on that side to aid and assist in framing a system which was intended for the common benefit of all; but if they admitted it was for the purpose of aiding and assisting in carrying Party measures, they could not call upon Members on that side to help them in doing that which they believed to be injurious to the best interests of the country. Whatever might be the views of the Prime Minister, there were, he thought he might say, three other Gentlemen in the Government who, at any rate, regarded this Rule as a useful instrument in their hands for the purpose of forwarding their own particular Party views—he meant their views in favour of particular measures which were adopted by their Party and not by this—[Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: The views of the majority.] Well, but what was a majority? The views of the majority were the will of the people.

> "The will of the people practically means the will of the most numerous, or the most active, part of the people—the majority, or those who succeed in making themselves accepted as the majority. The people, consequently, may desire to oppress a part of their number, and precautions are as much needed against this as against any other abuse of power."

That was the sentiment of that champion of bigoted Toryism, Mr. John Stuart Mill. In the minds of a great many, the significance of the Rules, and particularly of the 1st Rule, was very plainly interpreted by the utterances of Ministers themselves. A right hon. Gentleman said, not long ago—

> "I do not think intelligent people can deny that we are on the eve of fresh political changes, which, I believe, might be accomplished without violence, and without danger to the foundations of our national greatness and prosperity."

He also spoke of—

> "Carrying out the beneficial work of harmonizing existing institutions with modern necessities and the spirit of the times."

That language in the mouth of the President of the Board of Trade had its significance; and it seemed to him that if the changes he hinted at were so imminent, they ought to preserve the safeguards they had in the interests of both the great political Parties, and not surrender them into the hands of Ministers who were capable of using such language. He would only say one word after what fell from his hon. and learned Friend behind him the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Stuart-Wortley), about the example of foreign countries. In some of those countries, although the House should vote for the close of a debate, yet a Minister might, if he thought fit, re-open the debate, only with the consequence that it should be concluded in the ordinary form. And that was the sort of institution which was recommended by a Minister in the English House of Commons. The value of Parliamentary debates had probably never had a more eloquent exponent than the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister himself; and it was one, and not the least significant, of the signs of the times, that what the right hon. Gentleman wrote in 1879 he had not retracted himself in 1882; but it was absolutely inconsistent with the statement of many of his followers. It might well be that if the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly equipped with this weapon he would use it only for the purpose he had described; but how would he answer for those whose objects had been declared in the country, and which had not been disclaimed by them here? One valuable quality of Parliamentary debates, which it seemed to him most important that they should bear in mind, was the fact that when everybody had been heard, as in the analogous case of proceedings in Courts of Law, when a man was beaten he would say—"Well, after all, I was right; but still I had a fair trial," the minority, as long as they believed they had fair play, and were enabled to express what their views were, were contented. But when they allowed the Party which was in the majority for the moment to intervene and say—"No, you have been sufficiently heard," would that contentment continue? It went somewhat farther than that, he thought; because if they caused discontent to Parties who were in a minority for the time, and made them believe that a measure had been passed notwithstanding their protest, and without giving them a proper hearing, the stability of those things which they had enacted was in peril. The right hon. Gentleman himself pointed that out in 1874, in speaking on the Endowed Schools Act. He would read one observation of the right hon. Gentleman, and let it not be supposed that he was reading it for the purpose of establishing any supposed inconsistency between the Prime Minister's observations then and his attitude now. He read it now because it was a valuable expression of opinion by the Prime Minister, which had not been answered, nor, as he understood, disavowed by the Prime Minister. What the Prime Minister then said was this—

> "If you consult any one of those great political writers who adorn the literature of their own countries, you will find their language respecting us uniform. When they look at our political Constitution they are struck by the multitude of obstructions which, for the defence of minorities, we allow to be placed in the way of legislation. They are struck by observing that the immediate result is great slowness in the steps we take; but when they refer to the consequences of this slowness, they find one great and powerful compensation, and it is that in England all progress is sure."—[3 *Hansard*, ccxx. 1709.]

It seemed to him (Sir Hardinge Giffard), therefore, that they were in great peril of interfering with that course of things if they adopted this Rule. Was it not a fact admitted almost by every Member of the House that the House was better governed than it could be governed under this Rule by an understanding of Gentlemen on both sides of the House? The Prime Minister could not point to a single instance in which there had been any departure from the understanding of the great body of the House that the debate upon a particular question should close upon such and such a night when the Government had expressed a desire that it should close. Of course, it was all very well for hon. Members opposite to suppose they only meant to do what was right. He was surprised to hear so moderate, so candid, and, he would add, so wise a Member of the House as the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) say he would have no objection to this Rule, provided the power of enforcing it was always placed in the hands of his own Friends. That was, of course, what they would all say; but if they were to forge an instrument of this character it might get into what would be regarded as wrong hands; and the question was, whether it should be forged? He thought there was another danger connected with this question, and that was the effect which the adoption of this Rule would have upon the public mind out-of-doors. He believed that if there was one thing which was more firmly rooted in the mind of every Englishman than another it was this—that they had a House of Commons in which they could air their grievances, and that the House would make it impossible for any Minister, however powerful, to refuse to answer if a plausible case was made out. If this popular idea were interfered with, they would be interfering with what Mr. Roebuck—not the Mr. Roebuck of later years, hon. Gentlemen opposite might not accept his authority, but the Mr. Roebuck of an earlier time—had called the "safety valve." The Prime Minister had used the same metaphor. He said—

> "It has been providentially allotted to this favoured Isle,"

—in those days a proud appeal to our favoured position was not a Jingo sentiment—

> "that it should show to all the world how freedom and authority, in their due and wise developments, not only may co-exist in the same body, but may, instead of impairing, sustain and strengthen one another. Among Britons it is the extent and security of freedom which renders it safe to intrust large powers to Government; and it is the very largeness of those powers, and the vigour of their exercise, which constitute to each individual of the community the great practical safeguard of his liberties in return. The free expression of opinion, as our experience has taught us, is the safety-valve of passion. That noise, when the steam escapes, alarms the timid; but it is the sign that we are safe. . . . . . It is a great and noble secret, that of Constitutional freedom, which has given to us the largest liberties, with the steadiest Throne, and the most vigorous Executive in Christendom. I confess to my strong faith in the virtue of this principle. I have lived now for many years in the midst of the hottest and noisiest of its workshops"

—the language was figurative; but he understood that to be this House—

> "and have seen that amidst the clatter and the din a ceaseless labour is going on, stubborn matter is reduced to obedience, and the brute powers of society, like the fire, air, water, and mineral of nature are, with clamour, indeed, but also with might, educated and shaped into the most refined and regular forms of usefulness for man."

He had sought to translate some of the metaphors; but he would not strive to render into words what were the "brute powers of society;" but he was satisfied that if the "safety-valve" was taken away the danger that metaphor suggested would surely come. There would be a great number throughout the country who would look upon this as a gagging Resolution. He hoped this instrument would retain its French name. It seemed to him to reflect a French spirit, that spirit which, as surely as night followed day, carried with it reprisals; that spirit which, ever since 1789, had made each successive Government in France impossible, because each successive Government strove to avenge itself upon its predecessor. He had heard from moderate men like the hon. Member for Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey Vivian) that the power of closing a debate would be very rarely used. That was a strange excuse for the alteration of the Constitutional principles of the House of Commons. But was it clear that the Rule would be put on the shelf? Some people seemed to think that when engaged in political discussion they would always be reasonable and willing to recognize the rights of their adversaries who formed an opinion differing from theirs. Was that view in accordance with the experience of political life of right hon. Gentlemen opposite?

Mr. HUSSEY VIVIAN, interposing, explained that all he had said was that the *clôture* would be a powerful instrument to use when it should be required.

Sir HARDINGE GIFFARD said, he had understood the hon. Member to say that it was an instrument which would be put on the shelf. If, however, it was to be used when required, where was the moderating effect of the hon. Member's argument? If it was to be used when the majority thought that it was required, and when they thought that the minority were perverse, unreasonable, and even stupid, as they had sometimes been called, he feared that it would be found to be a convenient instrument by the aid of which hon. Members opposite would be able to fulfil their desires. The fact that some of them had suggested that it would not be used, or used but rarely, showed that they distrusted their own convictions. The Home Secretary had predicted that the Government proposal would be carried by a majority. He would like to ask hon. Members opposite whether, if this were not a Party question, recommended by the Ministry of the day, they thought a majority would be obtained for such a proposal as the present one? If it had come from his own side of the House, how many hon. Members on the Ministerial side would vote for it? They had heard a good deal lately about the Parties that existed in the House and in the country; it was apparent that the old Party lines had undergone some change, and that differences existed among the constituencies represented by hon. Gentlemen opposite. Were the Moderate Liberals, who had inherited the traditions of the great Liberal Party, sure that in the time to come this fetter which they would have helped to forge would not be applied to them, when the differences to which he had alluded should have broken up Parties and brought about a crossing of Party lines? The question they were discussing was whether or not the whole tradition of the Liberal Party was to be reversed, and without the pretence of misconduct in debate, but simply from a desire to make things "more quick and satisfying," to quote the language of a Cabinet Minister, and, for the sake of assisting particular Party measures, they were to abandon the tradition of centuries, which had made the House of Commons the home of free speech? If the Moderate Liberals should think it right to aid in the forging of the proposed fetter, they would, he believed, find at no distant date that they had acted with fatal imprudence, and not more injuriously to the interests of the country than in defiance of the traditions of their own Party.

Mr. DODSON said, that though the hon. and learned Member who had just sat down had not actually sounded such extravagant notes of alarm as had emanated from many hon. Members opposite, the hypothesis underlying the whole of his speech was yet that of the extreme alarmists. They had heard from him that the effect of the Resolution would be the suppression of free speech, and that the proposed Rule was not intended to defeat Obstruction, but to put down opposition. There was, he thought, a confusion of ideas in the minds of hon. Members opposite. The freedom of speech which their ancestors asserted, the freedom of speech which had been inherited from them, the freedom of speech which the Speaker claimed at the beginning of a new Parliament, was the privilege and the right of the House to discuss any particular subjects it saw fit; and the right of Members in discussing these subjects, to express opinions freely, without fear of consequences. But this freedom of speech was not unrestricted loquacity. The Tudors and the Stuarts would not have objected to any amount of prolixity of debate, provided the House would have abstained from discussing subjects that were inconvenient, and expressing opinions that were unpalatable to the Crown. That was not freedom of speech which left the House, not under the moral influence of its most able and trusted Members, but placed it physically at the mercy of the most persistent and the most pertinacious—at the mercy of those who were most callous to the sense of what was due to themselves and to their brother Representatives. It was pointed out by the Secretary of State for India that no Member had a right to unlimited speech. The right of speech was exercised, and always had been exercised, subject to Rules, conditions, and limitations imposed by the House itself and varied from time to time. There were Rules which prevented a Member from bringing forward a subject at all under certain conditions. The Rules as to Adjournment and the Half-past 12 Rule had that effect. They were not shocked at such Rules as those; but the House was shocked at a minor proposition to close a debate on a subject after it had been fully and exhaustively discussed. In every practical Assembly—in every Assembly which pretended to be more than a debating club—there must be a time when discussion must cease, and the judgment of the House be ascertained with certainty, and expressed with authority. That was the object of this Rule—to secure that power to the House. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said that the question before them was whether a bare majority should have power to stop a debate which was neither a repetition nor Obstruction. That was a pure assumption. It was never suggested by anyone on that side that they should stop a debate which was neither repetition nor Obstruction. Then it was said that the subsequent proposals of the Government were sufficient to meet the case of Obstruction. What about the case of last year; what would have happened had the Speaker not intervened? But, apart from that, let them take the case of a Bill which must be passed by a certain date. Suppose the Mutiny Bill was met with Obstruction, would the subsequent Rules secure the passage of that Bill by the necessary day? The hon. and learned Gentleman said that the power of the initiative placed in the hands of the Speaker could not be over-estimated. But the late Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir R. Assheton Cross) made light of the initiative of the Speaker. The Speaker, he said, was only to declare the temper of the House. He (Mr. Dodson) ventured to point out that the temper of the House was not the sense of the House, any more than the temper of an individual was the sense of the individual. With all respect for the legal interpretation placed on the word by the hon. and learned Gentleman, "may" in the Resolution would not be construed to mean "shall." Hon. Gentlemen opposite assumed that this Rule was devised for Party purposes, for the suppression of discussion, for the injury of the Conservative, and the benefit of the Liberal Party. He ventured to say that if the effect of the Rule was to be as described by the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just spoken, the Liberal Party had most to suffer by its exercise. Rightly or wrongly, the Liberal Party believed their views gained by discussion; that their measures were, in the long run, advanced by the fullest discussion; and they believed, as it had been in the past, so it would be in the future. Therefore, entertaining that belief, surely they would be a most benighted set of personages if they proposed a Rule that was to have such an effect. Then, as to its being aimed at the Opposition, did hon. Gentlemen suppose the Liberals were so blind as not to know that the time must come when they would be in Opposition, and consequently, if that were the case, it might be very damaging to themselves? The hypothesis that an unworthy manœuvre could be successfully resorted to under the circumstances assumed by hon. Gentlemen to close a debate proceeded upon a series of improbabilities amounting together to an impossibility. It was assumed that the Leader of the House would signal to the Speaker to declare the sense of the House. Let them consider the position. What sort of a Speaker must they have to accept the signal? What sort of a Prime Minister must they have to give it? The Leader of the House acted under the highest responsibility; his character, position, and career were at stake. The Speaker was not less responsible than the Leader of the House. He was placed by the House in a post of judicial trust. Then the suggestion was that, at a signal from the Leader of the House, he was to betray his trust—to rise from the Chair with a lie in his mouth, and declare that it was the evident sense of the House that the Question should be now put. But that was not all; they must have men so reckless of consequences to themselves as to support such a manœuvre. Let them calculate the depth to which a Party must have sunk—[Mr. WARTON: It has sunk.]—before it lent itself to such a proceeding. What a cry it would give to the Opposition if it could only plausibly represent to the country that legitimate discussion had been burked. For behind the majority would be the public out-of-doors. For the success, therefore, of this unworthy manœuvre they must have an infatuated Minister a dishonest Speaker, an absolutely blind and reckless majority, and torpid, or utterly unintelligent constituencies. If ever they had such a combination as that, it would not much matter whether this or any other particular Resolution was standing upon the Order Book of that House or not. The Leader of the Opposition felt the absurdity of the hypothesis upon which his allies proceeded, and took different ground. He assumed that pressure from outside would be put upon Members to enforce the closing of a debate. But if the *clôture* was only to be put in operation when a debate had been so protracted that the public out-of-doors rose in sickness and indignation, reasonable liberty of speech could not be in any appreciable danger. Again, consider the position of a Speaker who, having rashly averred that it was the evident sense of the House that a debate should close, found, on a division, that only a minority was in favour of this step. He would look foolish. If it turned out that a narrow majority was in its favour his position would be even worse. He would have committed a mistake he could not retrieve, and exposed himself to imputations of partiality. The House might depend upon it that no Speaker would act in the matter, unless he were satisfied that a preponderating majority would support him when he took upon himself the responsibility of closing a debate. He saw no reason to suppose that future Speakers would be partizans, or that they would cease to be men of honour and independence. The Chair was, to a great extent, removed from Party strifes. But, even if the Speaker remained a politician and took part in the debates, there was no reason to suppose that he would exercise the power intrusted to him unfairly. The Lord Chancellor was the Speaker of the House of Lords, and remained a foremost Member of the Government of the day; yet no one would suppose that an Earl Cairns or a Lord Selborne would, even after making the most telling Party speech on the floor of the House, use his judicial power improperly for Party purposes. If he were to criticize the Amendment with the closeness with which the Resolution had been criticized, he should say that it proposed that no majority should have power to close a debate. The hon. and learned Member said he hoped the French name of *clôture* would be retained. If they were to quarrel with a thing because it had a French name, they would have to quarrel with several good things which were not altogether inappropriate to an hour which was not far distant; and were they to object to "Parliament," which was a French word? The hon. and learned Gentleman said the institution was French; but it would be more correct to say that the power of closing a debate was European and American, and that it had been adopted in almost every one of those Parliamentary Assemblies which had been based on the model of our own. But if they wanted an English name, closure was an English word. The word could be found in Johnson's Dictionary, and he supposed hon. Members would allow that Shakspeare and Pope knew something of English, and they were authorities for the word closure. But he neither accepted nor rejected the Resolution because it had a French name or was a French institution, or because it had an English name or had been an English institution. He supported the Resolution because he thought it was suited to the circumstances of the case. As a matter of fact, not only had they the word closure, but they had the thing, to a certain extent, in that House. What was a "count out" but the closing of a debate? and what did the hands of the clock do at a quarter to 6 o'clock on Wednesday but close a debate? It was perfectly true they did not provide for the coming to a decision on a question; but that used to be effected by an understanding between opposing Parties in the House, when they all felt that a subject had been sufficiently discussed; and when that was the case, it was the practice always for the minority, although unconvinced by the arguments of their opponents, to allow the debate to be stopped, and to accept the decision of the House. For reasons which were apparent to all, it was now considered that an explicit Resolution of this kind had become necessary to secure to the House the just and reasonable power of bringing a debate to a conclusion, when the matter had been fully discussed, and was ripe for determination. It had been urged that this subject should not have been made a Party question; but who was to blame for having made it a Party question? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon and the late Home Secretary had, early in the autumn, announced their intention of opposing any proposal of this kind to the utmost, and their cry had been followed by their Party. The truth was that this Resolution was necessary to enable the House to get through the multiplicity of its own Business, and to become master of its own time. It had been said that though Foreign Assemblies had the *clôture* we did not want it, and the reason given was that we had more Business. It was just because of that that it was necessary to have some Rule, in order that the House might be master of its own time. There never was an Empire which was so extended and diversified as this; and yet, while their possessions abroad were extending, their foreign relations increasing, and their commercial interests multiplying, Parliament was so far from showing a disposition to relax its hold on domestic matters, over which it had heretofore exercised control, that it seemed rather disposed to take more of those affairs into its keeping. On the whole, he believed that the Resolution would prove beneficial in its working; and he hoped, therefore, that it would be accepted by the House.

Sir JOHN MOWBRAY said, that hon. Members on the Opposition Benches had been charged with holding extravagant views on the Rule under discussion; but he was not inclined to be classed among that number. The loudest note of alarm had been sounded by the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down. In the early part of his speech the right hon. Gentleman spoke of the *clôture* as the minor proposition; and if that Resolution for gagging the House were the minor proposition, one would like to know what were the major propositions that were to follow when that had been forced upon the House? Speaking in no Party sense, he (Sir John Mowbray) deeply deplored the position into which this question had drifted. He lamented the paralysis of Business in the House, and thought the Prime Minister had a right to complain, as Leader of a large majority, that he had lost the credit of being able to carry three or four good legislative measures in one Session. He also thought the Prime Minister was right in not relegating this question to a Committee. The conclusions of Committees had generally been impotent and their results inconsiderable; but he had fully expected that the right hon. Gentleman would have consulted the Leader of the Opposition before taking action, so as to have insured the carrying of the necessary proposals by a large majority. It was also to be regretted that, contrary to the assurances given by the Prime Minister during the Recess, this had been made a Party question. If it had not become a Party question, what was the meaning of those threats of a Dissolution which had been spread so largely about the House to terrify young and weak Members on the Liberal Benches? The Opposition were not terrified by those threats, because they knew that the result of a Dissolution would be to add to their numbers. Then there was a talk about resignation. In that he (Sir John Mowbray) did not believe; if he did, he candidly confessed he should deeply deplore it. Members were asked to consider this as a question of credit and of supporting the Government, and were not allowed to deal with it on its merits. ["No!"] Of that there could be no doubt after the speeches of the Secretary of State for India and the Secretary of State for the Home Department. The Head of the Government had admitted the loyal support which was given to the Government during several trying weeks of last year, and they were now ready to give similar support to any reasonable proposition submitted to them. But what they had mainly to complain of was that the Resolution, as presented them, looked very much as if it were brought forward by one Party in order to diminish the strength of the other. After what had occurred, he admitted that the House was bound to do something this Session; and he felt grateful to the Speaker for vindicating the credit of the Assembly on a recent unparalleled occasion, and recognized that it was its duty to do something to restore its order and dignity; but what was the way in which these Resolutions had been brought forward? Following the *clôture* Resolution, there were others which he was decidedly inclined to support; but Members were not allowed to consider one of those. The Prime Minister had put in the forefront of all these a single Resolution most obnoxious and repugnant to the feelings of old and experienced Members of the House, and so objectionable to some Members around him that they had to be coerced in order to obtain their votes. That Resolution was put forward as a thing which admitted of no modification, concession, or compromise—the Government must have the Resolution, the whole Resolution, and nothing but the Resolution. For his own part, although it would be the last step he should wish to see the House take, he was prepared, if the necessity should arise, to see adopted a proposal for closing debates in certain circumstances by a proportional majority. He was not prepared to oppose *clôture* under all circumstances; but *clôture* of a bare majority should have his irreconcilable resistance so long as he had a vote in the House. He did not admit the necessity for such a violent step as the passing of the 1st Resolution. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary had stated that the Resolution was necessary in order to vindicate the ancient fame of the House of Commons. For his own part, he not believe that that ancient fame would be vindicated by any such step as that proposed. It would best be vindicated by walking in the old paths. He recollected a memorable speech made by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister nine years ago. The Liberal Government had been defeated in 1873 on the Irish University Bill, and the right hon. Gentleman resigned Office. His resignation, however, was not accepted, and in announcing his return to Office the right hon. Gentleman could only find expression for his feelings by quoting the words of the Roman General in the noble ode of Horace—

> "Neque amissos colores
> Lana refert, medicata fuco:
> Nec vera virtus, cùm semel excidit,
> Curat reponi deterioribus."

Those words would now be a sufficient answer to the right hon. Gentleman. If the ancient tone and high character of the House of Commons had departed, they would not be brought back by any device imported from our Colonies, or from foreign countries, or by any electro-plate wash of Birmingham manufacture. If the true virtue and ancient fame of the House had gone from it they would not be restored by the mechanical aid of a gagging *clôture*. Under the *clôture* a deteriorated House of Commons would cease to be the illustrious Assembly that for six centuries had enjoyed the confidence and esteem of the English people, commanded the respect of foreign countries, and built up the fabric of England's greatness.

Mr. WODEHOUSE said, that he would not further pursue the controversy by whose fault the subject under discussion had become a Party question; rightly or wrongly, avoidably or unavoidably, it had become a Party question, and there was no hope now of its ceasing to be so; but nothing was more remote from his own desire than to approach it in the spirit of Party. It had been said that the proposal contained in the Resolution was the device of an imperious Minister, whose impatient spirit would brook no opposition; but it was notorious, and they had heard it from the Prime Minister's own lips, that he had been one of the slowest and most reluctant to be convinced of the necessity for such a change. It had also been said that the closure was wanted by the Government as an engine to enable them to fulfil a Party programme of Liberal legislation. But under a system of Party Government every Government would have a Party programme. It was no reproach to them to endeavour to fulfil it; indeed, if they acted otherwise they would culpably betray the hopes of those whose confidence placed them in power. It was contended by the Party opposite that the Government should abandon the 1st Resolution, and rely exclusively on the other proposed Rules respecting Procedure. The answer to that contention could best be given in the words of a high authority—the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote). In February, 1880, the right hon. Gentleman made a speech in which, while expressing a strong repugnance to restrictions on freedom of debate and the rights of minorities, he said—

> "I do not know that we have arrived at a perfect set of Rules; and I have no doubt that there are matters upon which we may have new Rules; and we may, from time to time, propose new Rules, and consider and discuss them. But if we think that by such Rules we are to prevent Obstruction altogether, we are reckoning in the dark. There is only one alteration of our Rules which would be of a character that really could prevent Obstruction, and that is one for which we have no English name, but which is known to us all under the name of the *clôture*."

Here was a distinct admission from the right hon. Gentleman that the closure was the only thoroughly effective check upon Obstruction. Again, at Manchester, in June last, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "We have had, this Session, to deal with a state of things which I fully admit is unprecedented in the history of Parliament, and which I also admit, if it should be proved to be permanent, will be a great blow and a great injury to the House of Commons, and will render necessary the adoption of measures which, if we possibly could, we would avoid introducing into our system."

That was just the question. Could they longer postpone the adoption of those measures? Every right-minded man must deeply lament the loss of that excellent closure which the House once possessed, given to it as a freewill offering by the spontaneous discipline and loyalty of all its Members. But that was gone; and what hope was there that it would ever return? Unless remedies were promptly applied, things would grow worse rather than better. There were innocent agents of Obstruction, and other agents the reverse of innocent. The pressure of both kinds would increase rather than diminish. The magnitude and growth of national affairs, and the general operation of democratic influences, would make increasing contributions to the block of Business. And there was a Party in the House avowedly ready, in the very words of their own Leader, utterly to disorganize and interfere with every Business. This policy was not a mere rejoinder to the Coercion Acts; it was proclaimed at a time when the Government were trying to govern Ireland without a Coercion Act; and the policy would survive if the Coercion Acts were repealed tomorrow. They were told that at the next Election the followers of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) would be largely reinforced. If that boast were well founded, it was the strongest argument for setting their House in order before the new comers arrived. Penal Rules directed against individual offenders were effective only against the coarser modes of Obstruction. To show how inoperative mere Penal Rules would be against subtle and scientific Obstruction, the following extract from *The Nation* would be instructive—

> "The present legislative arrangements between England and Ireland cannot stand. They are unsuited to the requirements of the two countries; they are behind the age. If additional proof on that point is wanted, the Irish Members can supply it in any single Session. It is not putting the case too strongly to say the British Legislature is very much at their mercy. Against their will Business cannot go on. Without having recourse to open, gross, palpable Obstruction, they can so clog the wheels of the machine that it will do next to nothing; can bring great numbers of Irish Bills into the House of Commons—good, desirable, and useful Bills—and proceed to their discussion; they can interest themselves in English Bills of all sorts, Imperial and local, public and private, and debate them in the most painstaking and conscientious manner. A very proper course of action this, open to no Constitutional objection, quite legitimate, and perfectly in order; but the result of its adoption would be that little or nothing would be done."

No penal laws could touch this kind of

Obstruction. They had heard much about the degradation which would be inflicted on the House by the closure; but was there no degradation in the thought that the British Legislature could be truly said to lie at the mercy of its worst enemies? The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) was reported to have said last year that for every arrest under the Coercion Act the Irish Members would fine the Government a night of the time of the House of Commons; in other words, that because the Government exercised certain powers with which they had been armed by Parliament for the public good, the time of the House of Commons was to be deliberately wasted. Could any hon. Member opposite be insensible to the degradation of such a state of things as that? Looking at the question from a mere Party point of view, would not the closure operate in the long run more to the advantage of the Party opposite than to the Liberal Party? There was "another place," even in this world, which many Liberals believed to be paved for the most part with bad intentions; and would the permanent Conservative majority in that "other place" ever hesitate to throw its shield over a Conservative minority in the House of Commons, if they thought that time and reflection would bring the country round to their side? When the Liberals were in a minority they had no powerful auxiliaries elsewhere. They had been warned of "stonewalling," "filibustering," and other Foreign and Colonial practices which would be introduced if the closure were adopted; but no attempt had been made to trace the origin of those practices to the closure. He believed that they proceeded from other more general causes, and that, where they and the closure existed side by side, the closure was valued as a check upon them. They were also told that the closure would convert every Member of a gagged minority into an Obstructive, and even the hon. Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter) had threatened to turn Obstructive under such provocation. He did not think that the hon. Member would ever fulfil that threat; he believed rather that the hon. Member would do what he always did at the critical moment—he would run into the nearest cave he could find. The objections of hon. Members opposite to the closure would soon vanish after they had once had an opportunity of applying it to a Liberal minority, and a few years hence neither Party would be willing to abandon it. For his own part, he should prefer a simpler form of closure to that now proposed—a closure, for instance, subject only to two limitations—first, that it should not be carried except in a House of a certain size; and, secondly, that the Chair should have the same discretion in putting the Question to the vote as was given to the Chair under the Rules of Urgency as to putting Motions for Adjournment to the vote. In his opinion, the growing sensitiveness of the House to the breath of public opinion was the best safeguard against the abuse of the closure. The abuse of the power of closing a debate would inevitably recoil on those who practised it. As far as right of speech in that House was concerned, a most complete gag had been put on one of the Members for Northampton; but was he silenced, and had they heard the last of him? or was he less conspicuous than when he sat and spoke there? Nothing of the kind. If Mr. Bradlaugh had spent an enormous sum annually in advertising his Atheistical publications and his treatises on domestic philosophy, he could not have done as much to extend their notoriety as the House had done, free of charge. Though the Opposition had renounced Mr. Bradlaugh and all his works, they had invested him with a European and Transatlantic fame, and he now filled a space in the public gaze second only to that other friend of the people so rudely expelled from their shores—second only to "Jumbo." The surest way in this country to swell the number of a man's adherents, or even of a beast's adherents, was to give him the chance of posing as a martyr; and any minority which had been unjustifiably gagged in that House, would have its ovations out-of-doors. Freedom of speech, it was said, was the ancient glory of the House of Commons. He did not deny it; but he would rather say that the true glory lay in the sober, temperate exercise of that freedom, and in the uses to which it was turned. Every Member was free to speak at any length on any question; but if they all exercised that glorious freedom not many weeks would elapse before a hurricane of national indignation would awake, and this famous old ship would go down with all hands on board in the wild waves of its glory. Let them be wise in time. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) justly observed the other night that this House was becoming more and more the practical Executive Government of the country. But, surely, the first duty of an Executive authority was not to talk, but to act. An Assembly like this House, arrogating to itself Executive functions, and extending its long arm to the farthest bounds of a world-wide Empire, could not live by freedom of speech alone. If such a Body surrendered itself to unlimited talk it would not only evoke the indignant scorn of mankind, but it would also become a fountain of confusion and calamity as wide as the range of its interference. It was whispered abroad that the House was no longer what it once was; that the tide of its renown had begun to ebb; and if that allegation were true its causes were not far to seek. They all knew where they lay. It was not yet too late to redeem the name and fame of the House of Commons; but the opportunity might soon pass away, never to return. The issue was whether this illustrious Assembly, where freedom and order should be worshipped with an equal devotion, should slowly but surely sink into a degraded arena of adventurers and demagogues, or whether it should now, by a strong effort, renew the vigour and the splendour of its prime? With such an issue before them could they hesitate—could they pause? And persuaded, as he was, that nothing less than the proposals of the Government would be adequate to the end in view, he earnestly asked the House to sanction those proposals by decisive votes.

MR. GRANTHAM said, he thought the hon. Member who had just sat down had spoken with great moderation; but, at the same time, he had not, in his opinion, contributed anything in favour of the Motion before the House, as his arguments had practically answered each other. The hon. Gentleman seemed to argue, when he referred to the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), that that House ought to open its portals to any individual, however objectionable he might be, because otherwise his principles and writings would become more widely known than before. The hon. Member ridiculed the position which the hon. Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter) had taken up, saying that whenever there was any fear of a storm that hon. Member ran into the first cave. In point of fact, however, the hon. Member for Berkshire was doing exactly that which the hon. Member for Bath had shown was the wisest thing for Liberal Members to do at the present time, for the hon. Member for Bath said that a hurricane was brewing in this country, and that unpopular Members ran a risk of going down in it. He thought there was a very strong feeling among the Liberal Party that this Rule was not necessary at the present time. The Prime Minister contended that both the overwork of the House and the Obstruction to which it was subject rendered the *clôture* necessary; while the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India avowed that he wished for it in order to put down certain hon. Members whom he regarded as bores; and the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary spoke of it as an efficient weapon against the existing powers of Obstruction hitherto lying dormant and unused, but which he unfolded with evident relish, as they reminded him of his days in Opposition, and in reference to which he would no doubt, soon find the Irish Members very apt pupils; so that there was, apparently, no complete agreement between these three Ministers, all of whom supported the Resolution for such very different reasons. The speech of the Prime Minister was, of course, interesting, not only for its own intrinsic merit, but as the work of a man whose great experience of the House added weight and value to his arguments. Their experience of the past 20 years had, however, shown them that the right hon. Gentleman constantly changed his views, and was from time to time led, by the pressure of circumstances, to discredit opinions that he had recently believed to be infallible. With regard to the question of overwork, it was to be noticed that the number of hours during which the House sat each Session was not a fair test of the amount of work to be done. It was true that in 1832 the House sat for 1,150 hours, and at a later period for 930 hours only, while last year the numbers went up to as many as 1,400; but that was no proof of the House rebelling against overwork. After the Reform Bill, as was natural and desirable, came a period of considerable energy, followed by a time during which the inaction of the House only reflected the lethargic manner in which the country regarded political questions; and even now, but for the Irish difficulty, the House would pursue the even tenour of its way. The country did not desire, as had been said, the passing of so many new measures. Obstruction of the kind adopted by certain of the Irish Members, and not overwork, was the only excuse for the Resolution. There could be no question, however, that the House might, if it chose, grapple with that difficulty without adopting the *clôture*, and that much might be done by such minor reforms of Procedure as were judiciously and successfully introduced by Melbourne and Peel, men who were as worthy of respect in their day as the present eminent Leader of the House. The excessive numbers of Questions asked might, for instance, be much reduced, and much time might be saved by merely printing the Ministerial answers; for the pleasure of questioning seemed to depend very much on the publicity of the Question and the reply. The Prime Minister had reminded the House that 58 nights of last Session were devoted to the Land Bill, and had argued from that fact that the *clôture* would have been found useful. Now, it was admitted that the Land Act was so imperfect as to be urgently in need of amendment; but how would it have been improved or rendered more durable by curtailing the time and attention that were actually spent upon it? The truth was that an act of such importance, an act which so altered the existing relations of the bulk of the population of a country, ought not to be passed in one Session. The effect of the various propositions contained in the many sections of such an Act could not be ascertained without being sifted through many minds and months of consideration. How was the Ballot Act of 1877 passed? It was practically passed by means of the *clôture*, for a meeting of the Liberal Party was held, and it was agreed that all Liberal Members should take their Amendments off the Paper and allow the other side to carry on the discussion alone, so as to get the Bill through the Commons. By that means the Bill was passed in time to be sent to the House of Lords, not a single Conservative Amendment having been accepted by the Government. It was, however, thrown out in "another place." The consequence of that was that the Government had time to consider the objections which had been raised to it, and to considerably modify their own opinions in regard to it; and thus they were enabled in the following Session to introduce a Bill essentially superior to it, and that passed into law. In the same way he thought it would have been better if the Irish Land Bill had been thrown out last year, so as to give the Government time and opportunity to prepare a measure more perfect and just. He would, however, ask this—Supposing the *clôture* had been in force last Session, and applied so as to put a stop to the objections of the Irish Members sitting below the Gangway, what would those Gentlemen have said of the measure? They would have had just ground for saying that they had not been treated with fair play; and no one would have been surprised if they had endeavoured not only to do all in their power to prevent its becoming law, but also in frustrating its working after it had become law. Then as to the operation of the Rule, if the Government succeeded in carrying it. Was it only to be applied to the second and third readings of Bills and great debates? In that case it would have little effect in saving the time of the House. But if it were to be a constant weapon in the hands of the Government, and was to be used in the manner indicated in the speech of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India, then there would at once be an end of that freedom of debate which had been their boast for so many years. If the evident sense of the House was only to be declared by the Chair, when it was clear that there was a great majority in favour of the debate being closed, then he wanted to know why the Government had wasted their time and insisted on forcing on an unwilling House a Resolution which would never be put in force, when a Resolution of sufficient power to effect such an object would have passed almost *sub silentio.* Was it likely that any Speaker would ever take upon himself to state that it was the evident sense of the House that a debate should be closed without relying on the strict letter of the Resolution, as it might turn out that he was wrong? He maintained that there must be some meaning in the words of the Resolution with reference to the evident sense of the House, and that its meaning was that the evident sense of the House was to be determined by a vote of, perhaps, 201 against 200. If the *clôture* were to be used in that manner, then, to use the language of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, that which was a hateful incident, and would be a hateful incident, of the Gladstone-Chamberlain Administration, would become the daily life of the Radical Government of the future. The Prime Minister had founded the proposal, in a great measure, on the number of pressing measures requiring to be dealt with. He had told the House that in 1878 he wrote in a certain periodical stating that there were 22 important measures requiring immediate attention. Then, in 1879, he says he discovered 31, and in his celebrated Mid Lothian campaign he stated the number he found was something like 40. If so, why did the right hon. Gentleman not introduce those measures when he was last in Office? There was no Obstruction then, for he had himself admitted that it did not show itself till 1878-9, when the Conservative Government was in power. But the country had not asked for those measures, and, therefore, they had not been passed. The right hon. Gentleman had also made a strong argument with reference to the Select Committees that were appointed to consider this question. Those Committees were composed, not of partizans, but of men supposed to be eminent in their knowledge of the Rules and practice of the House, and of what changes it was desirable the House should make in its Procedure. Yet the Government now wanted to do what none of those Committees thought desirable. It was strange that they should have gone on for so many centuries without requiring the change now proposed. The whole feeling which animated the House enabled the two rival Parties to arrange when the debate should be closed; and, for his part, he did not believe that the old traditional feeling of respect for the House, which used to exist in the House, had yet died away. It might be that there was a break in their traditions; but when the difficulty with regard to Ireland was settled, he believed they would find that the old feeling still existed, and that they would be able to go on for many years before any such Rule as this was necessary. Some reference had been made by a preceding speaker to Jumbo. In his opinion, the *clôture* much resembled Jumbo. They were afraid that, like Jumbo, it might become mischievous in the future, and they would rather not put such a power in the hands of the Government. The Prime Minister was very much in the position of a host who, having provided an ample supply for his guests, insisted when they had sat down to the entertainment that they should make their dinner entirely from the first article in the *ménu*, which he might call *clôture de bouche à la radicale.* He believed that in the Resolutions which were to follow the one under discussion they might obtain everything that was necessary for amending the Procedure of the House; and, therefore, he thought they ought not to rush headlong on that which was so objectionable as the Rule now proposed. He felt very strongly that they were not being dealt with fairly in having that Resolution forced upon them when, apparently, there was no difference between them as to the way in which they thought the Business of the House should be conducted. He therefore regretted that the Leader of the Opposition had not been consulted on that question; because he felt sure that that right hon. Gentleman would have done all he could to sink mere Party differences and to assist the Government in arriving at some common conclusion which would have been satisfactory to both Parties. The responsibility of making that a Party question really belonged to the Government; because in their autumn speeches it was announced by leading Members of the Ministry that they intended to have the *clôture*, or something like it. The Government might now obtain a small majority, and their victory, however slight, might be cheered by hon. Gentlemen opposite; but the echo of those cheers would be but as the clank of the chains that would enslave freedom of debate in that House. [*A laugh.*] The hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers), who laughed, should remember that half the benefits of modern legislation had been conferred by minorities who had refused to be put down, and who persevered until they were ultimately successful. The men by whom Catholic Emancipation, the repeal of the Corn Laws, and many other great measures had been persistently advocated might have been treated as "bores" and Obstructives under a system of *clôture* enforced by a bare majority. The course of the present discussion showed that a different form of the *clôture* from that now proposed would be sufficient. The speeches of the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) and other hon. Gentlemen opposite indicated that they were favourable to a two-thirds majority, or some other more moderate mode of discovering the sense of the House than the vote of a bare majority. In conclusion, he hoped that, if not in the first division, at least in some of the divisons that would follow, they would still find that there was enough freedom among the Liberal Party to secure the passing of a Resolution which would carry with it the evident sense of the House.

Mr. THOROLD ROGERS said, he would not have intruded on the debate had it not appeared to him that he might perhaps be able to say something that had not been said before, and so avoid those useless repetitions against which these Resolutions were aimed. It might be inferred from some of the Opposition speeches that the Resolution gave the Prime Minister power, for his own purposes, to interpose between the House and a debate, and summarily to close the latter; but on looking at the Resolution he was entirely re-assured, for all that it did was to make the Speaker or the Chairman the judge of the evident sense of the House, and neither could take the initiative without derogation to his high Office if he had failed to perceive or to find out what the evident sense of the House really was. He therefore concluded that it would be impossible for the action spoken about in the Resolution to be taken unless the evidence of the sense of the House was unmistakable and overwhelming. It had never been the practice of the House for a Speaker to take part with the majorities against the minorities. Throughout all the annals of the House of Commons, only one Speaker had failed in his duty to the House, and his consideration for those who spoke in it. The solitary exception occurred in 1629, when Speaker Finch refused to put a Question to the House, because he had received the King's commands, and he got impeached for his pains afterwards. The fact was that the opposition to this Rule was directed against the Chair, and the permanent traditions that had been attached to it. It had been assumed throughout that the Speaker and his successors would fail in their duty to the House; that they would forget the traditional fairness which had always been shown to minorities; that they would neglect the duties intrusted to them; and that the Speaker or his successors would lend themselves, for mere Party purposes, to the worst and most fatal Party purposes. For his own part, he did not believe that the Speakers of the future would be inferior to those of past times in impartially discharging their duties. The Speaker had the right to choose the speakers in a debate. He had never heard of that right being abused; and yet it was quite within the Speaker's power to decline to see those Members who might wish to rise and address the House. It had been assumed that what the Government proposed was a novelty. It was really a revival, in a limited form, of the power which the Speaker formerly possessed, for the Rules of 1610 laid down that the Speaker could put, without debate, the Question to the House, and ask the House whether they would hear the speaker further, or listen to further speeches. It was quite clear, from the works on Parliamentary Procedure, that this right or duty of the Speaker embodied in the ancient Rules was continued and well known until about a century ago. The Government were re-affirming that the Speaker possessed this power of asking the House to determine, without debate, whether, in their opinion, a subject had been sufficiently discussed. The work of Sir Erskine May was the first in which the Rule he had been referring to was left out. It was superseded by an understanding being entered into between the officials and past officials as to the time when a debate should terminate and who should be the speakers. They were told that the Rule now proposed was an invasion of the rights of minorities; but was there any rational person who believed that the Speaker would degrade the dignity of his Office by lending himself to the stifling of a fair debate on any subject, however small the minority might be? It was impossible to believe that the present Speaker or any of his successors would be guilty of such a gross dereliction of duty. The old Rule to which he had referred was still recognized in a lame and halting manner in the Rule passed in February, 1880, for the purpose of applying some remedy for an acknowledged evil. It was true that in the Legislature of the United States one-third of the House was required for the purpose of negativing a Motion that the debate be closed, but the Speaker there was chosen on distinct partizan grounds; whereas the Speaker of the House of Commons was never chosen on such grounds. They were told that the country was alive to the serious hindrance which this Rule would be to the freedom of debate. The country was much more alive to the serious hindrance to the progress of Public Business, and they knew very well the source from which these hindrances proceeded. He did not believe that the opportunity for exercising the Rule would be very frequent. There must be manifestations of prodigious impatience before the Speaker would take any step; and he must be further convinced that the time of the House was trifled with—he must, in short, feel that nothing could warrant a continuance of the debate. Though they might not often draw the sword of Justice, it was very desirable that they should have it in their power to do so; and so, though this Rule might not be often used, it was of great importance that they should have such an instrument for maintaining the character of their debates. He himself would have supported the *clôture* even if it had been in a stronger and more emphatic form.

MR. J. A. CAMPBELL said, hon. Members on his side were all anxious that Obstruction should be prevented, and that the Forms of the House should be improved for the facilitating of Business. It had been said that the office of the House was not to speak, but to act. It was, no doubt, important that they should do legislative work; but it was equally important that that should be done in such a way as to satisfy the country that it had been deliberately and well done. It appeared to him that there was a necessity for separating between the intention of this Resolution, and the probable—almost inevitable—effect of its operation. Sometimes it had been defended on the ground of the intention with which it had been brought forward. But at other times they had heard arguments for it which seemed to be based upon the effects which it was expected to produce, and which effects, he thought, were inconsistent with the intention with which it had been brought forward. One very important point was to know what was meant by "the evident sense of the House." They had an explanation of that phrase from the Prime Minister himself, who, in introducing this subject, had used the expression "the unquestioned will of the House," and this expression he had explained by adding—"not the will of one Party in the House, or of a mere majority, but what may be called, in the phrase of one of the Resolutions, 'the evident sense of the House.'" It appeared, therefore, that this phrase—"the evident sense of the House"—meant something more than the will of one Party, or of a mere majority; and they must assume that the intention of the Government was to give effect to that general sense of the House, and to nothing less. But what they complained of was that the Resolution was not consistent with that intention. It was proposed in the Resolution that, in certain circumstances, effect might be given to the will of a mere majority. That, not to speak of other objections, was directly opposed to what they must assume to be the intention of the Government in bringing forward the Resolution. But then it was said that the case of carrying the *clôture* by a mere majority was not likely to happen. It was sufficient objection, however, if the Rule admitted of it happening. But let them see whether it was an impossible thing that it should happen. The Prime Minister spoke of an objection taken to the Rule in this respect as absurd, and as involving a moral impossibility. The Prime Minister thought it morally impossible that the Speaker, seeing 200 one way and 201 the other way, should take that for the evident sense of the House, and act accordingly. That would, indeed, be morally impossible, as they could not conceive of the Speaker, seeing the House so equally divided, saying that it was the evident sense of the House that the debate should close. But it was possible, and conceivable, that the Chair might make a mistake. He spoke with all respect for the Chair. The Chair might make a mistake in interpreting the impatience of the House. He presumed the desire to stop a debate would be intimated by a manifestation of impatience. But there was the difficulty to be overcome of deciding how much of that impatience was directed against the Member who was addressing, or endeavouring to address, the House, and how much against a continuance of the debate. These were two very different things. Then there was another difficulty in interpreting the preponderance of voices in the House. Sir Erskine May, in 1871, when asked by the Select Committee whether the Speaker or Chairman might be intrusted with a power of putting a Question if, in his opinion, "a decided expression of voices" was in favour of it, replied—"No; because the giving of the voices was so very uncertain and indistinct." If this Resolution were passed, a difficulty of an opposite kind would beset the Chair. Any manifestation of impatience at present was intended to have its effect merely on the Member who was addressing the House. Clamour had no direct influence on the decision of the House; but pass this Resolution, and would not clamour and counter clamour become directly influential? They would then be in danger of having what the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) described as manifestations of prodigious impatience. They were told there was not now the same loyalty and deference to the general feeling of the House as formerly. He was afraid, if they passed this Resolution, there would be, at least, no improvement in that respect. Then, it was said, why should not a majority rule? and they had been told how many important measures had been carried by a mere majority. Well, the answer was obvious. The majority, certainly, might rule; but after debate. There was an implied condition in their proceedings that there must be full debate before there was a decision. If it was said that on this principle the House might never come to a decision at all—that a debate might be carried on *ad infinitum*—it might be replied that the one extreme was not more absurd than the other, and that on the principle of it being in the power of the majority to stop a debate when it pleased, why not dispense with debate altogether? Why not, after ascertaining that there was a majority, pass all the Bills introduced by the Government, without debate? It was said that, after all, the introduction of the *clôture* was not a formidable thing, for they virtually had it at present; but the *clôture* they had now was by consent of Parties—a very different thing from the Rule proposed by the Government. On every ground it was desirable, if there was to be *clôture* at all, that it should be by the act of the general body of the House, and nothing less—desirable for the influence of the Chair, desirable for the amenities of Parliamentary life, and desirable for the value of Parliamentary decisions. If a debate was brought to a close by a vote representing the general sense of the House, it would be accepted as an act of the House; but if it were closed by a vote representing less than that—a vote representing the will of one Party, or a mere majority—then it would be received as a Party move, and would be resented accordingly. Why, then, if *cloture* was to be introduced, was it not proposed on the lines of the Order of last Session, requiring a majority of 3 to 1? The Prime Minister objected to "an artificial majority constructed in ingenious ways." That, he said, did very well last year, the features of the occasion being peculiar; but was not the *clôture* intended now only for peculiar and extraordinary occasions? This, at least, might be said—that to adopt the principle of last Session's Order, and require a majority of 3 to 1, would be consistent with what they assumed was the intention of Government—with making the Rule applicable only to the occasion when there was in its favour the evident sense of the House. And yet, while the condition of requiring a certain proportionate majority was set aside as inapplicable to present circumstances, this very Resolution contained in one part of it the condemned principle. The House was already familiar with the eccentricities of the arithmetical puzzle contained in the Resolution. He would not refer to that matter further than to call the attention of the House to the curious result that, according to this Resolution, while a minority, however small, might successfully resist a majority of 100, and while a minority of 40 would successfully resist a majority of 200, a minority of 200 would be helpless against any majority, even against a majority of only 201. The Home Secretary compared the *clôture* to the hydrants and hose which were had ready in case of fire; but the illustration was not altogether perfect. Hydrants and hose were not likely to be used except in case of fire; there was no temptation to use them—there was every inducement not to use them—until they were absolutely necessary. But it was different with the *clôture.* There might be a desire to put it in force before there was necessity for it. There might be a simulation of fire for the sake of bringing the hose into play. What was to be feared was that under the operation of this Resolution, if it were carried, Parliaments might come to forget the intention with which the *clôture* was introduced; and, being found a convenient mode of extinguishing debates, it might be put in use whenever it suited the convenience of the Party which had the majority. But was the *clôture* necessary? The principal evils which obstructed Business were to be remedied, as had been shown, by the other Resolutions, on which there would not be much difficulty in bringing the House to a general understanding, and which need not be, and were not likely to be, discussed in a Party spirit. Several experienced Members had expressed the opinion that if these other Resolutions were passed, it would not be necessary to introduce the *clôture* in any form whatever; and certainly it would appear reasonable not to make the *clôture* the first step, but a last resort, and, therefore, allow it to be one of those measures which the House might adopt in future years, if the other reforms which were about to be proposed, and on which the House was pretty well agreed, should unfortunately prove to be inadequate. For these reasons, he should vote for the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott).

MR. ANDERSON said, he was not going to answer the speech of the hon. Member who had just sat down, as he agreed with almost every word of it, although speaking from the opposite side of the House. A few hours ago he heard an eloquent speech from the hon. Member for Bath (Mr. Wodehouse), and he had the credit of introducing, while attempting to advocate *clôture,* the strongest argument against it that any Member had yet propounded from that side of the House. The hon. Member said that the repugnance to the *clôture* evidenced on the Conservative side of the House would end the moment that Party had power to inflict the *clôture* on a Liberal minority. That argument, he thought, used in favour of the *clôture,* ought to weigh very much with Members on the Liberal side of the House against it. It was because he remembered what power the Conservative majority had between 1874-80 that he was so adverse to giving that arbitrary power to any Government whatever. In that Parliament he was himself what he supposed advocates of the *clôture* would call an Obstructive. He recollected very well, in the first Session of 1880, spending a whole Wednesday in speaking himself, or getting other Scotch Members to speak, against the proposal of the Tory Government to force upon the country the legalizing of the use of cabs at elections. Well, if the Tory Government had had the power of *clôture* they could have shut up the debate immediately. His obstruction on that occasion was perfectly successful, for he succeeded in exempting Scotland and Ireland from the iniquity of having cabs thrust upon the boroughs at election times. Another occasion was the Cattle Diseases Bill, in which he had assisted the President of the Board of Trade and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland in a very considerable amount of obstruction against that measure. They believed that the measure would have the effect of raising the price of the food of the people; and they were successful in modifying it. But if there had been the power of *clôture* they would not have been able to do any of those things. He admitted the position he held was an extremely painful one. He did not like to speak against the Party with whom he generally acted. The other day a youthful Member, the hon. Member for Aylesbury (Mr. George Russell), had the audacity to say that such Members were deserters of their Party. Deserters were those who changed their opinions; not those who clung to them. Every leading Member on the Front Bench was committed in opposition to the *clôture.* The Prime Minister, by his

Nineteenth Century article, was committed. [Mr. GLADSTONE: No, no!] He would withdraw that statement, as the Prime Minister was best entitled to interpret what he really meant. He could only say many understood it to be a condemnation of the *clôture*. Well, other Members on the Front Bench were committed against the *clôture* by the Committee of 1878. He himself sat on that Committee, and remembered perfectly well, when the *clôture* was proposed, the Gentleman who proposed it (Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen) was almost alone in its support. What did they see now? That Gentleman now wrote to *The Times* to say that if he had been permitted to express his full views on that occasion it would have been shown that the *clôture* he proposed was of a very much milder character than the one now under consideration. The unanimity of that Committee, drawn from all parts of the House, showed that there would have been unanimity of the House against it, if the *clôture* on that occasion had been proposed in the House. He thought, therefore, he was entitled to say he was not changing his opinions or deserting his Party. It was the Leaders who were deserting their old opinions, and who were forcing the Party at the point of the bayonet to do a thing distasteful to them—a thing that was not truly Liberal in principle. ["No, no!"] Hon. Members said he was wrong in that. Well, hon. Members of the Liberal Party, who thought coercion and *clôture* were Liberal principles, were welcome to their opinion. Well, there had been a great many fallacies imported into the debate. On the last night of the debate they had the Home Secretary, whose argument was most fallacious. The Home Secretary insisted there was nothing before the House but the original Resolution of the Prime Minister and the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott). He said some hon. Members wanted a two-thirds or a three-fourths majority; but it was no use to discuss that, as it was not before the House and could not be brought forward, because the proposal of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton was a mere negation; and if they rejected the Resolution they could do nothing else than accept the negation. That he could show was a complete fallacy, although the Prime Minister seemed to approve of the sentiments of the Home Secretary. The Speaker had ruled that when the Question was about to be put, he would put it in such a way that, even if accepted, it would still be in the power of the House to introduce a two-thirds or three-fourths Amendment afterwards. Supposing, however, even the Resolution was negatived, then the Amendment would become the substantive Resolution, and might be amended by putting in a two-thirds or three-fourths provision, or in any way they pleased. Therefore, whether the first Question put to the House was affirmed or rejected, the House could still amend the proposal, and was not shut up to the negation. He quoted the Rule from Sir Erskine May, page 301, to prove the fallacy used by the Home Secretary. He had said that he felt himself in a painful position. He had listened with much attention to the speech of the Prime Minister, earnestly hoping that he would be able to provide him with some argument to his conscience that would enable him to vote for this Resolution. But he had been unfortunate. He failed to find any. He recognized, as the Prime Minister did, the difficulty in which the House was placed, partly from having too much to do, and partly from Obstruction. There was a necessity, he recognized, for great changes in the Rules, and he recognized that many of the Rules proposed were exceedingly good, and would, directly and indirectly, deal both with Obstruction and with the difficulty of having too much to do. But what he failed to recognize was that the *clôture* was in any sense necessary. The *clôture* seemed to him to deal not so much with Obstruction as with that wholesome opposition which was the life and soul of government by Party. By that means the minority of this year became the majority of future years, and expressed itself at last as the will of the nation. It was not desirable that that should be done away with. The Prime Minister's arguments were unanswerable as regarded the necessity for some change in the Rules. But not only he, but most of those who had followed in the same direction since, had supported the *clôture* simply because some change was necessary. Hon. and right hon. Members on both sides of the House agreed that great changes were necessary; but that did not at all prove that the *clôture* was the right remedy. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) said that the question before the House was whether the existing limitations of debate were sufficient for the purposes in view. Well, that was not, he maintained, the question before the House at present. The question that was before the House was whether the *clôture* was the right remedy. That, and that alone, was the point they ought to keep to in arguing this matter. He had been at a loss to know what the strong desire for the *clôture* really meant. Did it mean that as soon as they got the 1st Rule it was to be used to rush through the House all the rest of the Rules? Or did it mean that when they got the 1st Rule all the other Rules were to be dropped as useless? The Prime Minister had failed even to show any good reason for placing this *clôture* Rule first. He had not justified that. He had failed to show that, even if he had had the *clôture* from the beginning of the Session, he would have saved one hour from the many that had been wasted. If he could show that he would have saved time he would regard that as the strongest argument that could be used against the *clôture*, because it would prove that they were disposed to use it improperly. At no time during this Session could it have been used without hardship and oppression. If, however, some of the other Rules of the Prime Minister had been passed at the beginning of the Session, particularly Rules 2 and 12, which could have been done with comparative ease, the House would have been relieved of a great deal of that Obstruction and loss of time from which it had since suffered. That would have enabled them immediately to enter upon a position of comparative relief. They would have removed a good deal of Obstruction, and that loss of time from which the House had suffered so much. He saw no other ground the Government could have in asking the *clôture* than to pass a new Coercion Act for Ireland. Unless that was their object he failed to see any other. It would have been well for them to have tried some beneficent legislation before confessing that they could do nothing without the *clôture*. They did very well without it in 1880 and in 1881, and with the assistance of the Prime Minister's other Rules, leaving out the *clôture*, they would have sufficient control of the time of the House. They were told that the *clôture* worked well in other Parliaments, and a number of hon. Members had cited America, for instance; but even if it did well in other Parliaments, he did not think it was any proof to take an isolated Rule and bring it away from all its surroundings, and say that because it worked well under certain conditions elsewhere it would work well here. The curse of their Procedure was not the number of speeches, but the length of the speeches. It was what the President of the Local Government Board called that night "unrestricted loquacity," the loquacity of such Members say, as the Attorney General for Ireland, who spoke for three hours, and would not consent that a single sentence of his speech should be delivered during the dinner hour. He did not wish to say a single disrespectful word of the Attorney General for Ireland. His speeches had a great deal in them, and they sparkled with "bulls;" but no amount of brilliancy would redeem a speech of three hours from the charge of taking up too much time. He should like to see that checked in some way. He should like to see restriction that was not suppression. The *clôture* that was now proposed was a suppression. The constituencies were constantly sending up to the House a great number of Members who were not only capable of addressing the House intelligently, but whom their constituents desired to do that; and as they could not add to the time at their disposal they were bound to apportion it with some kind of equality, so that a greater number of speakers might have some small slice of it. He had mentioned America. Hon. Members were not aware, probably, that there were means in America for reducing this unrestricted loquacity. In America a speaker was allowed to read a few words of a large manuscript speech, and thereupon to move that the speech be held as spoken. Thus time was saved. The next day in the Public Record the speech appeared as if spoken at full length. When hon. Members advocated the *clôture* here they had better take this accompaniment of it and see how they would like it then. No doubt this cutting down of long speeches saved so much time that it was not necessary so often to apply the *clôture*, and so it was said to work well in America. It seemed to him, if they were to give an arrogant majority this power of *clôture,* they would need to have shorter Parliaments than they had now—[*Opposition cheers*]—to make sure that the arrogant majority was really interpreting the will of the people. He saw that the Leader of the Opposition cheered that sentiment; but when he was Leader of the House during the Tory Government, from 1874 to 1880, those on the Liberal side of the House thought that during that term of six years the right hon. Gentleman and his Party did not represent the feelings of the people. It was because that happened then, and might happen again, that he thought that if the majority was to have this power of *clôture,* they ought to have along with it shorter Parliaments, in order that the will of the people should be better known. They might also be obliged to ballot for who was to have the honour of addressing the House, because the natural tendency of the *clôture* would be not to shorten speeches, but to lengthen them. As a smaller number of speeches were to be heard, the result would be that the chance of catching the Speaker's eye would be rarer than ever, and those who were lucky enough to catch it would trespass more upon the time. There was another objection he had to the *clôture,* and that was that it would tend more to the practice of arranged debates —mere tournaments between the two Front Benches—in which private Members would be absolutely nowhere. The other night the hon. Member for Aylesbury (Mr. George Russell), in a clever and eloquent speech, but sadly wanting in knowledge of the ways of the House, drew a beautiful but illusive picture of what the *clôture* would do for private Members. He said he had been writhing under the dark chain of silence that had been inflicted upon private Members, and that the *clôture* would relieve them from this. He (Mr. Anderson) should like to know what it was to do for private Members except obliterate them altogether. It was never intended to do anything for private Members. Even without the knowledge of the ways of the House, which longer experience of it would have given him, the hon. Member might have learned sufficient from the speech of the Secretary of State for India, who not only told them what he wanted to do for private Members, but even gave them a proscribed list. To be sure, the name of the hon. Member for Aylesbury did not appear in that list; but he could assure the hon. Member that if at any future time he should venture to have sufficient courage to act an independent part, and not go always slavishly with his Party, he might very soon find his name on the proscribed list. The *clôture* never was intended to do anything for private Members, and it never would do anything for them. Another thing he had to complain of was that they were not allowed to consider the Rule upon its own merits. He thought he had shown what the feeling of the House was in old time against it. If they were allowed now to vote for it on its own merits it would be sent almost unanimously out of the House. They were told they must consider it on something totally alien to its own merits —namely, the merits of the Ministry that supported it. That was the point of view from which he was bound now to consider it. He admitted that he considered it from that point of view with very great pain. He saw the Government which he had always admired more than any other, and which he believed could more than any other do good service to the country. He saw them deserting old principles, and aiming at arbitrary power, and must vote, he was told, with them on pain of losing his seat, of having a Dissolution, or of what was of infinitely more consequence, the country losing the services of a great and wise Government. That put him in a great difficulty indeed, and it put a great many other Members in a great difficulty. He was told the other day that not less than 100 Members of the Liberal Party disliked this *clôture* very much, and that if only it was to be decided on its own merits they would vote against it; but what they had to consider was this—that they saw the Tory Party, whom they did not usually look upon as defenders of popular right of any kind, posing on this occasion as champions of freedom of speech. He might think they were quite right in doing so, and yet have some little suspicion of their motives. He might fancy, indeed, that their zeal was quickened into this action by the belief that they had found a weak place in the armour of the Government, and that they thought it right to press the weapon home. They had, indeed, found a weak place; but he did not feel able to assist them in pressing the weapon home, and join in a vote which was to turn out the Government. At the same time, he could not but say he thought it was insane folly on the part of the Government to have staked their existence on a question of mere Procedure, and especially on such a question as this. He had no doubt they would win; they would equally have won had he voted against them—but he did not, on the other hand, think he could vote for a usurpation of power which no Government ought to have. They had placed him, therefore, in the very uncomfortable and unusual position of going out of the House on the division. The Government would gain the division; but when they gained it they would have nothing to rejoice over, for they would know they had gained it by putting an unfair restriction upon their followers. These things did not do much good for the Party. He believed that if the Government got the *clôture* by these means it would not do them much good.

MR. H. S. NORTHCOTE regretted that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Anderson) had not the manliness to record his vote according to his convictions. He (Mr. Northcote) had no intention of expressing an opinion whether the *clôture* should be applied to the House or not. But he should like to point out two facts which had struck him as being important. The first was that the Resolution, if carried, would not affect small minorities, and possibly the factious minorities of the House, but rather the regular bulk of the Opposition, against whom no serious charge was brought by the Government. The second was that the Resolution would take away from the Leader of the Opposition the only effectual means of control he possessed over his supporters, which was that, hitherto, from his position in the House, he had been able to hold over them the *ægis* of protection against tyrannical majorities. He would no longer have that power if this Resolution was passed, and the effect of it would be to reduce the Front Opposition Bench to very much the same position as that occupied by individual Members sitting in any portion of the House. Another and an even more serious objection to the adoption of the Resolution in its present form was that it disregarded the fact that the Business of the House was still conducted with considerable regard for the old Forms; that there was a desire that opposition should not be carried beyond certain limits, which, although not well defined, were well understood. But if the New Rules were accepted, everything that was not forbidden by that Code would be admissible. He thought that the Government had so far departed from the old custom of the House as to inflict on Gentlemen sitting on the Opposition side the unmerited humiliation of entirely disregarding not only the loyal attitude they had assumed during the whole time since they had been in Opposition, but of their respect for the unwritten Rules for the conduct of Parliamentary Business. With respect to the course of public opinion, it was contended by the supporters of the Resolution that it was brought forward and would be adopted in deference to public opinion out-of-doors. He contended that the Opposition for the time being were, or rather should be, more directly influenced by public opinion than the Government of the day; and for the very natural and obvious reason that the minority of the day was seeking by all means to convert itself into a majority, and he did not see how that could be done except by following and adapting itself to the course of public feeling. He hoped they should hear no more of the suggestion made by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India about closing the mouths of individual Members; otherwise it was quite conceivable that should a change of circumstances place the Conservatives on the Treasury Bench a similar Rule might be applied, he would not say to the noble Marquess, but to some Members of his Party. At all events, that was a dangerous doctrine for a Minister of the Crown to give utterance to—that private Members were to be silenced, because they annoyed the Government of the day. As regarded the power of the Speaker, he felt perfectly satisfied that there would be nothing to complain of while the present right hon. Gentleman occupied the Chair. But if, say, the noble Lord the Member for Flintshire (Lord Richard Grosvenor), who now held the same Office which the present Speaker formerly held, were elected to the Chair, many Members of the Opposition would seriously object to arm him with the great powers which this Resolution would place in his hands. Under these circumstances, while fully recognizing the necessity for materially reforming the Procedure in Public Business, he (Mr. H. S. Northcote) had no hesitation in giving his support to the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott).

Mr. WHITBREAD said, as to the suggestion that the debate had taken a Party turn, those who had much experience in the House found that questions did, sooner or later, become Party questions. He had no complaint to make of the manner in which the Opposition had met the proposal of the Government. He had expected the Opposition to contest such a proposal. What he did think was, that the fears which they entertained, and which they had expressed, were exaggerated, and that the estimate which they had formed of the real evil with which the House had to contend was totally inadequate. They had been told that the Prime Minister ought to have consulted the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), and that some mutual agreement ought to have been arrived at by means of a Committee upon the alteration in the Forms of Procedure. But what had they been doing for the last 20 years but to attempt by this means to arrive at an understanding between the two sides of the House; and how far had they got? Anyone who had been a student of the Reports of the Committees on this subject would have seen that there had been one continual effort to try and arrive at some compromise; and then the weak, and almost miserable, outcome of the Committees' deliberations was further watered down before any Government ventured to propose measures to the House. He was very much struck with some of the speeches which had fallen from hon. Members opposite. What drafts on the imagination had been made, and what a total disregard there had been of the real safeguards which surrounded the Resolution! Had not the proceedings of that House become a reproach to it? Of late years all-night Sittings had become a necessity if the majority desired to carry into effect those measures for the advocacy of which they had been returned to Parliament. But could anybody conceive the amount of disgust with which reasonable and intelligent men outside those walls looked upon the methods employed in that House for carrying on the Business of the nation? Did anybody deny that the most severe blow was struck at Parliamentary institutions when that which should be a contest of reason was brought down to be a contest of bare physical endurance? They had had abundant experience within the last two or three years that those who were friendly to a measure were absolutely compelled to restrain themselves, and not criticize any of its details; because the only way by which they could hope to see a measure, in the main principles of which they agreed, pass into law was by keeping an unbroken silence. If they had been able freely to criticize the great Irish Act of last year, there were many blots which had been found since which might have been avoided; but that they were compelled, if they wished to see that great Act pass into law at all, to keep silence, and let those minor points go by. If a debate was to be brought to a conclusion by some power, he failed to see that there could be any process more favourable to a minority for bringing it to a close than that now before it. The hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) talked about the power being in the hands of the Government; but where did he find in the Resolution that the power was placed in the hands of the Government? On the other hand, many hon. Members had seen danger in placing the initiative in the hands of the Speaker or the Chairman. Those Gentlemen thought it would have been better to place it in some other Member of the House, so that when he interposed the interposition should be on behalf of the minority. But the form of the Resolution had been chosen advisedly. If some other person were chosen for that purpose, in a doubtful case the Speaker might refer the matter to the decision of the House. But when the Speaker undertook the full responsibility of taking the initiative, when he had no Motion behind which to shelter himself, he would feel bound to act with caution. The Resolution was a permissive one. The Speaker was not bound to put the Question. The hon. and learned Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard) had said that the word "may" in the Resolution was the same as "must." But no Speaker or Chairman would so interpret it. Having that responsibility, the Speaker would decline to act unless he were satisfied that the question had really been sufficiently debated, and would not proceed merely on the "evident sense of the House." Another safeguard lay in the position and duties of the Leader of the House. Before the Rule could be abused to Party or improper ends, the Leader of the House would have to combine with the Speaker to abuse it. The hon. Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter) had said that in the discussion of Party questions fair play vanished. He thought, on the contrary, that the spirit of fair play was, above all things, eminently characteristic of the proceedings of that House. Any Ministry who ventured to misuse such an instrument as the first of these Resolutions would soon find its followers deserting it. The immediate result would be that the Government adopting such a course would find all its own measures blocked. The Opposition would place Amendment after Amendment on the Paper, so that if the *clôture* were applied to one debate, debates would be indefinitely raised on numerous Amendments, so as to put the Government so misusing its power in a worse position than if it had never applied the Rule. But, it was asked, why place the power in the hands of a simple majority; why not require a two-thirds or three-fourths majority? The first reason against this proposition was that it was opposed to the invariable rule and practice of Parliament in all other matters. There was danger in departing from a long-established and Constitutional usage. His second reason was that in such a case the minority might find itself hopelessly crushed. He had much greater dislike to the suppression of small minorities than to the silencing of a powerful and numerous minority. It might very conceivably be the wish of 19-20ths of the House that the debate should close when the question had by no means been sufficiently discussed. His third reason was that such an arrangement would really put the power in the hands of the Opposition. It would be for the Opposition to allow or refuse the *clôture,* and the inevitable result would be a system of bargaining between the Opposition and the Ministry. He did not mean that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) would openly across the Table make propositions to the Leader of the House, or that he would employ such opportunities improperly. But unquestionably bargains, or tacit arrangements of a mischievous character, would, from time to time, be entered into. He would state frankly that he did not expect too much from that Rule. The Rule must be considered as a part of their Procedure, and not as an isolated Rule. They purposed to take away from the Obstructives some of the weapons with which their hands were most familiar, and to prevent the House from drifting into aimless discussions accidentally, which were usually a mere waste of time. It was proposed that when the House, after much long-suffering, pronounced its censure upon some offending Member, that censure should be felt. Oppressive Rules were part of the necessity of the case, though they must not look to such Rules for the despatch of Business. For the more speedy and the better despatch of Business they must look to two things—one the spirit of industry in the House, and the other the expansion of the powers of the House. For his part, he looked to the two Rules which stood at the end of all with the most hope, if the Government would consent to share the work among the whole of the House, and not to give it to a section. If Obstruction were to be really put down, it must be as much by the general co-operation of the House as by any Rule. There was some danger of a feeling springing up of a friendly neutrality to Obstruction; there was some danger of hon. Members thinking that if they did not openly connive at Obstruction, and did not openly engage in it, they could remain in a merely passive state. In his opinion, no neutrality was possible in this matter. No one really anxious for the economy of public time could be neutral with regard to the waste of it. They might fairly say in this case that those who were not with them in the saving of public time were against them. What remedies were proposed by the other side? The right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), in a very temperate speech, had admitted that some power must be found for closing debates which were unduly prolonged; and the remedy he suggested was contained in the Rules which followed this. No doubt there were, to some extent, remedies against Obstruction; but they were mainly remedies against the offender. The speech of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India had been somewhat misinterpreted. The hon. Member for Exeter (Mr. Northcote) imagined that the noble Marquess had advocated closing the mouths of hon. Members for the purpose of putting an end to a debate. That was what the noble Marquess expressed himself as anxious to avoid. He said he thought it better for them to put an end to a long debate by the adoption of this Rule rather than by closing the lips of hon. Members. It should be remembered that Obstruction had a tendency to spread. It was perfectly possible for 20 or 30 hon. Members to prolong a debate unduly without personally offending against the Rules of the House. If 20 or 30 hon. Members agreed to prolong the debate simply by repeating the same idea, so long as the speeches were in accordance with the Rules of the House it would be impossible for them individually to be stopped by the Chair. There had been no attempt on the other side to grapple with the real difficulty. Much had been said as to the suspension of liberty of debate; but no real attempt had been made to meet the difficulty of an unduly prolonged debate. He would remind the House of what took place last year, when, after an excessively long discussion, the Speaker interposed on his own authority, and took the very grave responsibility of closing the debate. Then the Speaker appealed to the House for directions, and that appeal was now responded to on the other side by the refusal to give him directions for his guidance in the future. Hon. Members on the other side simply asked the House to shrink from taking upon itself the responsibility, and to leave it upon its officers. He would ask whether it was a generous way of dealing with the appeal of the Chair? Had hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite reflected upon the advice they were giving the House when they proposed to leave the Speaker and the Chairman of Ways and Means in the same position in which they were placed last year when they appealed to the House for Rules for their guidance? He did not find in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire any proposal on this point.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that his argument was that the adoption of the Rule for adjournment would have entirely put an end to unduly protracted Sittings.

Mr. WHITBREAD said, that it was perfectly possible for 20 hon. Members to be engaged in Obstruction, and to keep the House sitting for 24 hours by repeating the same arguments, without being guilty of any transgression of the Rules.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS observed, that he had also contended that that would be met by the other Rule, by which repetition was not to be allowed.

Mr. WHITBREAD said, that that was idle repetition. That Rule would not meet the case, because it could not be said that it was repetition for one hon. Member to use the same argument as had been used by another hon. Member. Was the course recommended by hon. Gentlemen opposite a proper answer to the appeal by the Chair for directions for future guidance? All that was proposed was, practically, to leave the Speaker in the same position as before, and to permit him again to take the responsibility of acting when the occasion should arise. It was with the utmost pain that he had come to the conclusion that their Rules were no longer sufficient to meet the case; but it was the sincerity of their convictions on that side of the House as to the necessity for change which induced them to support this proposal. He had clung almost desperately to the hope that they might be able to get on without change; but the events of the last two or three years had driven him slowly and reluctantly to the conclusion that the time had come when an alteration was absolutely necessary. After the 41 hours' Sitting, he was convinced of the necessity of some such change as was now proposed. The Rules under which the House was governed were good, no doubt, but were not perfect. They were the outcome of the experience and the wisdom of those who preceded them in that House; and, in his opinion, they should be sorry successors of those men if, in their day, when the necessity for change had been proved, they set up those Rules as idols to be blindly worshipped, and refused to change them. He should support these Resolutions in the hope that more, perhaps, by their insertion amongst the Standing Orders than by their frequent application, they might gradually bring back to the House some measure of that self-restraint which, if it had not lost, it was in danger of losing; in the hope that they might give them some of their old aptitude for the discharge of Business; and in the hope that they might enable them once again to take a firm grasp of the affairs of this great nation.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY remarked, that the hon. Member for Bedford, who had just addressed the House, was always regarded as an authority on such a subject; and he (Mr. M'Carthy), in common with many others, listened to his speech with attention and respect. But that speech lost much of its value as a contribution to the present debate, inasmuch as it was given up wholly to the consideration of the general necessity for some change in the Rules of Procedure, or in the system of conducting the Business of the House. The hon. Member did not apply himself to prove a necessity for this Rule of *clôture*. The hon. Member had said that on the Opposition side of the House Members had no adequate idea of the difficulty of getting through the Business, while they had a very extravagant notion of the danger of this Rule of *clôture*. He (Mr. M'Carthy) replied that he had an adequate idea of the difficulty of getting through their Business. He would even go further, and admit that it was impossible adequately to discharge the Business which that House ought to do under the present system of arrangement. If the time were fitting, he could state his idea of the proper and the only means by which the House might relieve itself of its present great burden. What he did not hear from the hon. Member for Bedford was any suggestion as to how this Rule of *clôture* would enable the House to get through the Business better. He gave an illustration in support of his arguments which certainly seemed unlucky. He spoke of the Irish Land Bill of last Session, and remarked that many Members who might have made important contributions to the debates upon it, and might even have re-moulded much of the Bill, could not speak, because they knew that if they did someone else must be prevented from speaking, or possibly be induced to reply. If ever there was a debate of great and varied interest, in which there was no Obstruction, it was the debate on the Land Bill; and for the Party to which he belonged he said —though he supposed they were considered responsible for every delay of Business—that they kept silent during that debate except when it was absolutely necessary to speak. They purposely left the speaking to two or three Members who fully understood the measure; while he and many others took little or no part in the debate. How could the *clôture*, suppose it then existed, have assisted that Bill or the House of Commons? On that point the hon. Gentleman who last spoke failed to give them any information whatever. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board addressed himself almost altogether to the task of re-assuring hon. Members on the Conservative side of the House against the dread that they might be suppressed or put down by this *clôture* Resolution. The right hon. Gentleman was considering the case of a minority approaching near in numerical strength to the Government majority; and, while he evidently considered he was bound to re-assure that strong minority, he did not seem to care how sharply or how suddenly the ruling power might deal with a small minority. That small uninfluential minority, he (Mr. M'Carthy) thought, was the Party which it was the business of the great and powerful Party to protect. The men who came into Office when the present occupants went out, the Party which carried on a regular oscillation from Opposition to Ministerial Benches, needed no protection, for under no circumstances could they be effectually silenced; but a small and weak minority, consisting of men who were without influence or power in the House, and which could be crushed by a bare majority as well as by a union of the strength of both Parties, did not seem to be at all considered by the right hon. Gentleman. The hon. Member for Bedford had complained that no hon. Members from that side of the House had offered any suggestion for an improvement in the conduct of debate. It did not seem that much encouragement was extended to them for such a purpose by the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary. The right hon. and learned Gentleman, in the boldest, plainest, bluntest style, and in that imperious way which was his peculiarity and so well became him, informed the House that the Government had made up their minds to put their foot down, and would listen to no suggestion. If the Government wanted to make progress with Business, putting their feet down was not the way to do so, unless they took their feet up again very quickly and got into movement. His words were—

> "The Government have put forward a plan. They have given considerable attention to that plan, and, having done so, we do not intend to produce any other."

Such was the Government's announcement to the House. The Government on this question had said their last word. In vain might other Members talk and argue. Their arguments would be useless. The Government had made up their minds, and the House must have their proposal or nothing. So far, therefore, as the Government was concerned hon. Members might avoid all this waste of time and save themselves the trouble of hearing or making speeches, and go at once to a division on this question. If that were so, it illustrated forcibly the spirit and temper in which the Government might be induced to use this *clôture* if they got it. As their minds were made up and unchangeable regarding the form and substance of this Rule, so their minds might be made up as to the peremptory manner in which it would be convenient to crush a small minority. He was inclined to compare the attitude of the Government with that of the hero of Marryatt's *Pasha of Many Tales.* The Pasha, who was the hero of that story, had a great deal of eloquence himself, but was impatient of unrestricted loquacity in others—perhaps there were great personages with similar qualities in other places as well as in Turkey. When a suitor came to this Pasha and began to plead his cause, behind him stood an executioner, and the moment the Pasha had heard enough, or the suitor went into any needless repetition, the Pasha gave a signal, down came the executioner's axe, and the unhappy suitor was cut off in the flower of his youth and the middle of his sentence. It seemed to him that the minority in that House was invited to occupy the position of the suitor. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary, towards the close of his speech, devoted some attention to the Irish Party—the Party which was supposed to stand with the executioner behind it—and criticized, among other things connected with that Party, the manifesto it recently issued. He found fault with its form and its substance, and said he never before saw any document like it. He was not going to follow the right hon. and learned Gentleman's criticism of that manifesto. The right hon. and learned Gentleman understood better than he (Mr. M'Carthy) the etiquette of political documents; but he was very much mistaken when he endeavoured to point out that the Irish Party stated, in that manifesto, they were opposing this Closure Rule because they believed that if they turned out the present Government they would never again be subjected to interference with their speech in that House. Those who drew up the Circular condemned by the right hon. and learned Gentleman never thought of making any statement so absurd. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said the Whip had not been sent to him, and that, therefore, he could not be supposed to know all about it. True, the Whip was not sent to the right hon. and learned Gentleman; but when Gentlemen undertook to speak in that House of any document, they were supposed to have first read it carefully, and to be able to speak accurately of its contents. The right hon. and learned Gentleman thought that in that Whip he had discovered a great conspiracy. The right hon. and learned Gentleman was always discovering great conspiracies. He had a sort of divining power, which enabled him to perceive conspiracies not visible to anyone else. In the middle of the 17th century there was a remarkable character named Matthew Hopkins, who was notorious as a witch-finder. He could discover witchcraft when everyone else failed to detect it; he could detect a witch under the most subtle disguises. Well, as regarded political conspiracies and combinations, he thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman was a modern Matthew Hopkins. But as Matthew Hopkins was not always right in his instinct, and sometimes mistook a chance and harmless gathering of persons for an assembly of witches, so the right hon.

and learned Gentleman was not always right in his detection of political conspiracies. He could relieve the right hon. and learned Gentleman's mind by informing him that there was no conspiracy, coalition, or even arrangement between the Conservatives and the Irish Party on this question. The Irish Members had their own reasons for opposing this measure, and the Conservatives had theirs, and both were endeavouring to accomplish the same end. If the result of this division should be to turn out the Government, and if the Tory Party came into power, they would be under no obligation whatever to the Irish Party; and if within a fortnight of their accession to Office they should propose a Coercion Bill twice as severe as the one at present in force, they could say to the Members from Ireland that they had not given the slightest pledge that they would take any other course. So much, therefore, for the grand discovery of a conspiracy between the two Opposition Parties. He would turn now to the most important speech in the debate, that of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister had divided his remarks into two parts—those which dealt with Procedure, and those which referred to the "devolution or delegation" of the powers of the House. In the first part of his speech he dealt specially with Obstruction. How was the plan he proposed to the House justified by that part of his speech? In the first place, it justified some change in the Rules by referring to the great growth of Public Business in recent years. He admitted that in that respect the right hon. Gentleman thoroughly established his case. Nothing could be clearer than the fact that Public Business had grown enormously during the past few years; and, under existing circumstances, it must continue to grow, until it choked up the entire avenue of Procedure, and made some alteration inevitable. But the right hon. Gentleman went on to deal with Obstruction, and upon that he rested his main argument in favour of the peculiar change proposed in the Resolution. He (Mr. M'Carthy) was anxious to deal with the subject of Obstruction in the fairest spirit. He did not admit that Obstruction in this Parliament had been worse than Obstruction in the last. He even thought the late Government had Obstruction of a more difficult and perplexing kind to deal with than that which had come before the present Parliament. One reason which made it more difficult and more complicated was that those who were supposed to be obstructing then had the valuable assistance of some of the ablest and most eminent Members of the English Liberal Party. In some of the most protracted efforts against certain obnoxious measures which were then before the House, those who were now charged with Obstruction had the wise counsel, the close sympathy, and the constant support of two or three Members of Her Majesty's present Administration. He did not find fault with those Gentlemen for having acted in that manner. They acted on high principles, and with a perfect sense of justice, in opposing measures, some of which had since been proved to be dangerous to the country, and some of which had been abandoned. But while they were perfectly justified in the course they took then, he thought they were hardly justified in the course they were taking now. In considering Obstruction in the last Parliament, it should be remembered, too, that no measure was ever introduced with reference to Ireland so arbitrary, so obnoxious in its character, as the present Coercion Act, nor was the local administration of Ireland anything like so bad as it was under the present Government. Under the circumstances he could well understand how, to the official mind, there might appear to be less excuse for Obstruction in the last Parliament than in the present. But the Prime Minister distinctly narrowed his case, as far as Obstruction was concerned, to the proceedings of the present Parliament. He said that until that Parliament came into existence his mind was not made up. The right hon. Gentleman, referring to the obstruction of the South African Bill and the Army Discipline Bill in the last Parliament, said that—

"The two great subjects on which Obstruction was experienced in that Parliament were the subjects of the South African Bill and Army Flogging. But in both of them the great length of the debates which occurred was mixed with circumstances which make it not easy to form a perfectly accurate and impartial estimate of the obstructive forces that were put in action (ironical cheers and counter cheers), because—I believe I am right in regard to the South African Bill, and I know I am right in regard to the Army Discipline Bill, in saying that very important changes were introduced into these measures, and were the fruit and progress of long debates, and where that is so, it is not fair to drive home without a great deal of hesitation the charge of Obstruction."

The present Parliament, therefore, was the one to which the Prime Minister's remarks about Obstruction were particularly addressed. And here he would say a word about the manner in which the Urgency Rules were obtained. The Prime Minister declared that they were passed by the help of an extraordinary error in tactics on the part of a certain number of Members of the House. He said—

> "They contrived to place themselves in such a position that we were able to deal with them in a single division; otherwise we might have been occupied with divisions throughout the night, and at the close of them would have been totally out of condition for dealing with the question of Urgency."—[3 *Hansard*, cclxvi. 1144.]

The occasion to which the right hon. Gentleman referred was that upon which a number of Irish Members were suspended in a cluster, and not one after another. He might tell the right hon. Gentleman, as a matter of some little historical interest, that they committed no error in tactics at all. They were perfectly well aware that they could have occupied the whole night if they chose to take a division upon every suspension; but they were not concerned in occupying any more time in that demonstration than was occupied in the actual act of their expulsion. They desired to make a protest in the most dignified way possible against an intolerable and arbitrary Act, and they thought that could be done with more emphasis, with more dignity, and in a manner more worthy of a national cause by adopting the course they did than if they went through a number of tedious and unmeaning divisions. What was the cause of the exceptional Obstruction to which the Prime Minister referred in the present Parliament? There was one cause, and one only, and that was the introduction of the Coercion Bill. It would have been impossible for Irish Members who cared for their country, or who had any of the spirit of an Irishman in them, not to resist the introduction of that Bill by every means at their disposal. But that was an exceptional case—it was a crisis which did not often occur in the history of the country, and against which it would be absurd to provide by exceptional legislation in the shape of a proposal like that now before the House. He supposed English statesmen did not propose always to govern Ireland by coercion. The hour would some time come when the Prime Minister of England would have to acknowledge that he could not govern Ireland by coercion, and that some other means should be tried. When that time came, whether by a separation of Parliaments or by the reconciliation of the Irish people, if that were possible, to the English Parliament, they would need no *clôture* to put down Obstruction. But at present the Government said in so many words that they wanted this power of *clôture* in order that they might more effectively pass a Coercion Bill for Ireland. They wanted to gag the Irish Members in order that they might have less trouble in fettering them. That reminded him of the case of the highwayman told of by Sydney Smith, who not merely knocked down and began to rifle the pockets of his victims, but complained of their pestering him with their groans and obstructing him by their struggles. By maladministration they produced discontent and disaffection in Ireland; that disaffection was met by coercion; the coercion in turn provoked what was called Obstruction; and thus they were ever tracing a vicious circle. Until they tried some better system there was no satisfactory way out of their difficulty that he could discover. He trusted that they would some time or other enter upon a better path; but, in the meantime, why should they destroy their own Parliamentary system because of an exceptional and, he hoped, a transient condition of things? Again, Obstruction of some kind had been a not uncommon phenomenon in Parliamentary annals. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) spoke the other night of the happy days when the Business of the House was over in a few hours. He (Mr. M'Carthy) did not remember of having read of those happy days. He failed to find any account of the halcyon time when the Business of the House was disposed of in such an expeditious manner. He did not remember reading of those happy days in the biographies of Chatham and Pitt and Canning. There might have been a few such halcyon days a short time before the Reform Bill; although before the Reform Bill they had their bouts of Obstruction as vigorous as ever they had had since. Let him take the debates on the Reform Bill itself in 1831. Mr. Molesworth, in his History, said that—

> "In order to to promote delay the Leaders of the Opposition stood up again and again every night repeating the same stale statements and arguments, and often in almost the same words."

Among those Leaders were Mr. Wilson Croker and Sir Robert Peel. In one short fortnight—eight Government days —Sir Robert Peel made 48 speeches —not hasty remarks on clauses in Committee, but 48 speeches; and he was not the worst. Mr. Wilson Croker favoured the House with 57 speeches; Sir Charles Wetherell made 58. The hon. Member quoted the following extract from the Records of the House concerning the debate of July 13, 1831:—

> "Debate on the Question, 'That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair.'
>
> "Motion made and Question put, 'That the Debate be now adjourned till this day;' Ayes 102, Noes 328.
>
> "Question again proposed, 'That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair.'
>
> "Motion made and Question put, "That the House do now adjourn;' Ayes 90, Noes 286.
>
> "Question again proposed; Motion made, 'That the Debate be adjourned till Thursday;' Ayes 63, Noes 235.
>
> "Question again proposed; Motion made, 'That the House do now adjourn;' long Debate, and Motion withdrawn.
>
> "Question again put; Motion made, 'That the Debate be adjourned to this day;' Ayes 44, Noes 214.
>
> "Question again put; Motion made, 'That the House do now adjourn;' Ayes 37, Noes 203.
>
> "Question again put; Motion made, 'That the Debate be adjourned to Friday;' Ayes 25, Noes 187.
>
> "Question again put; Motion made, 'That the House do now adjourn;' Ayes 24, Noes 187.
>
> "At last it was agreed to go into Committee *pro formâ*, and the House adjourned at half-past Seven o'clock in the morning to meet at Three next day. Sir C. Wetherell said, with an oath, if he had known it was raining they should have had a few more divisions."

He said there were several such instances on record long before the present Irish Party was in existence, and long before any such thing as Irish Obstruction was known. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) himself had distinguished himself as the most brilliant and pertinacious Obstructionist in the history of Parliament. He (Mr. M'Carthy) did not find fault with him for what he did at the time when he was resisting the Divorce Bill, but for what he proposed to do now. It was said that the Government did not object to liberty of speech, but to licence. He was afraid that what was called liberty of speech by a man out of Office was apt to be called licence by the same man when he got into Office. They had the examples of other States given them. They were told that England was the only country that had not yet grasped the great idea that the true way to be free was to have a *clôture* Resolution. They were told to look to the Imperial Parliament of Germany; but he did not think that was a very happy example. They were told of Imperial France under the Second Empire, and they had their attention pointed to France under M. Guizot. Now, M. Guizot was a great writer and a great statesman; but as a political Leader he was a mere pedant. He mismanaged France. He mismanaged her Parliamentary institutions, and brought France to the level of a catastrophe. He was just the kind of man to rejoice in such a device as this *clôture*, which put as much power as possible in the hands of the official classes; while a kind of sham Parliament was maintained to delude the people. It was by these means that he brought about the Revolution of 1848. When the news of that Revolution was conveyed to Sir Robert Peel, that statesman said—"That is the result of trying to govern a country with too narrow a representation." The case of America had also been quoted; but the right hon. Gentleman admitted that it did not exist there in the Senate. If, therefore, the *clôture* was, as stated by the right hon. Gentleman, confined to Representative Chambers, he supposed the Senate was not considered by the right hon. Gentleman to be representative. But the American Senate was a Representative Institution. It was an elected Body, chosen by the State Legislatures, and elected only for short periods; and if its Members did not please their constituents they would be as certain to be dismissed by those who had chosen them as some hon. Members of that House were sure to be at the next General Election. The Senate often sat long, and had even all-night Sittings. They sat sometimes in private. They had vastly more power than the House of Commons; they could overrule the Government in its foreign policy and its Treaties; and yet they had no *clôture.* He would now advert to that very unlucky part of the speech of the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India, in which he stated what he would do if he only had the power which it was proposed to confer upon the majority by this Resolution—that part of his speech in which he singled out four Members of that House of whose tiresome eloquence he would relieve the House. He (Mr. M'Carthy) was connected by Party with only one of those hon. Members; and he would say of that hon. Member that he was a man—however he might, at times, take a course unwelcome to the House—of remarkable ability, remarkable knowledge, of wide resource; a man of that force of character that he must always be heard in any assembly of reasonable men, despite of any *clôture.* The noble Lord had been very metaphysical, and had drawn a supersubtle distinction between the House and the Members of the House. The time taken in the proceedings of the House was the property of the House, and was not, the noble Lord said, the property of any Members of the House, the House being something essentially different from its Members. He thought the noble Lord would have been more straightforward if he had said the majority of the House instead of the House; if he had said that the time was the time of the majority—that was the Government. But it was not a question of the right of individual Members to take up the time of the House by speaking; it was a question of the right of constituents. The constituents of Members had an absolute right to have their opinions publicly expressed by those whom they had sent to Parliament, whether the Government wished it or not. He asked whether this plan would really prevent Obstruction if there were a body of men in the House who were determined, for the mere sake of Obstruction, to oppose the Business? Suppose there were 40 of them—which was not an impossible number—and each of those Members exercised his right to speak for a quarter of an hour every night, to speak strictly relevantly and straight to the point, they would consume 10 hours. And what was the House to do? They could not say that such an hon. Member was sure to be tedious, and sure to speak irrelevantly. They could not pass a Resolution stating that a certain body of hon. Members were always tedious and should not be heard. They could not do that. But what were they to do? The Speaker might fail to see some of those hon. Members, and might take other Members instead. Yes; but the time would be gone all the same; and in the end, when no English Member rose to address the House, then one of these malignant creatures was sure to rise, and they would have to listen to his speech. Then another illustration struck him as he stood that day behind the Speaker's Chair. Several Private Bills had been before them that afternoon. Suppose a number of Members chose to speak on those Private Bills. They might have taken special pains to make themselves acquainted with the questions involved, and be able to speak with authority on those questions. How could the Rule be applied if those Members spoke pertinently on each point? Yet the time of the House might in that way be very effectually wasted. If Local Business were taken out of the hands of Parliament altogether, Parliament would be left to deal with Imperial affairs, and the temptation to Obstruction would be destroyed. If they were to vote by ballot on the question of closure, in all probability it would not be carried. Certainly, if it was carried, it would only be by the dark shadow of a Dissolution which was kept floating over the heads of hon. Members on the other side. He did not think himself, at any time, that there was much fear of a Dissolution just now. He should say that with his Party it was not a question of fear, but a question of hope. He confessed that he, for one, had always admired the English Parliament as an English Representative Body; and he once had hoped that if they came in Ireland to have an Irish National Chamber, it would be modelled on the English Parliament. Now, he should not say "if," but "when" they had an Irish National Parliament, he trusted it would be modelled on what that Parliament had hitherto been, and not on what the right hon. Gentleman proposed to make it in the future. He trusted they would always avoid in an Irish Parliament that sham system—that quack system—which dealt with symptoms and thought it was dealing with disease; which paltered with consequences and thought it was removing causes; and which, if it might sometimes, on some odd occasions, be strong enough to strike down and silence some individual Member, would be found much more strong in impairing the value and lowering the dignity of the Parliamentary institution itself.

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE said, that, in common with many other Members, he found it very difficult to give an altogether silent vote upon the Resolution now before the House; and also, in common with many Members of the House, he felt inclined to join in the general chorus of regret that the two sides of the House should find themselves engaged, one against the other, in opposing phalanxes on such a question as this. But he thought that the Conservative Members might say with some justice, as far as they were concerned, that they were in no wise responsible for such a state of things. He thought, also, that the irony of the situation had reached its very extreme limit when the Conservative Party found themselves there in a minority, pleading, as it were, to a Liberal Government, backed by a large Liberal majority, to treat the minority according to the true principles of liberality, and according to the instincts of freedom. And even now he might almost hazard a hope that it was not too late for Her Majesty's Government to be satisfied to take this scheme as a whole; and certainly it was not too late for the Conservative Party to ask this very pertinent question—How and why it was that this 1st Resolution was to be dragged out from among its fellows to be put in the forefront of the battle, and that at the very commencement of the discussion they were to be told that on this 1st Resolution, at all events, if any disaster were to happen to it, and if it were not carried, the Government would resign, and a terrible crisis would follow? He thought that was very hard upon the Opposition, and equally hard upon the Supporters of the Ministry, and doubly hard, if he might say so, upon the whole Assembly at large, because he believed that nearly all of them, in spite of the Party feeling which the question must engender, were equally anxious that it should be brought to a fair and just settlement. He asked why it was that they were threatened with this Party crisis? And he wished to ask, further, one or two questions in reference to the actual position of Public Business in that House. It would seem to him, looking at the present state of Business, that Her Majesty's Government were anxious to seize that as a fresh argument for pressing forward this harsh Resolution. They had been reminded that they were now within one week of the Easter Recess, and that little or no Business had yet been done. That was true; but he maintained that if the Resolution had been in force at the commencement of the Session, not one single additional hour would have been saved, and many hon. Members were desirous of knowing what all this meant. They wished to know why it was that the Resolution was to be made of such first-rate importance as to decide the fate or fall of the Government? Upon this point it was desirable that he should comment upon one or two facts in connection with the speeches which had been made in support of the Resolution. It was a curious fact, which had come under his notice, that most of the Members opposite who had supported the Resolution were now serving in Parliament for the first time. It was also a curious fact, that from the opposite Benches, out of four hon. Members who had spoken—the hon. Members for Berkshire (Mr. Walter), Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey Vivian), Glasgow (Mr. Anderson), and Bedford (Mr. Whitbread), all of whom possessed considerable experience of Parliamentary life—two of them, the hon. Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter) and the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson), had condemned the Resolution very decisively. His hon. Friend the Member for Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey Vivian) made a statement which was somewhat of a curious character. His hon. Friend said that the Resolution as it now stood had the support of the majority of the people of this country. His (Sir William Hart Dyke's) reply to that was a very simple one. It was only necessary to read certain letters which had been distributed among various political organizations throughout the country during the past few weeks to show that the support of the Resolution came solely from the borough of Birmingham. He had happened to be in the House during the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the

Home Department (Sir William Harcourt), and, listening attentively to the arguments adduced by the right hon. and learned Gentleman, he was struck by the fact that if that speech indicated anything, it was that in the belief of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Resolution was the chief and the only cure that could be applied to the unfortunate state of things which now existed in the House. The speech of the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread), however, contained a complete reply to that argument, because the hon. Member pointed out that the Resolution could never be used harshly or offensively against the minority, or it would recoil upon the majority and create a state of Obstruction far worse than that which now existed. That was a complete answer to the right hon. and learned Gentleman. Well, then, what did the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) do? He had been much struck with the discrepancy between the opening and the concluding portions of the speech of the noble Marquess. The noble Marquess, at the commencement of his speech, implored the House, and especially the Opposition, whatever happened, not to allow themselves to become frightened. He said that he was surprised at the exaggerated alarm with which the Resolution was regarded by hon. Members opposite. The noble Marquess went on to say—

> "What is this proposal? After all, it is but a modification of the existing Rules and restrictions in regard to debate."

And he proceeded to urge that it was in itself a proposal of a far milder character than one which was passed in 1842, whereby Members were restricted in their right of speaking on presenting Petitions to the House. He (Sir William Hart Dyke) found that that proposal, as far as any record of it was to be found in their Parliamentary Proceedings, only occupied a few pages of *Hansard*, and there was very little difficulty in inducing the House to accede to it. But if they would compare the commencement of the speech of the noble Marquess with the closing part of it, it would be found that the two were in direct opposition to each other. In the last part, the noble Marquess went into interesting details as to what the minority would have to go through if the Resolution was passed. What surprised him (Sir William Hart Dyke) more than all at this proposal was that it should be looked upon as so much milder a proposition than that which was carried in 1842, when the noble Marquess concluded his speech by informing the House that on the acceptance of the Rule would depend the fate of Her Majesty's Government. At the risk of detaining the House he wished to discuss the merits of the Resolution itself as submitted to the House. He knew that he might be accused of going over ground which had been occupied before; but he must confess that with regard to any accusation of that kind he was perfectly reckless, because he had an important object in view—namely, to show that out-of-doors a wrong impression was fast gaining ground in reference to the Resolution; and also as to how matters stood in regard to the Public Business of the House. It was said that it was high time that something should be done, because Easter was arriving, and as yet no Public Business had been transacted. He merely quoted that assertion to show how erroneous the impression was which was gaining ground in the country in regard to the effect which the Resolution would produce; because, as he had already pointed out, if the Resolution had been in existence throughout the whole of the Session, not a single half-hour of the Session would have been saved by its application. It had been his lot for 12 years of his life—from 1868 until 1880—to be closely connected with the Business of the House. Six of those years were passed in Opposition, and the six later years in a more responsible position. He therefore wished for a moment to argue the question by the light of the experience he had gained in both positions. Looking at the Resolution in that way, he would endeavour to argue it as if he were arguing with one of his own Leaders in some of the troublous days they went through when in Office. He would rather consider the question in that way, than form any narrow-minded or partizan argument on a question affecting the future proceedings of the House. The chief complaint he had to make against the Resolution was that it would not prove effectual for the purpose for which it had been brought forward. He had watched very closely the various causes which had created the difficulties which the House had now to contend with, and he acknowledged as fully as any hon. Member sitting opposite—as fully, indeed, as the Prime Minister himself—the difficulties of the position in which Her Majesty's Government were placed. But there were many circumstances which had caused the present state of things, and the great increase in the time-consuming power of the House. In the first place, there was a difficulty which was met by one of the subsequent Resolutions—namely, the power enjoyed by hon. Members, and constantly exercised, of moving the adjournment before the Business of the day commenced. That was a difficulty which constantly met the late Government at every turn. He remembered on four nights in succession the late Government coming down to the House, and yet Motions for Adjournment were interposed, and therefore, practically, there was no Agenda Paper, and it was found impossible to commence the Business of the day until 7 or 8 o'clock. That was a very grave difficulty, but it was one which was struck at by one of the subsequent Resolutions, which Resolution should certainly receive his hearty support. Another and a very grievous change had occurred in the time-consuming power of that Assembly—namely, the number of Questions which were put to Ministers. He did not for a moment wish to give a hint to any hon. Member how to obstruct the Business of the House—he would not be so disloyal—but he wished to point out that the Resolution did not strike at that difficulty; and when the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread) spoke about an irritated minority, and pointed out how dangerous it would be to put the Rule in force for fear of irritating the minority, it was impossible to overlook the fact that in regard to this particular difficulty it was possible to have such a multiplicity of Questions put to Ministers that the Public Business would never commence until 7 or 8 o'clock at night. Surely there ought to be some means of curing this evil, and why did not the Government attempt it, for it was an evil which stared them in the face every day the House met? He would venture to urge another difficulty, which added far too much to the time-consuming power, and that was the unfortunate state of affairs in Ireland. He should be the last person, on an occasion of that kind, to wish to enter into an Irish debate. He thought the House had had enough of them, and that was no time for discussing the condition of Ireland; but they must all admit that the consideration of Irish affairs was to a great extent absorbing the time of the House which ought to be devoted to general legislation. It was a state of things which they must all very much regret, and he fervently hoped that the cause of it might soon cease; but in the meantime there it was, and when hon. Members got up and asked questions in reference to the treatment of their friends in prison in Ireland, no one could justly or reasonably complain of the course they took. It was part of the penalty they had to suffer for the state to which Ireland had been brought. It was, however, a condition of affairs which they all trusted would not last long. But what he wished to ask, with due respect, of Her Majesty's Government was, whether the fact that one portion of the United Kingdom was in such an unfortunate condition was any solid reason why the House of Commons should part with its liberty of speech? He contended that it was nothing of the kind. There were other matters he might allude to, but he remembered that the hour was late. There was, however, one point which had been brought very much under his notice—namely, the number of Amendments which were now moved in Bills in comparison with the number of Amendments which used to be moved some eight or ten years ago, when only those Members who were actually cognizant of the questions dealt with by a particular Bill took part in the discussion of them, and very few Amendments were moved. If any hon. Member would take the trouble to search through the Journals of the House, he would be perfectly astonished at the number of Amendments that were now moved in Bills of every description compared with a very few years ago. The other day he was engaged in making a comparison, and he took occasion to compare the interest taken in the Land Bill of 1870 with that taken in the Land Bill of 1881. The subject was a cognate one, and he believed that on each occasion the Bill excited an equal amount of interest in Ireland. But he found that the number of Amendments presented upon the Land Bill of 1870 in one evening was contained in 15 pages of the Notice Paper of the House; whereas the Amendments put down on one night on the Land Bill of 1881 reached 36 pages—or considerably more than double. The number of Amendments now moved was the cause of the consumption of a great deal of the time of the House; but, in reference to these Amendments, he wished to ask Her Majesty's Government how the application of this Rule would put a stop to the difficulty? They were told that if it was in the opinion of the Chairman of Committees the evident sense of the Committee that a discussion should be stopped, then the Chairman could interfere and put the Question; but he wanted to know how this could apply to Amendments proposed in a Bill? If it did not, the "irritating minority" already spoken of would be left perfectly free to obstruct the progress of Business by continuing to move needless and endless Amendments. What would be the effect of the Resolution if the House consented to pass it? The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, in moving it, told the House to be cautious how they adopted any measure that would tend to aggravate the evil. He (Sir William Hart Dyke) thought he had shown that this proposal, if it were passed, would be ineffective, and that it would tend largely to aggravate the evil; and, in regard to the future, he believed that if it were adopted it would do more to demoralize the inner life of that Assembly than anything that had been attempted in regard to its Procedure before. Of course, they were bound to consider the future in regard to this proposal. It was all very well for hon. Members to say that what they wished to cure was what was happening in the present day. It was due to those who were asked to make so large a change in their Procedure that it was nothing more nor less than a revolution, and especially for the younger Members of the House, to consider what would be the future effect of the Resolution if it were once adopted by the House. They were told that no Speaker dare make use of it in the future, unless it was very certain that it was the evident wish of the House. It had been frequently said by hon. Gentlemen opposite that they did not like it, but, at the same time, that it was perfectly safe to support it, because it would seldom, if ever, be put into operation. If that were really so, why should the House be called upon to pass an obnoxious Resolution that would seldom, or never, be used? He admitted the difficult position in which the House was placed in reference to the progress of Public Business; but why, in the name of common sense, were they to make so vast a revolution in their Procedure for so miserable an object? Then, with regard to the application of the Rule, he thought the present Session offered a case in point. Supposing, in the future, that a Government should be as unfortunate in the management and control of its Business as the present Government had been, would they tell him that the Leader of the Government would not be tempted to make use of this Rule, in order to enable him to make up for lost time? Any assertion to the contrary was rather too much for any person who had any knowledge whatever of human nature to believe. There was this further question he wished to ask in reference to the application of the Rule in regard to the Chairman of Committees. He thought the Rule as regarded the Chairman of Committees would be most unfair and unjust to the occupant of that Office. The Chairman of Committees in these days was never considered, when in the Chair, in the light of a partizan; but this Rule would, undoubtedly, make him one. Of course, the Chairman of Committees would belong to the political Party coming into power, and would be appointed by the Government of the day. He would, therefore, in the future, be placed in a most unfair and undignified position. Look at the relationship between a Minister in charge of a Bill and the Chairman of Committees. His experience of a Minister in charge of a Bill was that there was no more dangerous a creature to meet towards the end of July. Each Minister, of course, believed in this effort of his creation—perhaps it was the embodiment of some crotchet of his earlier years, or some dream of his early life. Accordingly, he believed that nothing could save him, that nothing could save his Department, and that nothing could save his Party, or the country, except that his Bill should become law. On that one point he became dangerous to approach. Well, what would happen under the New Rule? Towards the end of July the Bill would get into Committee, and some clause of it would get into one of those difficult tangles from which it was so difficult to extricate it, and which only too often happened to a Bill in Committee. Time would be waning, and the last days of the Session rapidly approaching. What an enormous temptation there would be, in such a state of circumstances, for the Minister to go to the Chairman of Committees and say—"To-night is the last chance for the passing of my Bill. If this clause is not passed to-night, the pressure the Government Business is such that of I shall be compelled to drop it, and, therefore, I insist upon your making an endeavour to close the debate to-night." This was not only possible, but the House would very probably find that it would happen in case of the *clôture* being adopted. He said this with some knowledge of the pressure put on by Conservative Ministers, and it was very easy for the House to judge what might happen if such a Rule existed, and right hon. Gentlemen opposite ceased their present method of conducting the Business of the House, and really endeavoured to press their measures through. It was said that the Conservative Party did not care for this Resolution, because they were all in favour of Obstruction, and did not wish to advance legislation. He wished to enter an emphatic protest against such an assertion. What he and his hon. Friends objected to was, that out of a scheme which the Government put forward, containing 12 proposals, this particular one should be singled out in this prominent manner; that they should be told not to consider the scheme as a whole, but only one proposal, and then that the Government would resign if they failed to obtain the support of the House in carrying it. In point of fact, the House was told that if it did not support Her Majesty's Government upon one-twelfth of their proposal, Ministers were prepared to resign Office. He, for one, was prepared to give his support to the remaining Resolutions, and he would do so because they struck a blow at obvious blots in the Procedure and conduct of the Business of the House. Therefore, he asked that, in common fairness and justice, the House should be asked to discuss these remedies first, and that the proposals which did meet acknowledged difficulties should be considered, before they were asked to make the revolutionary change in their Procedure which was involved in the 1st Resolution. In regard to the practice of foreign countries, he did not think it was quite fair for hon. Gentlemen opposite to be continually quoting the use of the *clôture* in Legislative Assemblies abroad, and in ignoring the language used, and the scenes produced, in such foreign Assemblies on account of the introduction of the system. Then, in reply to the taunt that those who opposed the Resolution had no practical remedy of their own to suggest, he would point out that there were very good practical remedies to be found in the Resolutions which followed. He would not detain the House longer. He should not have risen at all at so late an hour if the subject had not been one on which he naturally felt very strongly. He also felt most strongly that Her Majesty's Government were asking too much from the House in calling upon them to accept this proposal. He believed that it was one which involved great danger to the future of the House of Commons; and that it, further, called upon the House to make enormous sacrifices without any corresponding advantage or gain to the country. He believed that it would not strike at the root of the difficulties from which the House was suffering; he believed, also, that it was a proposal which could never be popular in the House or the country. It was a proposal which involved grave difficulties in the future, because it would always insure in the House the existence of an irritated minority. It was only those who had been connected with the inner working of that Assembly who knew how difficult it was to guide its delicate and intricate machinery; how dangerous it was to disturb it; and how easy it was by to heavy a pressure to break it up altogether. They had heard many speeches in reference to the proposal, most of which treated it from a different point of view; but he believed that the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India very much indicated the policy they were likely to expect if the proposal were adopted. In regard to the future of the debate—as to what was to happen to this Resolution—he knew nothing. They had been told that great pressure was being put upon hon. Gentlemen opposite to carry the Resolution. They had had the old bogey of a Dissolution trotted out to frighten hon. Members opposite; but he himself believed in nothing of the kind. He was quite certain of this, that if the Resolution were carried it would not be carried by a mechanical majority—that was, if a mechanical majority meant something that moved smoothly and easily and without undue pressure. Nor did he believe that the Resolution, if carried, would be of much assistance to hon. Gentlemen opposite, either as regarded the present conduct of Public Business or as to the future. He believed honestly that it would place the House in very serious difficulties. It might be that Her Majesty's Government would press the Resolution to the bitter end; and, if they did, he was sure of this—that if, against the wishes of a considerable minority, they brought it into operation, if there was one shred of meaning in the name, never again could the Party opposite be called the "Liberal Party." Wishing as well of the future of that Assembly as any hon. Member opposite, as fond of the Assembly and of its good guidance as any of them, yet he still thought their pathway lay clear and distinct before them, and that it was to resist to the very utmost the dangers of the Resolution, in spite of this false and conjured-up crisis. He was one of those who believed that if Her Majesty's Government carried the Resolution, the only effect would be to inflict a grievous injury upon the Liberal Party, and entail something like disaster upon the best and freest Institution of the country.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. John Bright.*)

Mr. SEXTON wished to say a few words on the Question of the Adjournment of the Debate. It appeared that an announcement had been made to the effect that an understanding had been arrived at by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister and the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition that the division on the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott) to the Resolution of the Government should be taken on Thursday next. Now, he had just received a telegram which, with the permission of the House, he would read. It was addressed to him by the imprisoned Members for Cork, Tipperary, and Roscommon, and was as follows:—

> "Parnell, Dillon, and O'Kelly to Sexton. Kilmainham.—We have written to the Chief Secretary asking to be permitted to take part in the division on Mr. Marriott's Amendment, and undertaking to refrain from any action in any other political matter during our absence from prison, and after the division to return to Ireland and surrender ourselves to the Lord Lieutenant."

Mr. SPEAKER: The question raised by the hon. Member has no relevancy whatever to the Question before the House.

Mr. SEXTON said, he was not proceeding with the debate, but only wished to point out that, in his opinion, it was undesirable that the Motion for the adjournment should be carried until it was known whether those Members of the House who were now in prison would be present at the division on Thursday next.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must point out to the hon. Member that it is not competent to him to bring a matter of that kind before the House on a Question of Adjournment.

Mr. CALLAN asked if it would not be within the right of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) to inquire of Her Majesty's Government whether they, in conjunction with the occupants of the Front Opposition Bench, intended to force on the division on the 1st Resolution next Thursday night? If that were the case, Irish Members might be drawn into the agreement, provided the "suspects" who were Members of Parliament were permitted to attend.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have already informed the hon. Member for Sligo that the question is one which cannot now be discussed.

Mr. CALLAN said, he wished, in that case, to know what question could be discussed? If he remembered rightly, Mr. Speaker had, in reply to a Question on a previous occasion, informed the House that he was wholly at a loss to say what might not be discussed upon a Motion for Adjournment.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is now referring to a substantive Motion for Adjournment. This is a Motion for the adjournment of a debate upon a Question before the House, and any discussion upon that Motion should be relevant to the Main Question before the House.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, in the course of the few remarks he had to make, he should confine himself entirely to the Question of the Adjournment of the Debate. It occurred to him, first, to inquire of what use it was to adjourn the debate? As far as he could judge, there was no possible object to be gained by continuing the discussion after the present Sitting. It was well known that the *clôture* was already practically in force, and that many measures which might have been brought forward had been obstructed by the Government themselves. Moreover, they had behind them a mechanical majority which would enable them to carry their Resolution on division next Thursday. But the character of that division was, at the present moment, a matter of interesting speculation. It might depend upon a small number of votes, and he and his hon. Friends believed it would depend very much on the presence of the three Members of that House who were under detention at Kilmainham.

MR. SPEAKER: I have already informed an hon. Member that that question is not relevant to the Main Question before the House.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he had no intention of discussing the detention of the hon. Members in Kilmainham. He was pointing out that the division on Thursday next was likely to be a very close one, and that the absence of the three Members might have a material effect upon it. He thought he should be in Order in making the observation that at present the House was not complete, and, as matters now stood, was not likely to be complete on Thursday night.

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member disregards my ruling I shall be obliged to take notice.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he had not the least intention of disregarding the ruling of the Chair. He said if the House was not to be more complete on Thursday next than it was at present, he saw no reason whatever why the debate should be adjourned. On the contrary, it seemed to him that it would be just as well to continue the discussion now, however long the House might have to sit, in order to allow all those Members to do so who wished to lay their views upon the question of the *clôture* before the House. The views of a large number of hon. Members having been already propounded, it occurred to him that there was not much more remaining to be said on the subject, and why they should be asked to adjourn the debate at an hour which, compared with the time until which they were accustomed to sit was comparatively early, he could not understand. If the debate could be finished on Thursday, it could, with equal ease, be brought to an end on the present occasion, without the House having to sit any longer than they were obliged to do last Friday, when the Government were desirous of obtaining a Vote in Supply. If, therefore, by sitting until 4 o'clock that morning, the discussion could be finished, he could see no reasonable ground on which the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster could be acceded to. Again, although the advantages to be gained by adjourning the debate were not patent, the disadvantages were very clear. They were approaching the Easter Recess, and the arrears of work were accumulating. Therefore, he said, if the discussion could be brought to an end on the present occasion, Thursday night could be devoted to some useful purpose. For instance, there were some very important Estimates to be dealt with; and if his suggestion were adopted, an opportunity might be afforded of discussing some of the many Votes which, in consequence of the action of the Government during the present Session, the House had already been asked to pass as a matter of course and without any discussion whatever. The Prime Minister himself had over and over again expressed his sense of the inadequate amount of criticism to which the Estimates had of late years been subjected. Under the circumstances, he thought the debate should be continued, and that Thursday night should be devoted to some of the immense arrears of work which had accumulated in consequence of the action of Her Majesty's Government.

MR. O'DONNELL said, if the Irish Party were not to be treated with fair play by Her Majesty's Government, he certainly thought it would be just as well to take the division on the *clôture* question that night as at any other time. It did not seem to be part of the policy of the Government to allow the views of the whole House to be consulted; but if there was to be a continuation of the debate, he thought they were entitled to an assurance that more space than a single Sitting should be devoted to it. It was quite patent to all the Members of the Irish Party that the whole of the discussion upon the present Motion, from the speech of the Prime Minister down to the last speech that had been delivered, had turned upon the alleged misconduct of the Irish Party, who had been made targets for every kind of observation proceeding from both sides of the House. Notwithstanding this, the best hours of the day, and, indeed, every moment which could be regarded as a fair opportunity for explaining the Irish case, had been most ungenerously occupied by English Members. There did not appear to have been the slightest disposition on the part of the House to give the Irish Party fair play in this matter. He repeated, that every hour of the debate most suitable for the exposition of the Irish case had been monopolized by the Leaders of the English Parties. And now the debate next Thursday, the closing day, as they were told it would be, of the discussion was to be opened with all the force and power which they were entitled to expect from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and who would, doubtless, regale the House with a further brilliant exposition of the defects of the Irish Party. He did not know what other great guns of Liberalism would follow the Chancellor of the Duchy; but it was evident that an agreement had been entered into between the two political Parties to deny a fair hearing to those who were bearing the brunt of this matter, and that the House was about to be hurried into a vote with reference to the alleged transgressions of the Irish Party without their being afforded any fair opportunity of replying to the monstrous misconceptions of their conduct and policy which had been ventilated in the course of this discussion. If this treatment was an earnest of what was in store for the Irish Members it would certainly be resisted, although, in the end, they might be overborne by numbers. But it seemed to him that the parties in this confederacy would not gain by the manner in which they were dealing with the Irish nation; and unless Irish Members received an assurance that a fair opportunity would be given to the Irish Party, before this most important discussion came to an end, of meeting the extraordinary misrepresentations and misconceptions which had been floated with regard to them, they would feel it their duty not only to divide the House on the present Motion, but when the subject next came forward they would make use of all the Forms of the House in order to obtain an opportunity for fair discussion. In conclusion, he begged to assure Members sitting on both sides of the House that the Irish Party could afford to regard the *clôture* with vastly more indifference than any other Party.

Sir JOSEPH M'KENNA said, he thought that some of the observations of his hon. Friend the Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) were not quite warranted. He believed that the Party really interested in this case was the Conservative, and not the Irish Party. He would endeavour to make this clear without going into the subject at any great length. He ventured to say that his hon. Friend, if he would consider the matter dispassionately, would find that this question was not one in which the Irish Party were interested, except in the abstract, and it was only because they were not immediately interested in it, that he addressed the House at all on the Question of Adjournment. If the Rule were intended—as it purported to be—for putting an end to the Obstruction which had obtained in that House, nothing could be more imbecile and inefficient for that purpose. Because, whilst it would be utterly ineffectual unless there were 200 Members to put down 40 Members, 201 Members could put down 200 Members. He challenged the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, when he rose on Thursday next to continue this debate, to produce a single parallel for such legislation as was contemplated by the 1st Resolution. Again, the insincerity of the Rule was apparent from the fact that, while Mr. Speaker was to decide that the sense of the House was against the continuance of debate, he would be sustained in that if 201 Members voted for the Motion against 200 Members. It was impossible, therefore, to reconcile the Rule with any intention of applying it to the Irish Party; and its obvious intention was to stop the mouths of the Tory Party when some great measures were being carried through the House.

MR. HEALY said, he considered the debate ought now to be adjourned. It was desirable that the Government should now be told that it was very unlikely that they would be able to come to a decision on Thursday. The Government could not expect that they would be allowed to go to a division on a matter which so vitally interested Members from Ireland, until a reasonable proportion of those Members had had an opportunity of speaking. He did not think there was any desire on the part of the Irish Members to prolong the debate unduly; but he would suggest to Her Majesty's Government that it would be unreasonable in them to bring down their Supporters on Thursday night for the division, unless it was seen that there was such an absence of desire to speak on the part of other Members as to give the Irish Members a fair share in the matter. It had been said, in the course of the debate, that it would be a good thing if the discussion went on until the Government had considered the arguments in favour of releasing the imprisoned Irish Members—in fact, until the Irish Members were let out.

MR. SPEAKER: I would remind the hon. Member that the Question before the House is "That the Debate be now adjourned."

MR. HEALY said, he was not in the House when the observations to which he had referred were made, and when some decision was given upon them. He only understood from hearsay what had taken place. As he was not in Order, he regretted that he had been betrayed into mentioning the subject. All he would say was, that until the Irish Party were able to bring before Her Majesty's Government the arguments they desired to offer on the very important subjects which had engaged the attention of the House, it would be undesirable to attempt to come to a decision.

MR. GLADSTONE: I assent to the adjournment, in the full expectation that we shall come to a decision on Thursday. I do not say I expect the division to be taken on Thursday because of any compact between the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote) and myself, for we have no actual power to arrange for the closing of the debate; but I say it for the reason that, as far as we can gather, it appears to be the general impression on all sides that the discussion should terminate on that day.

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *Thursday.*

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS BILL.

(*Mr. Hibbert, Secretary Sir William Harcourt.*)

[BILL 61.] COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

MR. HIBBERT said, that, although there was a blocking Notice against going into Committee on this Bill, he thought he should be in Order in moving that Mr. Speaker do leave the Chair, in order to commit the measure *pro formâ*, and have Amendments printed in it. He wished to have the Bill reprinted, and so save time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

MR. CALLAN: Is this Committee on the Municipal Corporations Bill?

THE CHAIRMAN: It is.

MR. CALLAN: I beg to call your attention to the front page of the Notice Paper. There is a blocking Motion against this Committee.

MR. HIBBERT: Perhaps the hon. Member will allow me to explain. I said I wished the Bill committed *pro formâ* for the purpose of having it reprinted. The blocking Notice will hold good when the Bill stands for Committee.

MR. CALLAN said, he should be sorry to stand in the way of the courteous Secretary to the Local Government Board. He only wished the hon. Member's example of courtesy was followed by all other occupants of the Front Benches. He (Mr. Callan) only rose as a matter of Order to ask whether it was competent for such a Motion as this to be made with a blocking Notice on the Paper?

THE CHAIRMAN: It is strictly in accordance with the ordinary practice of the House where the intention is simply to print Amendments. The block will stand good against the next Committee stage.

MR. HEALY said, the Irish Members had raised this question the other night. An hon. Member had a Registration Bill down, and he took off his hat when the Order was called on moving "That it be now considered." The Motion was objected to, and Mr. Speaker ruled that, as there was a blocking Notice against the measure, it could not be proceeded with. He (Mr. Healy) would ask of what use was this blocking Rule, if Members of the Government were to be allowed to play fast and loose with it?

THE CHAIRMAN: If there was any question to be raised, the hon. Member should have raised it when Mr. Speaker was leaving the Chair. But there was no question to be raised, because it is the rule to go into Committee on a Bill *pro formâ*, notwithstanding that there is a blocking Notice down.

MR. HEALY said, as a point of Order, he would point out that no one could possibly have known what was the intention of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Oldham (Mr. Hibbert).

MR. HIBBERT: I stated openly that I wished the House to go into Committee on the Bill, in order merely to have certain Amendments printed in the measure. The arrangement proposed was for the convenience of the House, and the block will still hold good. I should explain that before I made the Motion I was told both by the Speaker and the Clerks at the Table that I should be perfectly in Order.

Bill *reported;* to be *printed*, as amended [Bill 113]; *re-committed* for *Monday* next.

House *resumed.*

MR. HEALY said, he wished to call Mr. Speaker's attention to a point of Order. The hon. Member for Oldham had moved to go into Committee on a Bill against which there was a blocking Notice on the Paper; and he (Mr. Healy) wished to ask whether it was competent for the hon. Member, under such circumstances, to persevere with his Motion. The block was to prevent Mr. Speaker from leaving the Chair, and he should like to ask where hon. Members could find directions on this point in previous Rulings or in any work on the Practice of the House?

MR. CALLAN said, the Chairman of Committees had stated, as his excuse for allowing the Committee to go on, that the proper time for objecting to the stage being taken was not in Committee, but when the Motion was made to get Mr. Speaker out of the Chair. The hon. Member for Oldham had said that before he made the Motion he had consulted him (Mr. Speaker) and the Chairman of Committees. He (Mr. Callan) wished, therefore, to know how the Chairman of Committees could explain his statement that the proper time to object was when the Motion was made for Mr. Speaker to leave the Chair? If the hon. Member had consulted Mr. Speaker and the Chairman of Committees——

MR. LYON PLAYFAIR: The hon. Member said, "Mr. Speaker and the Clerks at the Table."

MR. CALLAN said, he wished, then, to know who was right? Was the Chairman of Committees right in his opinion that the proper time to object was when the Motion was made "That Mr. Speaker do leave the Chair?" The Chairman of Committees had expressed that opinion in such a manner as to lead to the inference that if objection had been made at the proper time, it would have been fatal to the Motion to commit the Bill.

MR. SPEAKER: The point raised by the hon. Member has been repeatedly ruled upon on former occasions. When a Member in charge of a Bill has desired to commit that Bill *pro formâ*, to have it reprinted, it has been decided that there is no objection to that Motion by reason of the Rule with regard to Opposed Business, because the Bill is again placed for Committee, and the block stands against that stage. I am bound to say that the proper time to raise this question would have been on the Motion "That Mr. Speaker do leave the Chair." If it had been raised then, I should have ruled as I do now, and as I have done on other occasions, that the objection cannot be maintained.

BILLS OF SALE ACT (1878) AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 108.]

(*Mr. Monk, Mr. Serjeant Simon.*)

CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, *considered.*

MR. WHITLEY said, he had to move an Amendment which was a very important one, and one to which he hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General would agree. The Bill proposed that where a bill of sale was registered and the owner of the property was not bankrupt within 12 months of that registration the bill of sale should hold good. He wished to amend Clause 17, which destroyed a great part of the usefulness of the measure and would lead to a great deal of litigation, putting commercial bodies to great expense. What was really the way in which it would act? Large sums of money were advanced on machinery. Bills of sale were a security. They were registered, the creditors having notice of them. To his knowledge, very large amounts were lent by persons in Liverpool to spinners and manufacturers on the security of these bills; but if this clause passed in the way proposed by the Attorney General, all such bills of sale might be absolutely void. Yet, at the same time, it appeared, on the face of the Bill, that all bills of sale registered 12 months before bankruptcy would be valid. He thought he was right in saying that if the Bill passed as it was proposed by the Attorney General, bills of sale executed by non-traders would be legal, but those executed by a spinner or other manufacturer would be bad. That would be undesirable. It would be better to at once abolish all bills of sale, and say that no security should be allowed for personal property, than to pass an Act which professed, on the face of it, only to legalize those bills of sale which affected non-traders, who were a decimal portion of the community, and make those affecting traders illegal. That was a very serious difficulty indeed. In regard to the objection that his proposal would involve that which was formerly the mode by which creditors were deceived, he contended that legalizing these bills of sale and giving notice to the creditors was the legitimate mode of making a good security. He earnestly hoped the House would understand the objection he had brought forward. He knew that the matter was a technical and difficult one; but, at the same time, what he had stated would be the effect of the Bill, and he therefore hoped his Amendment would be accepted.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, to leave out Clause 17, and insert the following Clause :—

(Repeal of sections eight and twenty of principal Act.)

"The eighth section of the principal Act is hereby repealed, and the twentieth section of the principal Act, and all other enactments contained in that Act, so far as the same are inconsistent with this Act, are hereby repealed, but this section shall not affect the validity of anything done or suffered under the principal Act before the commencement of this Act."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

Clause *brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he was sure it was his own fault entirely, but he did not understand what the hon. Member had endeavoured to convey to the House. The clause in the Bill proposed to modify the Act of 1878. Before that Act was passed, if any property was found, without the consent of the true owner, in the possession of a person who was a trader, and who became a bankrupt, the property would pass to the trustee in bankruptcy under the Order and Disposition Clause. In 1878, all bills of sale were taken out of that Order and Disposition Clause, and the result was the multiplication of bills of sale. It was thought desirable not to go back to the old law, but, by the 13th clause, to take a middle course, and to say that if a bill of sale should be made within 12 months—that might be in anticipation of bankruptcy—the Order and Disposition Clause should apply, and the creditors should obtain the benefit of the goods, as against the bill of sale. The matter was discussed by a Select Committee, and it was thought this was taking a moderate and middle course, and therefore a safe course; and, he must say, he did not understand what the hon. Member's objection to it was. An objection might arise, not upon the construction of the Bill, but in this way—that if they passed the Bill in this shape, money-lenders would endeavour to defeat its operation, and, instead of taking bills of sale at all, would make agreements of absolute sale from the borrowers to them, and then let the property back again to the borrowers. This would not be a bill of sale, but a purchase of the property. They would have to consider, when the question of Bankruptcy came before them, whether they ought not to strike out "non-trader." To make the Order and Disposition Clause apply to non-traders, as well as to traders, was a matter for consideration. In the meantime, it was now proposed that there should be no bill of sale under £50, and the result, in 99 out of 100 cases, would be that the person giving the bill of sale would probably be a trader, and then the Order and Disposition Clause would apply, and thus everyone who was a trader would be safe by this Section 13. He hoped the House would adhere to the proposition, for it had been fully considered.

Mr. MONK said, he hoped that, after what the Attorney General had said, the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley) would withdraw his proposed clause, more especially as the Attorney General had said that in the Bankruptcy Bill which would shortly come before the House, he would endeavour to deal with the difficulty. He himself must oppose the clause.

Mr. MELDON said, he thought this was a point of great importance. He did not admit that this Bill had been promoted by traders or commercial communities; he believed it was promoted by Chambers of Commerce; but nothing could be more mischievous. The matter was raised in 1878, and the difficulty surrounding the question of bills of sale was then fully considered. It was then pointed out that bills of sale, in the interest of commercial communities, ought to be real securities, or be abolished altogether. If the latter were done, well and good; but if bills of sale were allowed and tolerated and legalized, they ought to be surrounded with such conditions that persons advancing money should know how they stood. Bills of sale could be nothing but traps for the mercantile community unless this was done. He could well understand that the Government were not willing to consent to the entire abolition of bills of sale; but they should say that any person giving a bill of sale should show such indications of solvency that a bill should not be followed against him. If it was for a period during which an act of bankruptcy would run, then it should be void; and if there was a provision that any bill of sale given between acts of bankruptcy could be taken advantage of in six months, people would know where they were. But by this Bill there was the consequence of what was known among lawyers in bankruptcy as the Repudiated Ownership Clause. That left things in a state of glorious uncertainty. To enable a liability to be set aside under that clause, a number of different facts must be proved. People who advanced money liked to know whether the security was good or not; but now they would be in a state of uncertainty for 12 months, and then not know whether they might be involved in expensive litigation. The matter had not now been as fully discussed in Committee as it was in 1878; and he thought that before a Bill of this gigantic importance to the commercial community was disposed of, some further opportunity ought to be given for its consideration; and he should move that the debate be now adjourned, in order to have that opportunity of looking more fully into the matter, and of proposing other Amendments. He knew that the views he had expressed were largely shared in the commercial community.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Meldon.*)

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) expressed his regret that the House had not had the assistance of the hon. Member before, and said, the matter was very much discussed in 1878; but the Act, having been working for three years, had revealed a state of things that was perfectly intolerable. The present Bill was introduced last year, and was then referred to a Select Committee, and by that Committee fully considered. A Bill substantially the same as the present Bill was printed and circulated, and had been in the hands of Members for six months, and fully discussed during this Session. If the hon. Member had asked for further consideration on the second reading, or in Committee, he was sure the House would have listened to all the hon. Member had to say; but he thought it was a little late now to make this proposal after the Bill had been so long before the House, and he trusted that the Motion would be withdrawn.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA said, he hoped the hon. Member would not persist in his opposition. He knew a great deal about the state of things under the present law; and, while he did not think this Bill went as far as it should, yet as a Bankruptcy Bill was to be introduced, which would be a complement to this measure, the whole subject could be treated then. The abolition of bills of sale, under the Order and Disposition Clause, got rid of three-fourths of the number of bills which were now a means of great extortion and injustice; and therefore he hoped that, under the circumstances, the hon. Member would withdraw his Motion.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question again proposed.

MR. WHITLEY said, that, after what the Attorney General had said, he should not press his Motion, although he feared this clause would lead to a great deal of litigation.

Motion and Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. WARTON moved, in Clause 6, page 2, line 10, at end, add—

> "Or any hay, straw, corn, produce, live or dead stock, in or upon, or brought in or upon, any land or farm in substitution for any hay, straw, corn, produce, live or dead stock, enumerated in the schedule to such bill of sale, and which have been actually paid for by the grantor of such bill of sale."

The hon. and learned Member said, it would be in the recollection of the Attorney General, in the discussion—which he could not call a full discussion—in Committee upon this Bill, a hurried discussion took place, and, with the usual rapidity, the first four clauses, and nearly the fifth, were carried in about a minute. When the fifth was reached, he ventured to call attention to an Amendment in his name in the present form, but without the last words—" have been actually paid for by the grantor of such bill of sale." The Attorney General then said he would consider the matter upon Report, and the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) accepted the proposition. This proposition was forced upon him by the fact that farmers throughout the country were becoming alive to the great danger they were exposed to in doing what they had a perfect right to do—namely, borrowing money upon their stock. Farmers fed and fattened their own cattle, and could not always keep the same cattle from year to year while the bill of sale might last. They must substitute one animal for another, and they could not always have the same truss of hay, or the same corn; and it was only reasonable that they should have this power he now proposed. It was no pleasure to him to bring the matter before the House; but many agriculturists required this power. It might be asked why he did not put the same thing into the 4th section with regard to persons who were not farmers? He should have been very glad to do so; but the rate at which the Bill had proceeded gave him no opportunity. But there was another answer. Farmers stood in a different position from ordinary traders. A farmer might for a long number of years, and after several good harvests, find himself solvent; but he had to take his chance of good and bad seasons, and through bad harvests he might be temporarily pressed for money, and it would be hard to deprive him of the opportunity of raising money on his present stock or on animals, which must be substituted. He believed he had the support of one of the most distinguished agricultural Members of the House—the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot)—and he hoped the Attorney General would redeem his pledge to consider this matter.

Amendment proposed,

> In page 2, line 10, after the word "executed," to add the words "or any hay, straw, corn, produce, live or dead stock, in or upon, or brought in or upon, any land or farm in substitution for any hay, straw, corn, produce, live or dead stock, enumerated in the schedule to such bill of sale, and which have been actually paid for by the grantor of such bill of sale."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he wished to acknowledge the courtesy shown by the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) and by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) when he brought forward this same proposition. He had undertaken to consider the point, and he could assure the hon. Members that it had been fully considered. An endeavour was made to give way to the desire expressed by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport, and to accept the Amendment; but, after full consideration, those in charge of the Bill found they could not accept it. The House was aware that a practice had grown up in regard to bills of sale among money-lenders of not only taking assignments of all the goods possessed by the borrowers, but of all the goods afterwards to be acquired. That system applied very widely, and it was thought advisable to provide, as Clause 5 proposed to provide, that bills of sale should include only the goods enumerated in the schedule. In that way a borrower would assign all he had, but not what he would have in the future. With that object Clause 5 was inserted; but there were certain exceptions it was thought right to make. If a farmer wished to assign his crops, which were growing or which might grow, there was no reason why he should be prevented from assigning those crops. And if a portion of fixed machinery was taken down and replaced, the substituted machinery might be the subject of the bill of sale. But the hon. and learned Member now proposed, as he said, in favour of, but it seemed to him (the Attorney General) against, the farmer, that the farmer should be the only person permitted to assign property he had not got. There were two objections to this proposal. In the first place, the farmer was the very man who wanted protection; and it had been shown by evidence that the money-lenders were making their way through the agricultural districts in consequence of the depression there existing; and that borrowers, ignorant in regard to such transactions, gave bills of sale which were perfectly destructive to them. They were unaccustomed to such transactions, and yielded to the specious representations of the money-lenders, and district after district had been overrun by these money-lenders. Again, if this contention were admitted in regard to farmers, it must be admitted with respect to manufacturers, for there was no reason why a farmer should be excepted, and not a manufacturer or tradesman. The effect of the Amendment would be to strike out of the clause the protection desired. The framers of the Bill had to consider whether they should extend the exception to other persons or leave the Bill as it was, and the balance was so strongly in favour of the principle contained in the Bill that they came to the conclusion to adhere to the Bill as it stood.

Mr. WHITLEY said, that he regretted that the Attorney General had not seen his way to accept the proposed Amendment, for he thought the decision would have a most disastrous effect on the commercial world. He did not think anyone could have the slightest sympathy with the money-lenders; but in attempting to deal with them the Government were doing what would have a dangerous effect upon commercial communities. They were upsetting the legislation of 1878, which was arrived at on the representations of the commercial world, and in a way which they did not understand. They believed that the Bill dealt with Jew money-lenders; but instead of that it would prevent tradesmen from borrowing upon stock they had actually paid for. There was a great distinction between persons who assigned goods they had paid for and people who assigned what they had not paid for. He thought that if the House considered the question from the grave effect it would have upon large commercial operations, they would hesitate before they passed the clause as suggested in the Bill. Many communications had been made to him upon this point both by farmers and commercial men, and he thought that, it was very probable that, in the endeavour to deal a blow at the userers, they would injuriously affect the commercial classes.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he had listened most attentively to the statement of the Attorney General, and he was bound to say he did not think the hon. and learned Gentleman had given the consideration he might have done to a statement made on this point the other evening. Goods bought and paid for were in quite a different category to goods bought on credit, and the Attorney General might even now see his way to introduce words which might have the effect of keeping the Bill within the limits he had laid down in the 5th clause. No one wished to encourage money-lenders; but he feared that unless something were done to comply with the wishes of his hon. and learned Friend, an injustice might be done to many tenant farmers.

Mr. MONK said, the promoters of the Bill had an anxious desire to accept any Amendment in the interests of the farmers that was feasible. They found it impossible, however, to accept an Amendment of this sort, which would allow certain privileges to farmers which were not to be allowed to other traders. If they passed this Amendment in the shape in which it appeared on the Paper, it would be necessary to allow, for instance, shopkeepers to give bills of sale on their floating stock. It was all very well to say that this was live stock which had been actually paid for. It would be just the same if it was paid for by bill due six or 12 months hence. The subject was very fully discussed last year by a Select Committee consisting of 15 Members of that House, and after long and anxious consideration they extended to farmers the right to give a bill of sale on their growing crops, so there was an advantage given to them which did not apply to ordinary traders. He must agree with the Attorney General in opposing the present Amendment.

Sir JOSEPH M'KENNA said, he thought it would be a great mistake to accept the Amendment, though he was certain the hon. and learned Member introduced it with the best intentions towards the farming class. The phrase, "stock *boná fide* paid for," would be deceptive in its operation, and he had no doubt that injustice would often be done, although the terms of the clause might be complied with. He had had a good deal of experience in this sort of thing, and he should certainly say that, in the interest of mercantile, farming, and trading communities, the less people had to do with bills of sale the better.

Mr. WILLIS said, he should support the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member, because he objected strongly to Clause 5 of the Bill. The effect of Clause 5 would really be to put an end to most important commercial transactions.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now engaged in considering Clause 6. The hon. and learned Member cannot go back to Clause 5.

Mr. WILLIS said, he would content himself by stating that he would support the proposal of the hon. and learned Member, because it would, to a certain extent, modify the pernicious effects of Clause 5.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER said, it would be seen, if the Amendment were adopted, that a trader might buy on credit stock to the amount of, say, £100, but for which he did not pay 1*d.*; he might give a four months' bill. He might immediately raise money upon that stock by means of a bill of sale. It very often happened that the money-lender got his money, and that the legitimate creditor got nothing at all for his goods. It had been proved in thousands of cases that the dealing with future property was a source of the greatest fraud and robbery.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Mr. MONK moved, in Clause 7, page 2, to leave out lines 18 and 19, and insert—

"Personal chattels assigned under a bill of sale shall not be liable to seizure by the grantee for any other than the following causes."

Amendment *agreed to.*

Mr. H. G. ALLEN moved, in Clause 7, page 2, line 36, after "given," to insert—

"And if such consideration shall be wholly or in part the payment of money, then the amount of such money thereupon or theretofore, actually received by the grantor, without deduction."

He thought it was of great importance that there should not be deductions for bonuses and interest, and so on, from the sum actually received by the grantor. It very often happened that very large sums were deducted by the money-lenders, and that the unfortunate and, in frequent instances, ignorant borrower, received a sum which was not the amount represented on the face of the bill. He thought there was a great concurrence of opinion on this point. Over and over again it had been stated by County Court Judges, before whom these cases were now constantly coming, that in almost all cases the borrower was misled by the sum stated on the face of the bill, and that he received only a small proportion of the sum stated in the bill, deductions being made for all kinds of things.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 36, after the word "given," to insert the words "and if such consideration shall be wholly or in part the payment of money, then the amount of such money thereupon or theretofore, actually received by the grantor, without deduction."—(*Mr. Henry Allen.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he thought that, on the whole, it would be better to let the clause stand as at present framed.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Mr. WARTON moved, in page 3, line 5, after the word "grantor," to insert the words "for this purpose." It was only necessary the solicitor should be solicitor to the grantor for this purpose, and those were the words which were suggested in the Paper circulated by the Council of the Incorporated Law Society. If the Attorney General would look into the matter, he would find the insertion of the words would make the clause read more effectively.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 5, after the word "grantor," to insert the words "for this purpose."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, the proposition, although it would do no good, would do no harm. He could not, however, insert the words where the hon. and learned Member proposed to place them, but at the end of the clause. With that modification he would accept the words—

"And is the solicitor of the grantor and not the solicitor of the grantee for this purpose."

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment, to strike out the word "is" after the word "and," in line 5, put, and *agreed to.*

Further Amendment, to add, at the end of the Clause, "for this purpose," put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. MONK proposed, in Clause 10, line 7, to leave out the word "eight," and insert "nine."

Amendment *agreed to.*

Mr. H. G. ALLEN moved the omission of the end of Clause 11 after the word "registrar," in line 16, for the purpose of inserting words to provide that the registrars of the County Courts should be the registrars for the purposes of the Bills of Sale Acts, 1878 and 1882, and should file a copy of the bill of sale, and of the affidavit, and a copy of all the particulars required by the principal Act, in accordance with the provisions contained in the principal Act, and within three clear days after such filing and registration should transmit, in the prescribed form, an abstract of the contents of the bill of sale to the registrar acting under the provisions of the principal Act. The only object of this Amendment was to provide that in country districts the registrar of the County Court should be the registrar under the Act instead of the registrar in London. He believed that the adoption of that regulation would bring about a great saving of expense, and, in the end, no harm would be done, because an abstract would still be sent to London. It would be of great advantage in the country districts, where many of these transactions took place, that a bill of sale should be registered, in the first instance, in the County Court of the district. In the Committee a strong opinion was expressed that bills of sale in country districts should be registered in the County Court of the district.

Mr. MONK begged his hon. and learned Friend's pardon. The Committee were unanimous the other way.

Mr. H. G. ALLEN said, he had been perusing the answers and responses made to the Lord Chancellor upon certain queries as to the working of the Bills of Sale Acts, and he found that there was a great concurrence of opinion, if not among Members of the Committee, yet among the most experienced witnesses examined, that these bills of sale should be registered in the County Courts. Mr. Falconer, a Judge of one of those Courts, of very great experience, said that all bills of sale should be registered in the district where the assignor resided, and it was only necessary to send to the London office a duly examined abstract. A similar response had been received from the County Court Judge of Bedford, who said that the registration of bills of sale in the district County Courts would very much diminish the expense of registration, and such was also the opinion of many other witnesses of the greatest ability and experience. The alteration which he proposed was calculated to give facilities to those who lived in the country to discover what incumbrances there were on the property, and to diminish the expense now incurred; and also the delay in searching for these bills, which at present involved a considerable expenditure of money and time to persons living in remote country districts. They were now required to come up to London in order to conduct their inquiries; and the unnecessary cost thus entailed would be altogether obviated if they were registered, in the first instance, in the district County Courts. No inconvenience would be entailed in London, because the abstract would be sent there within three days of its being filed. Under these circumstances, he proposed to amend the clause in the way suggested by the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 16, to leave out from the word "registrar" to the end of the Clause, in order to insert the words "of the county court in whose district such places are situate, and if such places are in the districts of different registrars, then each such registrar shall be the registrar or registrars for the purposes of the Bills of Sale Acts, 1878, and 1882, and shall file the copy and affidavit, and enter, keep, and index in a register to be kept by him in the office of the said county court, the particulars required by the principal Act in the manner and in accordance with the provisions and regulations contained in the said principal Act with regard to the filing, entry, and registration thereby required, and shall also within three clear days after such filing and registration, transmit an abstract in the prescribed form of the contents of such bill of sale to the registrar acting under the provisions of the principal Act, who shall file, keep, and index every such abstract in the prescribed manner, and shall not be required to file, keep, or index the copy, bill of sale, affidavit, or other particulars relating thereto, except as aforesaid."—(*Mr Henry Allen.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

Mr. MONK said, the Committee were quite unanimous in agreeing to the provision of the Bill as it stood at present—namely, that all bills of sale, which, by the way, must all be sent up to Somerset House to be stamped, should be registered in London. The central Registry was easy of access to everyone. It was a very simple thing for agents in London to take a note of the bills of sale registered here and transmit notices to the country, when an abstract of them could be sent down to the registrars of the County Court where the bills of sale originated. The information would be obtained in that way much earlier by the world in general than if bills of sale were required to be registered in the County Courts of the district in which they were given.

Mr. H. G. ALLEN pointed out that the clause contained a provision requiring an abstract to be sent to London.

Mr. MONK said, that in that case the information would come to London later than it did at present. At present it was transmitted immediately; but under the amended clause there would be a delay. He hoped the House would be unanimous in rejecting the proposal.

Sir JOSEPH M'KENNA also expressed a hope that the Attorney General would not accept the Amendment.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. MELDON said, they had now arrived at a most important clause of the Bill; and he felt so strongly that legislation in this direction was quite wrong that after having first called attention to the serious omission in the clause—Clause 13—he intended to move the rejection of the clause altogether. Clause 13 sought to apply what was known as the "Disputed Ownership" doctrine in a modified form to the Bill. In 1878, the principal objection made to the passing of this clause was that so long as the "Disputed Ownership" Clause was in operation no bill of sale could be looked upon as a *boná fide* or valuable security at all. He wished to point out out that the validity of a bill of sale did not depend upon the grantor being in possession of the goods at the time of the bankruptcy, but whether or not the grantee under a bill of sale was able to come into possession sooner than a wholesale trader who had advanced money on the security of a bill of sale. Wholesale traders might live some distance away from the place where the person who gave the bill of sale was residing; but the usurer would probably live on the spot, and would possess much better means of knowledge and be able to find out more rapidly whether the trader was about to become bankrupt or not. In the case of such bankruptcy, within 24 hours he would be able to obtain possession of the goods, and thereby make valid the bill of sale which was his security; whereas the wholesale dealer, who resided at a distance and had no means of knowing the moment at which a trader became bankrupt, would lose his money in consequence of the "Disputed Ownership" Clause being put in force. The Act of 1878 gave a further protection to the *bonâ fide* holder of a bill of sale, because it was not sufficient to show that the goods were in the actual possession of the grantor; but it was also necessary to show that the possession or apparent possession was with the consent of the person to whom the goods really belonged. This clause was said to be a compromise between the two; but it changed the law materially against the *bonâ fide* holder of a bill of sale, because now, no matter what efforts the *bonâ fide* wholesale dealer made to obtain possession of the goods, even by violence, the money-lender could keep him out, and this new clause actually prevented him from obtaining the value of his goods. This was a departure from the law never known in the Bankruptcy Law before. The most material provision of the Bankruptcy Law was that such a transaction should be with the consent of the person who was the owner of the goods; and he did not think the Attorney General would agree for one moment to accept the clause in its present shape. Having pointed out this omission in the clause, he wished to say, further, that the matter was one upon which he felt strongly, regarding it, as he did, as backward legislation; and he should, therefore, have to put the House to the trouble of dividing upon the subject. He wished the House to understand clearly the position of the question. This Bill was brought in, owing to the action of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, in order to prevent usurers from lending money at exorbitant interest; but it was very well known that in the way of ordinary trade there were many persons who supplied goods on bills of sale, and that a large number of bills of sale were held by wholesale dealers. It was not wise, he thought, to make a material alteration in the law to the prejudice of these wholesale dealers, simply because there was a moment of panic, owing to the fact that usurers were in the habit of lending money on bills of sale. He thought this attempt at legislation had not been very carefully considered. What was the position of affairs? He quite admitted that bills of sale ought to be swept away altogether; but, at the same time, they had no right to allow bills of sale to be a legal and valid security, and then surround them with such provisions that they only became traps and pitfalls to induce persons to invest money in unreal security. Instead of applying the ordinary doctrine of bankruptcy and disputed ownership, it was suggested that it should not apply in a case where the ownership had occurred within a year. The question of validity would not, therefore, apply to goods that had been taken into the possession of the grantee in 12 months; but the bill of sale was made to turn upon the fact whether the goods had been seized within 24 hours or not. Twenty-four hours after the bankruptcy had occurred possession could be taken by the grantee; and this clause, in that case, did not apply, and the Bill, if passed, would, in his opinion, afford no protection at all. The clause simply gave an opportunity to those who lived on the spot, at the last moment, having allowed the trader to obtain all the benefit of having a reasonable possession of the goods, and having, perhaps, by an act of collusion, received early information to take steps for obtaining possession of the goods; whereas a *bonâ fide* holder of a good bill of sale, who did not possess the same means of information, could not do so. The simple effect of this clause was to enable the bankrupt, just before his bankruptcy, to give notice to some favoured creditor who held a bill of sale, and that favoured creditor immediately stepped in and obtained possession of the goods—his bill of sale being valid, while the *bonâ fide* creditor was absolutely shut out. The whole matter was fully considered in 1878, and subsequently, in reference to the Bill which dealt with Ireland. He believed that most people would be willing to abolish bills of sale altogether; but if they were to be valid securities, it was highly improper to surround them with pitfalls and traps such as had been introduced into this Bill. The Attorney General had stated that this was only a compromise, and that it was going back, to some extent, in the direction of the old Act. The old law was not satisfactory;

but he thought he had shown the House that this clause, as it stood, was very much worse than the old law as it was in 1878. He begged to move the rejection of the clause.

Amendment proposed, to leave out Clause 13.—(*Mr. Meldon.*)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that the clause, as affecting the commercial community, was one that had met with the approval of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, who, as he believed, were perfectly well able to protect the interest of those concerned. The hon. Member had, however, pointed out a defect which was quite unintentional; and if he would withdraw his objection to the clause as a whole, he should be perfectly willing to agree to the insertion of the words "by consent and permission of the true owner."

MR. MELDON said, he should have no objection to withdraw his Motion for the purpose of amending the clause, if he could afterwards move its rejection.

MR. SPEAKER: I must point out to the hon. Member that, if the clause is amended, he cannot propose the rejection of the clause at this stage of the Bill.

MR. MELDON said, in that case he would adhere to his Motion for the rejection of the clause.

Question put, "That Clause 13 stand part of the Bill."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 66; Noes 7: Majority 59.—(Div. List, No. 61.)

Amendment proposed,

In Clause 15, page 4, line 7, to leave out from "Company," to end of Clause, and insert "or other body is wound up under 'The Companies Act, 1862,' and the Acts amending the same, any bill of sale given by such Company or body within twelve months next preceding the commencement of the winding-up, shall, as against the liquidators of the Company or body, be void, in respect of any personal chattels which, at or after the commencement of the winding-up are in the possession or apparent possession, or the order and disposition of the said Company or body."—(*Mr. Monk.*)

MR. MELDON said, there were some words in this Amendment to which he objected, inasmuch as they would make the clause really unintelligible, and create, moreover, great difficulty. They were "or other body" wound up under the Companies Act of 1862. The expression "or other body" was one that did not occur in any of the Companies Acts, the wording of which, he thought, ought to be followed in the Amendment. He suggested the omission of the words.

MR. MONK said, he saw no reason for retaining the words objected to, and was willing to agree to their omission throughout the Amendment.

The words "or other body" in line 1, and "or body" in lines 3, 4, and 5 of the Amendment *struck out.*

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment,

After the word "are," in line 7, to add "by consent and permission of the true owner."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment, as amended, *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

In Clause 18, page 4, line 29, leave out the first "and," and insert "on payment of a fee of one shilling, or such other fee as may be prescribed, and subject to such regulations as may be prescribed, and shall be entitled at all reasonable times."—(*Mr. Monk.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

In Clause 18, page 4, line 33, after "stamp," insert "Provided, That the said extracts shall be limited to the dates of execution, registration, renewal of registration, and satisfaction, to the names, addresses, and occupations of the parties, to the amount of the consideration, and to any further prescribed particulars."—(*Mr. Monk.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

MR. O'SHEA said, with the object of making the Bill apply to Ireland, he should move the omission of Clause 19.

Amendment proposed, to leave out Clause 19.—(*Mr. O'Shea.*)

Question proposed, "That Clause 19 stand part of the Bill."

MR. MONK pointed out that the original Bill did not apply to Ireland, which was under a separate Act. He trusted the Amendment would not be pressed.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) objected to the Amendment, the effect of which would be to make the present Bill applicable to Ireland, where there was a distinct system of legislation in respect of bills of sale. The result of engrafting the provisions of this measure upon the system now in force could only be productive of mischief.

Mr. MONK said, he thought it was right that there should be one system of legislation in respect of bills of sale. The want of it had, no doubt, given rise to a great deal of confusion in Ireland. It had given the greatest possible power of extorting enormous sums from unfortunate individuals in Ireland. The mode by which it was proposed to remedy the evil was not a good one; it should be done by the hon. Member, or someone else, this Session introducing a Bill to deal with the law of Ireland. If the hon. Member would do that, the measure would have the support of those who had been Members of the Bills of Sale Act Committee.

Mr. O'SHEA said, that, after the recommendation of his hon. Friend, he should withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Bill to be read the third time upon *Thursday.*

PLACES OF WORSHIP SITES BILL.

(*Mr. Summers, Mr. Richard, Mr. William M'Arthur, Mr. Alderman Cotton.*)

[BILL 97.] COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Summers.*)

Mr. WHITLEY said, he hoped the hon. Member would not proceed with the Committee stage of the Bill at that hour of the morning (2.40). It would deal, he saw, with the lands of Corporations. There were many provisions in it which would have to be carefully considered.

Mr. SUMMERS said, that it would, perhaps, be better to postpone the Committee until Thursday.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Committee *deferred* till *Thursday.*

House adjourned at half after
Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 28th March, 1882.

MINUTES.] — Public Bills — *Committee* — Married Women's Property (13-52).
Third Reading—Settled Land * (19); Conveyancing * (20), and *passed.*

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY BILL.

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

(No. 13.) COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to order); amendments made: The Report thereof to be received on *Tuesday* the 25*th of April* next; and Bill to be *printed* as amended. (No. 52.)

Earl CAIRNS suggested that the third reading of the Bill should be postponed till after the Easter Recess, in order that the Profession might have time to consider the Amendments.

The LORD CHANCELLOR assented to the suggestion as entirely reasonable. The Amendments referred to by his noble and learned Friend were, for the most part, designed to embody in the new Bill certain provisions in the existing law which it was thought desirable to re-enact.

ARMY (DESERTERS).

MOTION FOR A RETURN.

Lord TRURO, in rising to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether the number of recruits shown in the General Annual Returns is that of exclusively new men recruited to the Army, or whether it includes the numerous oft-repeated re-enlistments of deserters; and to move for a Return showing the number of re-enlistments respectively by deserters, said, that he had recently asked the Government to furnish the Annual Army Returns earlier in the Session. Some objection was taken to his request; but he was glad to hear that the Government had taken an opportunity of considering whether they could grant it. But, while it was extremely desirable that the Returns should be furnished earlier, it was still more important that they should be fuller and more accurate, with more uniformity in classification and headings. He had been informed that, even in the Army, considerable trouble and difficulty had occasionally arisen from the headings of the Returns not being uniformly the same. With respect to the accuracy of the Returns, he wished to call their Lordships' attention to a few points in which considerable divergence existed between the Annual Returns presented to Parliament in April, 1880, and the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting for the same year. In the Annual Returns for 1880 the number of desertions was stated to be 3,276, while the Inspector General placed them at 2,384. Then the Inspector General stated the number of recruits to be 22,022, whereas, in the Annual Returns, the number of recruits was shown as 25,535. In speaking of recruits he wished to ask, as it did not appear from the Returns, whether the men who joined the Army from the Militia were below the age at which they could properly be enlisted? Nor was there any allusion whatever in the Inspector General's Report to the recruits who did not come up to be attested. The Annual Returns showed that 6,589 men in 1880 were recruited, but did not attend to be attested. There was also an absence in the Inspector General's Report of a proper classification of men discharged for misconduct. A large number of men had been discharged for illness and misconduct; but some of the Returns were classified so indifferently, that it was difficult to understand what number should come under the different heads. The large number of 8,462 deserters from the Militia was given in the last Return, and this was a serious matter. But what he particularly wished to draw attention to was the number of re-enlistments, because unless they ascertained this it was impossible to understand what the strength of the Army was. If a man deserted and re-enlisted in various parts of the country and was returned each time as a new recruit, the nation was miserably deceived as to the strength of the Army. His sole object in calling attention to the facts and figures was that in future better Returns should be furnished, and at a period of the Session when Parliament would be able to consider them. The noble Lord concluded by moving for the Return of which he had given Notice.

Moved, "That there be laid before this House, Return showing the number of re-enlistments respectively by deserters."—(*The Lord Truro.*)

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, he could assure his noble Friend that this subject, upon which he had asked a Question on a former evening, was occupying the attention of the military authorities of the War Office, and that they were quite as desirous as he himself and their Lordships were to get as early as possible the Returns in question. It was of great importance that they should be obtained as accurately as possible. The noble Lord had criticized the Returns, and said they should be more accurate. He (the Earl of Morley) quite agreed that they should be accurate; but the inaccuracies pointed out were very small, and not of a serious character, being in one case only eight men in 8,000, and in another instance 28 men in 25,000. He could not say exactly how these slight inaccuracies occurred; but he had no doubt they could be explained. The question of fraudulent enlistment was one which caused uneasiness, and they were as anxious as the noble Lord to check them as far as possible. Of course, if a deserter were known, he would not be enlisted at all; but, if he were enlisted, he would come under the head of recruits until discovered, when he would be liable to punishment. A paragraph in the Inspector General's Return showed what it was proposed to do in order to check, as far as possible, those practices. It was proposed that the medical officer should record in the attestation whether he thought the recruit had served before. An order would be issued almost immediately with the view of preventing fraudulent enlistment. Under that order a man offering to enlist would not be accepted unless he should satisfy the officer that his answers as to previous enlistment were to be relied upon. Last year 667 men were convicted of fraudulent enlistment. He regretted that there were so many, and the authorities were very anxious that the crime—for it was nothing less than a crime—should be checked as far as possible. He trusted that with greater care on the part of the medical officers and recruiting sergeants that would be done. The Return for which his noble Friend asked he was afraid it was impossible to give. It would not add much to the information he (the Earl of Morley) had already given to the House.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

STEAMSHIP "VICTORIA."

MOTION FOR A PAPER.

THE EARL OF DUNMORE, in rising to call the attention of the House to the accident that occurred to the South-Eastern Railway Company's Steamship "Victoria" on Tuesday last, the 21st March, off Boulogne, and to move for a copy of the certificate granted to that vessel by the Board of Trade, said, that on Tuesday last he was a passenger by the *Victoria*, which left Folkestone at 11.39 a.m. There was a strong westerly wind, with rough sea, and, the machinery breaking down, the vessel drifted for some time up Channel, but eventually reached Calais harbour in the afternoon. The ship cuold carry over 300 passengers, and yet there were only two small boats on board, which would not hold more than eight people each, and he should be very sorry to be one of them. It was a great sin to send such a ship to sea with only two small boats to fall back upon in an emergency. The travelling public deserved more care and attention. They relied upon Parliament to make laws for their protection, and they looked to the Railway and Shipping Companies to carry out those laws in their integrity. Either the Companies had failed to carry out the regulations of the Board of Trade, or those regulations were insufficient. All he now asked was that some inquiry should be made into the matter, and he would move that a copy of the certificate granted to the vessel by the Board of Trade should be laid before the House.

Moved for, "Passenger certificate granted to the South-Eastern Railway Company's steamship 'Victoria' by the Board of Trade."—(*The Earl of Dunmore.*)

LORD SUDELEY: My Lords, in reply to the noble Earl, I have to state that the steamer *Victoria* holds a certificate from the Board of Trade, authorizing her to carry 356 passengers between Folkestone and Boulogne. The boats she carries are two in number—one of them is a lifeboat and the other a jolly boat, capable of carrying 40 statute adults—namely, 25 and 15 persons respectively. She likewise carries two lifebuoys fit and ready for use. These boats are carried in accordance with a hard-and-fast scale contained in the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854, under which ships are required to be provided with boats, not at all in accordance with the number of passengers they may carry, but in accordance with the net registered tonnage of the ships; and as the size of ships is increasing, and owing to the operation of the tonnage laws, the register tonnage is decreasing, it follows that more passengers may be carried in a steamer provided with fewer boats than at the time of the passing of the Act. The Board of Trade have power to approve of liferafts in substitution for the boats required by statute, but not, as is often erroneously supposed, in addition to those boats. As regards the accident, it appears to have been very much as stated by the noble Earl. The *Victoria* left Folkestone for Boulogne at 11.30 on the 21st of March, with a crew of 21 men and 112 passengers. She encountered a strong breeze, with rough sea; and at 1.10 p.m., while going at the rate of 13 knots an hour, she was struck by a heavy sea. The crank pin of her port engine broke, and it took two hours to disconnect the engines, during which time, being in a disabled state, she drifted for about two hours, going about six miles up Channel. It certainly appeared that the number of boats was in accordance with the number prescribed by the Act of 1854. As soon as the engines were disconnected, she proceeded with her starboard engine, and arrived at Calais at 5 minutes to 4 o'clock. There will be no objection to lay the certificate of the Board of Trade on the Table, together with a Copy of the sections of the Acts of Parliament bearing upon the subject of boats and of the Board's instructions.

In answer to Lord ELPHINSTONE,

LORD SUDELEY said, that the ship, according to Act of Parliament, was bound to carry one lifeboat capable of carrying 25 passengers and one boat capable of carrying 15 passengers. He could not say at that moment whether she carried those boats or not; but he had no reason for supposing that she did not.

Motion *agreed to.*

Ordered to be laid before the House.

Passenger certificate: Laid before the House (pursuant to order of this day), and to be *printed.* (No. 53.)

House adjourned at Six o'clock, till
To-morrow, Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 28th March, 1882.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—Ecclesiastical and Mortuary Fees, *appointed.*

Report—Post Office (Annuities and Life Assurance Policies). [No. 138.]

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—*Resolution* [March 24] *reported.*

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Exmouth Gas *.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Committee*—*Report*—Duke of Albany (Establishment) * [112]; Turnpike Roads (South Wales) * [101].

QUESTIONS.

STREET TRAFFIC (METROPOLIS)—HYDE PARK CORNER.

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether his attention has been drawn to the congested state of the traffic at Hyde Park Corner; and, if he has any objection to state to the House any plans he may have for facilitating its passage at that spot?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Sir, I have been for some time past considering the best mode of providing a remedy for the difficulty at Hyde Park Corner, where the gravest complaints have been made of the danger and inconvenience to the public. With this object I have carefully considered all the many schemes which during the last 10 years have been devised at the Office of Works, or proposed to it from other quarters. The plan which I have selected, and which I propose to carry out, is one which was suggested some years ago by the Secretary to the Office of Works. A line will be drawn from Hamilton Place to Halkin Street, and this, it is proposed, shall be the future boundary of the Green Park; the land between this and the entrance to Hyde Park, and bounded by Piccadilly and Grosvenor Place, will be laid out as an open platz, intersected by such roads as may be necessary, and having in its centre ornamental gardens. This plan will involve the removal of the Wellington Arch from its present position to the point where Constitution Hill will end in the future, and where it will form the entrance gate to the Green Park. There will be broad roads from Hamilton Place to Halkin Street and to Grosvenor Crescent, and Piccadilly and Grosvenor Place may be widened to whatever extent may be necessary. The cost of this scheme is estimated at from £28,000 to £29,000. As the improvement is a Metropolitan one, the Government has thought that the burden of it should not fall upon the general taxpayers. I have, therefore, been in communication with the Metropolitan Board on the subject; and, although the matter has not yet been before the full Board, I have every reason to believe that the Board will contribute £20,000 to the scheme. The Duke of Westminster, who always takes a generous view of his position as a great landowner in London, has also offered £3,000 towards the scheme. The Commissioners of Woods and Forests, as owners of property in Hamilton Place and Piccadilly, will also contribute to the scheme, and I shall submit a Vote to the House for the remainder. I have not yet communicated with the Vestry upon whom the charge of the roads will fall; but I apprehend there will be no objection in this quarter. I have only to add that I will place to-morrow morning in the Library of the House a model showing the alterations intended; and I have great hopes it will be recognized not merely as a complete remedy for the evils complained of, but as forming a new and a fine feature in that part of the Metropolis.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—ADMISSION OF SOLICITORS.

MR. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether he is aware that the Incorporated Law Society in Ireland require a solicitor's apprentice, before being admitted as a solicitor, to obtain a certificate of character signed by two members of the Dublin Law Club, and to give the members of that Club notice of his application to be admitted a solicitor; whether this Club is recognized for this purpose by Statute, or is entirely a private body formed for social purposes only; whether he is aware that its membership is as a rule confined to Dublin solicitors, so that country apprentices are often compelled to obtain the necessary certificates of character from gentlemen with whom they are wholly unacquainted; whether a certificate of character signed by the apprentice's master and his town agent, or any other two solicitors, and a notice posted in the hall of the Four Courts, would satisfy the requirements of the Law Society; whether the Incorporated Law Society, in prescribing the conditions referred to, are acting under the provisions of the Statute, or the Judges Rules regulating the procedure in such cases; whether it is in accordance with the Statute for a private body, not recognized by Law, to exercise a censorship over the solicitors' profession; and, whether, considering the onerous conditions and the heavy expenses imposed on apprentices prior to their admission as solicitors, the Rules in question can be modified or abolished?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, the Incorporated Law Society does not require a solicitor's apprentice to obtain the certificate of character referred to in the Question, nor to give any notice to the members of the Dublin Law Club. Before the recent Judicature Act such certificate and notice were required by the Law Courts for admission as an attorney; but under that Act admission as a solicitor by the Lord Chancellor is sufficient for every Division of the Supreme Court. New forms have been accordingly prepared, but not by the Incorporated Society, and the affidavit of an apprentice now states that notice of his application to be admitted a solicitor has been posted in the Law Club six days before swearing his affidavit. I am informed that the Law Club was founded in 1791 for the advancement of the interests of the solicitors' profession, and is not confined to Dublin solicitors; it is quite distinct from the Incorporated Society.

MR. HEALY wished to know when these rules referred to came into operation, because, as far as he understood, it must have been very recently?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): I think in 1878, and the rule is that the affidavit of the apprentice shall state that the notice of his application for admission was posted six days previously.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY— SUB-INSPECTOR ROGERS.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that Sub-Inspector Rogers, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, stationed in the month of October last in the city of Limerick, was returned by the local bench of magistrates to stand his trial on a charge of assault, the decision of the bench being come to by a vote of seven to one; whether the clerk of petty sessions, by order of the magistrates, wrote to the county inspector of the Royal Irish Constabulary for facilities towards the identification of constables who had been guilty, on the occasion above referred to, of violent attacks upon unoffending persons; whether the magistrates subsequently ordered an application for the same purpose to be made to the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant; whether the Town Council of Limerick, also by public resolution, applied for the names of the offending constables; whether all these applications on the part of the local authorities have hitherto failed to elicit any satisfactory response from either the local officers of constabulary or the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant; whether it is true that Sub-Inspector Rogers has never been placed upon his trial; whether he will be placed upon his trial as directed by the local magistrates; and, whether any explanation will be given of the refusal to facilitate the course of justice in regard to the constables who assaulted the citizens of Limerick?

MR. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, last October, an aggravated assault was committed upon Mr. Henry O'Brien, of Limerick, by Sub-Inspector Henry C. Rogers, and a number of policemen; that, a summons for assault having been heard before the city of Limerick magistrates, when it was given in evidence that Sub-Inspector Rogers struck Mr. O'Brien with his sword, and that the policemen beat him with their rifles, the case was sent for trial to the Munster Winter Assizes; whether it is a fact that the case was subsequently postponed to the Limerick Spring Assizes, that these assizes are now over, and that the case had again been postponed; whether he will inquire into the cause of such repeated postponements; and, whether, in view of the grave charge against him, Sub-Inspector Rogers has been suspended from his duties, pending the decision of a jury on the facts?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir as this Question and that of the hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond) are matters for the Attorney General for Ireland, my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant has requested me to answer both Questions. Sub-Inspector Rogers was committed for trial on a charge of assault while quelling a violent riot in the City of Limerick during the conveyance to prison of a person arrested under the Protection Act. The informations were laid before me as Attorney General for Ireland by the Crown Solicitor, according to the practice of criminal procedure, for my direction, and having read and considered them I directed him not to prosecute. The Sub-Inspector, therefore, has not been put on trial, and I do not intend to prosecute. As to the other matters in these Questions, the clerk of petty sessions, by direction of the magistrates, sent copies of the informations to the County Inspector, with a request that he would make all necessary inquiries for the guidance of the magistrates and report the result for their information. Subsequently the copy informations were sent by the magistrates through their chairman to the Government, with a request that they should be directed as to what steps should be taken on an application by the complainants that an opportunity might be afforded them to identify the person mentioned in the informations. His Excellency, for the reason stated in his reply, declined to accede to the application. I am not aware whether any application was made by resolution of the Town Council.

MR. SEXTON asked the right hon. and learned Gentleman if he would state the reason for not prosecuting?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, the reason is the same as that upon which every Attorney General proceeds—that of using his own judgment in the matter, and exercising the discretion with which he is invested, and for the exercise of which he is responsible in such cases. In my opinion it was not a case which ought to be submitted to a petty jury, and my direction was given in reference to it along with many other cases in which I gave similar directions for the present Assizes. I formed my opinion upon the informations which were laid before me.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — MR. MARTIN HUBON.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that Mr. Martin Hubon, now imprisoned under the Coercion Act in Enniskillen Gaol, is being treated by the prison doctor for an affection of the eyes, which puts his sight in danger; whether the Enniskillen Gaol is an old building, and the cell occupied by Mr. Hubon narrow and dark, with a high and very small window, causing a dimness injurious to a person suffering in the manner described; and, whether the Government will order the removal of Mr. Hubon to Kilmainham, where he will have facility for consulting an oculist competent to deal with his case?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that he was informed that Mr. Martin Hubon had suffered from an affection of the eyes all his life; the cell in Enniskillen Gaol which he occupied was not narrow or dark, the windows being high and affording ample light; neither was it likely to be injurious to a person suffering from such an affection. He would take care that Mr. Hubon, in compliance with his request, should be removed to Kilmainham, where he would be able to consult a competent oculist.

LAW AND POLICE—PERSONS FOUND DROWNED IN THE THAMES.

MR. ALDERMAN W. LAWRENCE asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, Whether the attention of the Board has been directed to the large number of persons found drowned in the Thames, between Vauxhall Bridge and Blackfriars Bridge, in front of the Embankments; and, whether he will bring before the Board the question of the advisability of affixing life chains to the Embankment walls, throughout their whole length, in order to afford some assistance to drowning persons who may succeed in reaching the walls?

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: Sir I have observed in the newspapers with regret frequent mention of bodies having been found in the Thames between Vauxhall and Blackfriars Bridges; but

I am not aware that this is attributable in any way to the absence of chains on the Embankment walls. Suggestions that chains should be so placed have been made; but the Metropolitan Board have considered that, inasmuch as they would not be available at all times of the tide, they would be of no practical use.

Mr. Alderman W. LAWRENCE said, that the chains he had alluded to would be available at all times, because they would have to be so placed as to be so.

Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG said, he thought that hon. Members ought not to make speeches when asking Questions.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. PATRICK GIBBONS.

Mr. SEXTON (for Mr. Biggar) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Patrick Gibbons has been in prison as a suspect since May last; whether he has been under medical treatment in Galway Gaol for the past six months; and, whether, under the circumstances, there is any reason why he should be further detained in prison?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that Mr. Patrick Gibbons' name appeared on the doctor's books on the 18th October, and then his name did not appear until the 18th of March. He had been under medical treatment, as suffering from constipation, but was now in perfectly good health. His case was under the consideration of the Lord Lieutenant.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MESSRS. FITZGERALD AND BEGLEY.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that Mr. Michael Fitzgerald, of Cappoquin, County Waterford, has been released from prison, while Mr. Begley, of the same place, who was arrested at the same time, and on suspicion of the same offence, is still in custody; and, if he will state why Mr. Begley has not been released?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that it was true that these persons were arrested at the same time and on the same warrant; but it did not follow that there were the same grounds for arrest. It was under consideration whether Mr. Begley could be released, as Mr. Fitzgerald had been; but upon that point he could not as yet give any answer.

POST OFFICE—CONVENTION OF PARIS—SEIZURE OF THE "IRISH WORLD" NEWSPAPER.

Mr. HEALY asked the Postmaster General, in reference to the seizure of the "Irish World" in the post, Upon what authority the Government translate the word "perte" in the phrase "En cas de perte d'un envoi recommandé," in Article 6 of the Postal Convention of Paris, to mean "a thing lost which cannot be found;" and, if he has any objection to lay upon the Table of the House the authorized translation of Article 6 which has been made from the French for the other countries included in the Postal Union?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General has asked the Irish Office to answer this Question. The authority on which the Government translate the French word *perte* in this sentence as "a loss of a thing which cannot be found" is that that phrase is the accurate equivalent in English for the word here used in French. The Convention is in the French language; but there is no authorized translation. Each country party to the Convention translates it for itself.

Mr. HEALY asked if the right hon. and learned Gentleman could refer him to any authority for this translation, literary or otherwise?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): I think the hon. Gentleman can hardly require any such authority. I apprehend the origin of the word in the modern classic French is the Latin word *perdo*. It has its equivalent in the Greek word *apoballo*, meaning "to cast away from you and absolutely destroy."

STATE OF IRELAND—THE DROGHEDA TOWN COUNCIL — INTRUSION OF THE POLICE.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that a number of witnesses are prepared to prove that the words used by the sub-inspector of police at the Drogheda Town Council meeting on the occasion of the late election for mayor, are those which were reported in the press, and not those alleged by the official himself; if he will grant an inquiry into the matter; by whose instructions the police attended the meeting of the Corporation on the day in question; by whose instructions the constabulary attend meetings of the Drogheda Independent Club; and, whether, seeing that the members of the Club object to their presence, he will give orders that their attendance shall be discontinued?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that, having again inquired into the subject, he was quite satisfied of the accuracy of the answers he made to previous Questions as to the conduct of the Sub-Inspector of police at the Drogheda Town Council meeting on the occasion of the election of Mayor. The police attended the meeting by order of a superior officer, who acted on information received. He had no doubt that the Constabulary had also acted rightly in attending the meetings of the Drogheda Independent Club; but he would make further inquiries if the hon. Member liked to repeat his Question on Thursday or Friday.

Mr. HEALY: I will not repeat the Question. I think the best course for the Drogheda Independent Club is to put the police out.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ALLEGED PROSELYTISM AMONG PERSONS IMPRISONED UNDER THE ACT.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that religious tracts have been placed in the cells of Catholic suspects in Limerick Prison; and if this has been done with the sanction of Her Majesty's Government?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he found that one paper of a religious character—not a tract—was found in the cell of one of the Roman Catholic prisoners in December last. The Inspector of the Prisons Board inquired into the matter at the time, but failed to discover how the paper had got into the cell. On the 28th December the Board issued strict orders to prevent the introduction of any unauthorized publications into the prison. That was the only instance of the kind which had been brought to his notice by the Prisons Board.

INLAND REVENUE—BEER LICENCES (IRELAND).

Mr. R. POWER asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he is aware that persons in Ireland who sell beer merely by retail, for which they pay a Licence Duty of £1 5*s.*, have, in addition, to pay the sum of £3 6*s.* 1¾*d.* for a wholesale dealer's licence, which does not authorize the sale of less than four and a-half gallons, while retailers of beer in England are not required to take out this second licence; and, whether, in the next Revenue Bill, he will relieve Irish traders from paying for this extra licence in cases where it is not required?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Gladstone), in reply, said, that the Question was answered by him last year, and he probably could not do better than refer the hon. Member to the reply which was then given as to the details; and the real difficulty was this—that he did not think the hon. Member had quite accurately apprehended the difference of the law between England and Ireland, as to which the apparent inequality arose. It was not owing to any difference in the charge made by the Inland Revenue authorities; but to the fact that in England separate beer licences could be taken under the authority of the magistrates, whereas in Ireland they could not. The question of equalizing the law might be a proper subject for consideration, and in regard to that he should defer very much to the opinion of those connected with Ireland; but it was not a matter to be dealt with in a Revenue Bill, as the licences were not issued by the Revenue Department, but were under the control of the magistrates, and involved matters of police, &c., which it would not be suitable for the Revenue Department to deal with.

STATE OF IRELAND—THE LADIES' LAND LEAGUE—JUDGE BARRY AND MISS M'CORMACK.

Mr. J. R. YORKE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the following extract from the "Daily Express" of last week:—

> "A deputation of the citizens waited on Judge Barry, at his lodgings, Barrington Street, Limerick, this morning, for the purpose of requesting his Lordship to use his influence with the Government to have Miss McCormack, a member of the Dublin Ladies' Land League, released from the County Prison, where she is detained on a warrant issued by Mr. Clifford Lloyd, special resident magistrate, in default of finding sureties of 'good behaviour.' Judge Barry, in reply, said that, as a judge, he could not interfere in any way whatever with the matter, and could not receive the deputation in his judicial capacity; but, as Charles Barry and a citizen of Limerick, he was always glad to see his fellow-townsmen, and in that capacity alone he would use any private influence he had in forwarding the object of the deputation, and would write a private note to-day to the Chief Secretary, requesting, if it were possible to do so, that Miss McCormack should be released. The deputation thanked his Lordship for the courteous manner in which they were received, and withdrew;"

whether he had yet received the private note from the learned judge; and, if so, what answer has been returned?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I have seen the statement in *The Daily Express*, and I have also received a letter marked private from Judge Barry, to which I have given a reply. As the documents are of a private nature, I do not think I should be asked to answer the Question.

Mr. J. R. YORKE asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he was prepared to draw a distinction between the learned Judge's action in his public and private capacity?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I do not think I am called upon to define that.

MINERAL LEASES — INSECURITY OF TENANTS' CAPITAL.

Mr. ROLLS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he has any objection to lay upon the Table Copies of any letters and memorials, which he and the Secretary of State for the Home Department have received from Mr. Colborne, on the subject of insecurity of tenants' capital under mineral leases?

Mr. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, that inquiry had been made about the matter, and the only cognizance he had of it was that a letter was addressed to him by the gentleman referred to in the Question, which he (Mr. Gladstone) sent on to the Home Office in case his right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department should find it would be a matter for his jurisdiction. Some conversation took place between his right hon. and learned Friend and this gentleman. It did not appear that it was a matter which could properly be laid in the form of a public document before the House, inasmuch as it seemed to concern simply miscarriage and inequality of private arrangements, which was really a matter for the discretion of the parties. Even if it related to the law on mineral leases, he did not know if it would be a matter for the Government to deal with; but they could not produce a private paper.

YOUNG IRELAND LITERARY SOCIETY, DUBLIN—ALLEGED INTRUSION OF THE POLICE.

Mr. REDMOND said, he wished to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland a Question which, probably, as he had so recently come from the seat of war, he might be able to answer now. The Question was with reference to the interference by the police in Dublin with a meeting held two nights ago of the Young Ireland Literary and Debating Society. He (Mr. Redmond) had previously got an answer which led him to suppose that the interference of the police would be deprecated in the future. He wished now to know from the right hon. Gentleman, Whether the police were authorized in any way in insisting upon getting the names of the chairman, secretary, and persons attending the meeting; whether the interference of the police on that occasion was authorized by the right hon. Gentleman; and, whether the police had general authority to enter any private house for the purpose of seeing what was going on?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I must ask the hon. Member to give Notice of his Question.

Mr. HEALY asked whether any owner of a private house, which was entered without warrant, could eject the intruder?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson), in reply, said, it depended entirely on what was going on inside.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolution [24th March] *reported.*

Said Resolution read a second time.

MR. MAC IVER, who had a Notice of Motion on the Paper to reduce the sum asked for by £1,500, said, one reason, amongst others, for putting this Notice upon the Paper was that he felt he had received some provocation from the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Charles W. Dilke). But the House had nothing to do with anything that might be regarded as a personal question between the hon. Baronet and himself; and it devolved upon him, upon public grounds, to show some reasons of dissatisfaction with the general proceedings of the Foreign Office sufficient to justify him in putting the Motion on the Paper. There were abundance of such reasons. The hon. Baronet had published letters which appeared in the newspapers; and there was, no doubt, a very general feeling throughout the country that the Government had received certain valuable concessions relating to shipping and goods from the French Government. He should like to know whether the sum asked for by the Foreign Office in this Report of Supply included any payment in respect of recent or present negotiations in regard to French commercial matters?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: No, Sir; none. ["Order!"] I understand the hon. Member to ask a definite question. My answer is in the negative. That sum was voted some weeks ago.

MR. MAC IVER went on to say that he thought he was justified in assuming that there were no negotiations going on at the present moment, or, if there were, that the cost of those negotiations was not included in the present Estimate. [SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: There are no negotiations.] He should like to ask whether the sum which the Foreign Office asked for included payment for Blue Books which had recently been issued by them; and, if so, he should like to ask, and he thought it but reasonable to do so, whose duty it was to prepare those Blue Books and to revise their contents? He also thought he was entitled to ask, in view of the letters which had appeared in the newspapers and the statements which had appeared in the Press, why it was that that duty should have been neglected, and how it was that the contents of the Blue Books, as a matter of fact, did not correspond with that which Members of the Government led the public, whether intentionally or otherwise, to believe? If it was a fact that the Government did obtain concessions with regard to bounties upon shipbuilding and on navigation, he asked why were those concessions not shown in the Blue Books, and why did not the Blue Books correspond with that which had been stated? He (Mr. Mac Iver) had examined the Blue Books, and had employed others to do so; and he did not find in them any confirmation whatever of the view that the Government received any concessions whatever from the French Commissioners in regard to bounties on shipping, or any that were worth having in relation to cargo. Under these circumstances, he thought he was perfectly justified in asking these questions. The amount by which he proposed that the Vote should be reduced was precisely equivalent to the salary of the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; but he was sure that the hon. Baronet himself would believe that there was no one in that House more unwilling than he (Mr. Mac Iver) that any actual reduction should be made in that payment, which he was sure the hon. Baronet very hardly earned. The duties of the hon. Baronet's position were such that, if the Forms of the House permitted him, instead of moving that the salary should be reduced, he would have preferred to move that more money should be paid, and that the hon. Baronet should be properly assisted in the Department in which he held such an important place. He had not the slightest doubt the hon. Baronet did all he could; but he (Mr. Mac Iver) wished he was less overworked and that he was more accurate. And he thought he was not out of Order in calling attention to the general fact that the duties of the Foreign Office were not well performed. He had but a few more words to say, and that was in reference to what he conceived to be the proper duties of private Members in that House in relation to the Foreign Office. He thought that a Member who represented, as he (Mr. Mac Iver) represented, an important commercial constituency—a shipbuilding and a shipowning constituency — a constituency of a port which, if not the largest, was certainly the second port in the Kingdom, had a right to ask reasonable questions of the Government in regard to commercial negotiations which were under the control of the Foreign Office. He admitted to the fullest extent that the justification of any question which he might have asked, or which he might yet ask, depended altogether upon the reasonableness of such questions. He thought he was justified in asking questions in regard to matters upon which he individually was perfectly well informed, and respecting which he knew beforehand what the reply of the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs ought to be if he wished to give information to the House of Commons on the subject. When he asked in the future for information, as he had asked for it in the past, it might be upon matters upon which he was perfectly well informed himself, for the purpose of pinning the Government to some statement by which information should be given to hon. Members in the House who were not concerned in shipowning constituencies, and to hon. Members who really lacked information on such subjects. He thought that the Ministerial replies to questions so asked ought to be of a nature to give *bonâ fide* information to the House and to the public on any subject on which the Government might reasonably and properly be interrogated. The proceedings of the Foreign Office, and especially of the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, if the latter would permit the comparison, reminded him of what Mark Twain, the American humorist, once said. He undertook to deliver a course of lectures, and said he could lecture best upon those subjects which he least understood, because then he should feel less trammelled in anything he might have to say. That was a truthful description of the replies of the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He (Mr. Mac Iver) moved the reduction of the Vote, not in any serious desire to press that reduction to a division, but simply in order that he might express the hope that the Foreign Office would in the future make a more reasonable use than they had done in the past of the money voted to them, and would take a proper view of the duty, which he ventured to think devolved upon them, of giving accurate information to the House.

Amendment proposed, to leave out "£3,631,600," in order to insert "£3,630,100,"—(*Mr. Mac Iver,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That '£3,631,600' stand part of the said Resolution."

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he only wished to say one or two words, not so much with reference to the protest which had just been made, but to ask the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government, and also his hon. Friend opposite (Sir Charles W. Dilke), whether any steps had been taken to secure the execution of the reforms in Turkey stipulated by the Treaty of Berlin? A long time had elapsed without any steps having been taken to carry out these stipulations as far as the Government was concerned. His hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had told the House more than once that the Government were not able to act alone in this matter, and that they were obliged to invoke the Concert of Europe. But he (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) thought that, as all were agreed upon the necessity of these reforms being carried out, Her Majesty's Government could not entirely get rid of their responsibility of taking the initiative simply because there had been a change of Government. The late Government had taken a leading part in the Berlin negotiations, and the Government could not now refuse to take a prominent place in seeing that the terms of that Treaty were fulfilled. His hon. Friend had told him on one or two occasions that there had been no apprehensions of any difficulty arising between Germany and Russia, and he would fully admit that the Government must know best what was going on in official circles; but, judging from what was appearing in the newspapers, he could not but say that there were evidences of the spirit of the people in the two countries which were far more significant than the assurances of Governments, and which seemed to him to give reasons for apprehending a movement of a Pan-Slavonic character which might seriously endanger the peace of Europe. He could not help thinking that if we were to resist this Panslavic inroad, and if we were to maintain the peace of Europe in the East, no course could be better calculated to attain that object than the establishment of autonomies in the East of Europe, and it would be perfectly in accordance with the Treaty of Berlin. On more than one occasion the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had expressed his views in favour of the speedy establishment of autonomies in the Turkish Empire; and he quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that without such changes the confusion in that part of the world was likely to be intensified. He should therefore be glad of some assurance on the point. He was sorry not to see the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies in his place, but he presumed he was agreeably engaged in East Cornwall in electioneering; but if he had been in the House he (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) would have liked to have asked him whether he was prepared to lay upon the Table of the House the recent Constitution granted to Cyprus? and to have put a question as to the late census of the inhabitants of the Island. It was perfectly plain to his mind that the Constitution that had been established ought to have been founded upon fair distribution of power amongst the different nationalities of Cyprus; and he hoped that the Government would, before long, lay upon the Table of the House a statement of the principles on which the institutions had been given, as well as the basis upon which such principles had been arrived at. In the present state of Europe, and with the somewhat alarming accounts given in the newspapers as to the excitement in Germany and Russia, it would be satisfactory to learn the steps adopted by the Government for the maintenance of order in Eastern Europe.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he would not be in Order in making any reference to what had just fallen from the hon. Gentleman the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) with regard to Cyprus. With regard to the observations of the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver), that hon. Gentleman appeared to have moved the reduction of the Vote by the amount of his (Sir Charles W. Dilke's) salary for one year; but he could not understand upon what principle he had done so, as it was rather hard that the hon. Member should move the reduction of his salary for a whole year upon a Vote which was only for two months on account. The hon. Member ought to have divided the sum by six and taken the Income Tax off. The references that the hon. Member had made to his geniality had taken away the sting of his remarks; but that geniality could not be expected to continue if, while his official duties remained the same, his income was altogether taken away. Now, he did not think that the details of the negotiations as to the French Commercial Treaty could be very conveniently discussed on the present occasion. As the hon. Member had said, the subject was one in which his constituency and the shipping interest in general were nearly concerned; but the House had never shown any great disposition to follow the remarks of the hon. Member, and he hoped he might suggest, without any disrespect, that some of the hon. Member's observations were more suitable to his constituency than to the House of Commons. The hon. Member apparently had attacked the Foreign Office on the singular ground of his belief in what had been written and published in the newspapers by certain hon. Members below the Gangway on that side of the House. He (Sir Charles W. Dilke) was unacquainted with those articles, or with their authors, and did not know to what the hon. Member was referring. The hon. Member had asked whether the money that the Blue Books cost was included in this Vote. It was not, although the responsibility for the preparation of these particular Blue Books rested upon him (Sir Charles W. Dilke), and he was perfectly prepared to accept the responsibility. The hon. Gentleman had also stated, *inter alia*, that the Blue Books did not confirm the replies given in the House as to the negotiations for the Commercial Treaty, with reference, in particular, to the French shipping bounties and the *surtaxe d'entrepôt*. The question of the bounties on shipping he thought they had settled together the other day. The hon. Member complained that the Government had made no further representations as to the bounties; but that was not the case. Representations had, as a matter of fact, been made, but without result, as no Tariff Treaty or Treaty dealing with that subject had yet been concluded. With regard to the *surtaxe d'entrepôt*, the hon. Gentleman was mistaken in supposing that we did not reap any benefit in connection with it, because reductions had been made under the Belgian Treaty, and we enjoyed these reductions under the "Most Favoured Nation" Clause. With regard to the other portion of the *surtaxe d'entrepôt* case—namely, that which affected the Canadian trade through England, as contrasted with the Canadian trade through the United States, he had already twice told the hon. Member that we had obtained concessions from the French negotiators; and in the event of a Treaty having been made with France, those concessions would have been carried out. The hon. Gentleman had taken all the sting away from his observations by remarking that the Foreign Office Vote ought rather to be increased than diminished; and, therefore, he thought he could safely leave that question with the House. Passing to the observations of his hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth respecting the necessity of reforms in the Turkish Empire, he could only say that he concurred with him when he asked the Government not to repudiate the initiative in these matters. They did not repudiate the initiative; they had always taken the initiative as regarded the Provinces of European Turkey, and they continued to lead the concerted action of the European Powers at the present. He regretted as much as the hon. Gentleman could regret the slowness with which these matters were progressing; but it was useless to conceal the fact that other Powers did not feel so acutely upon the subject as we did ourselves. With regard to the reforms in the European Provinces, the Government had pressed the Armenian reforms. They had applied greater pressure with regard to these reforms, and they had received very strong assurances from the Turkish Government that the reforms would very shortly be carried out in Armenia. The only step, however, that had been taken up to the present time had been the removal of a few Provincial Governors, whose characters had been reported upon unfavourably, and the appointment of various Sub-Governors. He agreed with his hon. Friend in thinking that the reforms, of course, were greatly to be desired in the interests of Turkey herself, especially at a time when there were feelings abroad such as those to which the hon. Member had alluded; but the Government had no reason at the present time to apprehend any danger of a European war.

Mr. O'SHEA said, he hoped the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver) would not press his Amendment, although, in his (Mr. O'Shea's) opinion, he and other private Members had reason to complain of some of the answers as to foreign affairs given by the hon. Baronet, who had never given the House any real information as to our commercial negotiations with France and Spain. As a rule, the hon. Baronet's replies were terse, and conveyed no meaning whatever. He (Mr. O'Shea) had asked yesterday whether it was true that the Spanish Government had asked our Government to enter into serious commercial negotiations, and had suggested that they should take place at Madrid. The only answer given by the hon. Baronet was that the Spanish Government had asked that negotiations should take place at Madrid, and not a word had been said as to the reply of our Government or the appointment of Commissioners to negotiate. And on many other occasions the very minimum of information had been given by the hon. Baronet, and something always seemed to be kept back, with the air, perhaps, less of a Machiavelli than of a Talleyrand. He wished to know whether the Government intended to enter upon negotiations with the Spanish Government at Madrid; and, if so, whether they would appoint Commissioners?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE, in reply, said, that he had accurately and completely answered the Question as it appeared on the Paper yesterday, but had not entered into matters as to which no inquiry had been made. His hon. Friend did not ask that which he now asked, and he did not know whether his hon. Friend wished him to go further and to say what answer had been given by Her Majesty's Government. However, he might add that instructions on the subject were being drawn up for communication to Her Majesty's Minister in Madrid; but they had not yet been sent.

Mr. O'SHEA: Are negotiators to be sent?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: We do not think it necessary to send special

Commissioners, having full confidence in Her Majesty's Minister at Madrid.

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL said, that he was anxious to dissociate himself from the sentiments of the hon. Members opposite and below him (Mr. Mac Iver and Mr. O'Shea). He desired to say that, in his opinion, during the last two years no Department of the Government was administered with more conspicuous skill and courtesy than that administered by the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Mac Iver) at one time would move to reduce the Vote and at another to increase it, on the ground that the pressure of work was so great that the Under Secretary of State had no leisure to acquaint himself with the subjects brought to his notice, and was thereby driven to give inaccurate and untrustworthy information. So far from that being the case, nothing had been more remarkable than the accuracy and conciseness of the answers of the hon. Baronet, except the courtesy which he had always maintained in the face of very strong provocation. The answers of the hon. Baronet were such that any Member of the Government might be proud to imitate. The information given had been trustworthy, and it had been given with a point and decision, and with an extreme urbanity of manner, which had never been more conspicuous than when to-day he replied to those questions which the hon. Member for Birkenhead thought reasonable, but to which many Members would apply a very different term.

Mr. MAC IVER asked to withdraw his Motion. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] He would only add that if the tone of the hon. Baronet had always been what it had been that day he should never have brought the matter forward.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. SEXTON said, the Members of the Irish Party entertained a profound objection to the method of dealing with public money contemplated by the present Vote. The taking of public money by Votes on Account seemed to be growing into a practice and hardening down into a system; and he could conceive of no system better calculated to make the Government irresponsible, and to withdraw from the House of Commons its chief Constitutional function of criticizing the expenditure of the State. In the course of the summer they might ask for another Vote on Account, and then, as now, they might ask to postpone discussion; and finally, when the Vote for the balance was taken, and when by common consent the occasion had arrived for Constitutional criticism, the Dog-days would also have arrived, and the House of Commons would not be in a position to give the Vote that criticism which the public interest required. Irish Members, however, were not disposed to interfere between English Members and the Government; and, therefore, the reduction which he meant to move on the Vote should have reference only to items of expenditure for purposes of State in Ireland.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must inform the hon. Gentleman that after the Motion which has just been decided upon by this House no further reduction can be moved, because the House has affirmed that the original sum shall stand part of the Resolution. The hon. Member is at liberty to make any observations he pleases in reference to the Vote; but he cannot move its reduction.

Mr. SEXTON: Then I will confine myself to observations with reference to Ireland.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR, as a point of Order, wished to ask whether it was not competent for an hon. Member now to move for a reduction of the Vote smaller than that which had been moved by the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver)? Would it, for instance, not be competent for the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) to move for the reduction of the Vote by £1,200?

Mr. SPEAKER: The vote of the House was to this effect—the Question is, "That the sum of £3,631,600 stand part of the proposed Resolution." The House having resolved that in the affirmative, it is obvious that the amount cannot now be reduced.

Mr. SEXTON said, he apprehended at once the force of the right hon. Gentleman's ruling; and he should therefore strictly confine himself to observations on the item for the Office of Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant and that of Irish Prisons. He might say a great deal with reference to the manner in which the Civil Service in Ireland as regarded the prisons had lately been administered; that from time to time in that House he had felt it his painful duty to expose the manner in which, in the name of the resources of civilization, the instincts of barbarism had been applied with intense gratification; but, at present, he would confine himself to an inquiry into the present condition of the question of the imprisonment of three Members of Parliament in an Irish prison by a Government of which the Chief Secretary for Ireland was the principal responsible Officer in Ireland. He said the present condition, because the condition of the question with regard to these three hon. Gentlemen had within the last few days—he might say within the last few hours—very gravely and materially changed. In the first place, these hon. Gentlemen were not imprisoned in pursuance of any judicial process, any verdict of a jury, or any finding of a Judge. They were imprisoned on what was called "reasonable suspicion" in the mind of an Irish subordinate of the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government; and if the Government saw any reason to order their release, nothing more was necessary than to instruct the subordinate, and they would be released as a matter of course. Why were these hon. Gentlemen imprisoned? He (Mr. Sexton) was in a position to state the exact words of the Chief Secretary for Ireland on this point. He said, in a public letter, which was in strict keeping with previous declarations in this House, that the Coercion Act was intended to be used for the purpose of prevention, and not for the purposes of punishment. He asked the right hon. Gentleman for the purpose of preventing what? For the purpose of preventing the illegal acts contemplated by the Coercion Act—namely, acts of violence and intimidation. Passing on to the next point, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the telegram he was about to read accurately represented the facts to which it referred? This telegram was addressed to him (Mr. Sexton) by the hon. Members for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) and the Counties of Tipperary (Mr. Dillon) and Roscommon (Mr. O'Kelly), and was dated yesterday, from the prison, Kilmainham—

"We have written to the Chief Secretary asking to be permitted to take part in the division on Mr. Marriott's Amendment, and undertaking to refrain from any action in any other political matter during our absence from prison, and after the division to return to Ireland, and surrender ourselves to the Lord Lieutenant."

He (Mr. Sexton) now wished the Prime Minister and the House—he wished the Government and the country to clearly understand that these hon. Gentlemen had not taken this step of their own motion. He most firmly believed that the spirit which had sustained them through weary months of imprisonment would have animated them yet, and kept them silent; but they had made this application in obedience to the unanimous wish of their Colleagues in Parliament. If they had consulted their own feelings, they would have made no application on that or any other subject to the right hon. Gentleman; and it was only in deference to the wishes of others, and in obedience to their sense of duty to their country and to the mandate given by their constituents of the city of Cork and the counties of Tipperary and Roscommon that the application had been made. And why had it been made? Because they were on the eve of a trial of strength the most momentous that had distinguished the Parliamentary history of this century. It would be an idle task to compare the division to be taken on Thursday night with any other division. It would be no ordinary division, but an extraordinary one, perhaps the most extraordinary that had ever been taken in that House, for it was the first step in proceedings which proposed to uproot and shatter the Parliamentary Constitution which had been the slow accretion and natural growth of centuries. It proposed not merely to vitally alter the Constitution of that House, but also permanently to limit and restrict the rights of individual Members. Why, it was not merely because the Constitution of the House, as a whole, was threatened by these Resolutions, but also because by virtue of them their right, the most valuable, sacred, and hitherto cherished right of every individual Member—the right of free, unrestricted speech—was about to be taken away. It was for that reason that he claimed, for those three absent Members who were detained in prison, and who had as good a right as he or his Leader had to be heard and to vote on a question that concerned not merely their constituents and country, but their own personal exercise of their political, Constitutional, and Parliamentary rights, the right to decide as freely as any other hon. Members of that House. Having shown, in the first place, the circumstances under which those hon. Gentlemen were imprisoned, and the unquestionable gravity of the occasion when desired to be present, he would proceed to ask briefly what were the terms under which they wished to come to that House? They were imprisoned under suspicion, and, therefore, could not lawfully be punished, but only detained. The only moral reason and the only legal reason why the right hon. Gentleman, upon the authority given him by that House, could have a right to detain his hon. Colleagues was, that he apprehended that their release might lead to incitement to acts of violence or intimidation, or other acts punishable by law, and specified in the Coercion Act. In all the discussions on the subject, he would admit that he never felt that he could completely reply to the argument which might be advanced on the side of the Government. If they released these Gentlemen, what assurance had they that they would not repeat the acts of alleged misconduct of which they were suspected? He might have replied—and it was the only answer he could give—that the imprisonment they had already suffered had probably been long enough for the acts for which they were suspected, even if they had been found guilty; and if they were released and again misconducted themselves, the Government had their Coercion Act, their policemen, their warrants, and their gaols, and could renew the imprisonment and protect society against them; but now he had a different argument. He had the proffered word of honour of these three hon. Gentlemen, and he did not suppose that either of the right hon. Gentlemen or any Member of the House would question for a moment the adequacy of the word of honour of any one of these three hon. Members as a guarantee in respect of his future conduct. What was the demand they made, and what were the terms they offered? They asked to be allowed to come to that House on Thursday evening and exercise, in the most limited and restricted form, their Parliamentary right to vote on the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Marriott) to the Resolution of the Prime Minister in regard to the 1st Rule of Procedure. They did not ask to be even permitted to speak, but only to vote. In what direction they would vote it was not for him (Mr. Sexton) to say, and the Government were too high-minded to inquire. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) had said that if the Government had been willing to release them in order that they might vote on their own side; such conduct would be worthy of the highest reprobation. Perhaps the Government were afraid that their votes might be given on the other side; and even supposing they knew such to be the case, was that a reason why they should, any the less, release them for that purpose? Let him put in brief words the sum total of the engagement in that telegram. The hon. Gentlemen the Members for Cork, Tipperary, and Roscommon, on being released, pledged their word of honour that they would proceed to that House, that in that House they would limit themselves to voting on the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Brighton; that, having voted on that Amendment, they would return to Ireland, and all the time vigorously abstain from any political action, and personally tender themselves to the Chief Secretary for Ireland. If the Coercion Act was not for punishment but prevention, why would such an offer be refused? On what special pleading could the Chief Secretary for Ireland assert that the prevention which was the object of their imprisonment would be less effectually carried out in that House than in Kilmainham? Nothing more was asked by these hon. Members than was freely granted to prisoners of war. Prisoners of war taken red-handed were released on parole; the sole condition being that during their parole they should not take part in the conflict. What was the conflict in the present case? It was the agitation in Ireland, and the three hon. Members pledged their honour that during the period of their parole they would not take part in that agitation. He trusted he had fully shown that there was no possible conceivable danger to law and order involved in the granting of that demand. He had also, he thought, shown that the Chief Secretary for Ireland was bound by the maxim he had laid down, limiting the purposes of the Coercion Act to prevention, to release these hon. Gentlemen, it being clearly proved to him that there was no danger on their parts of a repetition of illegal practices. There was one further argument on which the Chief Secretary for Ireland was bound by his administration of the Coercion Act to release these Gentlemen for the purpose mentioned. He was bound to say, in justice to the right hon. Gentleman, that he had not been slow to grant releases upon parole. One man was released because of something in connection with his shop, and another because of something in connection with his farm; and the cases had been numerous in which the right hon. Gentleman had allowed men to proceed from gaol to their farms to carry out some domestic or business requirement. In no single case had the right hon. Gentleman found the parole broken. The difficulty he (Mr. Sexton) believed was in the opposite direction; because, on at least one occasion, the right hon. Gentleman persisted in regarding the release as permanent, while the "suspect" insisted it had been only temporary. The prisoner returned to the gaol and persisted in his demand to be re-taken into custody. How could the right hon. Gentleman reconcile that inconsistency? When the state of feeling was such in Ireland that men in the humbler ranks of society kept their parole, and returned to prison rather than bring the dimmest constructive stain upon their characters, the evidence was ample to show that the parole of the three hon. Members now in prison was sufficiently guaranteed. Men had been allowed out on parole to till their farms, and had been allowed to go freely through Ireland. Was a private obligation more sacred than a public right? Had a man who merely wanted to till his farm or stock his shop a greater right to release on parole than the men who wanted to come to the House of Commons and to take part in the highest function a subject could perform. He feared the difficulty in the latter case was precisely because these hon. Gentlemen desired to exercise a public right. If they wanted to go to the Mediterranean or to America, or upon a tour of pleasure, or on business, there would be no hesitation about granting the parole. It was because they wanted to perform their public duty that they would, he supposed, be refused a parole, for the countenance of the right hon. Gentleman forewarned him of the probable reply. It was because the strongest Government of the 19th century in England apprehended that upon a division from which the greatest events might hang—the existence of the Government, the holding of a General Election, the future force of that Parliament—those three hon. Gentlemen might be found in the Opposition Lobby, that the Government would refuse to them, their victims of suspicion, the common privilege—he would say the right—which the right hon. Gentleman extended to the poor tenant who simply wanted to leave prison that he might sow his crops. Having said so much, he would leave this question to the judgment of the House and of the country. Rather, he would say, to the judgment of the country, because, as the right hon. Baronet opposite remarked, the mechanism of the House was nervous, and speedily responded to the hands of those who so well knew how to use it. In the country there was intelligence, there was honesty, there was a vast and abundant perception of public rights. He would conclude his observations with the remark that, however high might be the pretensions, however moral might be the professions that emanated from the Treasury Bench—and Heaven knew they had abundant moral professions from the Treasury Bench—every man in England, Scotland, and Ireland, however humble was his intelligence, however limited his political knowledge, would know that the great Liberal Government was afraid of their votes upon the first *clôture* division. When the hon. Gentleman used an Act of suspicion to keep three hon. Members away from their Constitutional right they would know that a Statute obtained by deceptive practices from the House, which gave it, for great purposes of public right and safety, was being used by the Government for the meanest ends and for the most contemptible intrigues of Party.

Sir JOSEPH M'KENNA said, he desired, before any Members of the Government might state their views on this question, to say a few words. The proposition put forward by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) was made under circumstances without parallel in the history of Parliamentary legislation. In supporting the proposal for the release on parole of the three hon. Members, he (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) would ask—was it possible that any exercise of the prerogative could be so fenced around with safeguards? Could those three hon. Gentlemen afford to break their words of honour before the country by endeavouring while on parole to renew the conduct for which they were arrested? He asked the Government to consider carefully the request that they had made, and not to give a hasty refusal.

Mr. WARTON said, he wished to offer a suggestion as a Member in an independent position, being neither a Member of the Government—thank God—nor a Member of the Irish Party, for which he was equally grateful. He had already suggested that the Prime Minister should pair with the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), that the Home Secretary should pair with the hon. Member for Tipperary (Mr. Dillon), and that the Chief Secretary for Ireland should pair with the hon. Member for Roscommon (Mr. O'Kelly), &c. That suggestion, unhappily, had not met with the approbation of the Government; but he had yet another to make, so anxious was he to assist his kind friends among all Parties in the House. Could not some three of the Irish Members now in the House be held as hostages while the division was going on, and, when the division was over, be detained in the custody of the Serjeant-at-Arms until the three "suspects" re-entered Kilmainham? He did not see how the Government could refuse, for they already had liberated "suspects" in order that they might attend the funerals of their relatives; and it was only consistent that these three hon. Members should be liberated for the purpose of enabling them to attend at the funeral of the British Constitution.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he had understood that the hon. Members of the political section to which the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) belonged intended to arraign the general conduct of the Government upon that occasion. From the course of the observations of the hon. Member, however, and from the silence of those who sat around him, he conceived that he must have been misinformed upon the subject, because, undoubtedly, if there had been a disposition to arraign the general conduct of the Government, he should have desired to have taken his part in its defence, and to have stated what he thought about the course which the hon. Member and his Friends had taken in bringing about the present condition of Ireland. But as that was not the case, and as the Irish Representatives were evidently waiting for some reply from the Government upon this particular subject, he would give one; but he must, however, rely upon them that there was no other subject of debate that afternoon. ["No, no!"]

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY was understood to signify that the Irish Members intended to enter upon a general discussion after the right hon. Gentleman's speech.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Then, he begged pardon—he must decline to proceed then if there were to be any other subjects of discussion. If there was to be an attack made upon the general policy of the Government, he hoped that he should be allowed to sit down for the present. He had been drawn by the speeches of the two hon. Gentlemen who had just sat down to speak on the subject now. He now learnt, after they had sat down, that it was the intention of Irish Members to attack generally the policy of the Government.

Mr. CALLAN hoped that his hon. Friend (Mr. M'Carthy) would not be led into a trap. The people in Ireland and Irish Members wished for a clear and distinct declaration from the Government upon this subject, and that nothing should be done to prevent that from being given.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, then he would proceed; but, with the Speaker in the Chair, he would lose his right of speaking again. The hon. Member for Sligo began by observing that he regretted very much that there seemed to be a growing practice of asking the House for Votes on Account for the Civil Service, and said that that was a system dangerous to Parliamentary control. The hon. Member should bear in mind that, so far as that Vote on Account went, it was a matter of absolute necessity, under the arrangement by which the public money was paid. It might be a reason against the arrangement—he (Mr. Gladstone) gave no opinion upon that subject—but as long as the arrangement continued, as long as the law was fulfilled under which balances of money voted were repaid to the Exchequer by the 31st of March, so long as the custom continued of the House meeting in the month of February or the last days of January, so long it was a matter of absolute necessity that there must be a Vote on Account taken about that period of the year. Therefore, it did not form the subject of attack or defence of the general character of Votes on Account. The hon. Member had concluded his speech by an imputation which, he need not say, was in the highest degree offensive. [" Oh, oh!"] The imputation was this—and it was for hon. Gentlemen who heard him to judge whether it was offensive or not—that any reasons or pleas which the Government could advance for declining to accede to this request were mere shams and pretences, and that the whole and sole reason why their request was refused was in order that the Government might avoid the disadvantage of having three additional votes recorded against them on that night. Was it possible to assign to any body of men conduct more disgraceful? If to assign disgraceful conduct were offensive, he must say that the speech of the hon. Gentleman conveyed the imputation with an appearance, a cool assumption of certainty which treated the matter as beyond all doubt or question, and was offensive in the highest degree. He did not intend to reply in a similar spirit, he did not intend to use any words himself in dealing with that comparatively limited, though rather delicate and somewhat important question which could hurt or wound anybody; but he thought it right to record instances of this kind as he went along in the conduct of Parliamentary debates. The hon. Member said that, under the plea of making use of the resources of civilization, Her Majesty's Government were indulging in the instincts of barbarism. That was a much fairer, but still a very serious, charge; while it was one that was perfectly intelligible. It certainly did tempt him (Mr. Gladstone) to widen the field of this debate, and to inquire what instincts of barbarism they were that were now being principally stimulated and indulged in Ireland; and who were the persons by whom those instincts were deliberately stimulated, with the effect of carrying rapine, murder, and mutilation into the houses and dwellings of the families of the innocent people in Ireland as a punishment for the offence of paying rent? That was the inquiry which he was tempted to enter into, and although he believed there was good reason for putting forward the allegation against certain persons with considerable force, yet it was not a matter on which he should enter at the present moment; and he should not have introduced it, but that the phrase was one so remarkable that he could not pass it by. There was another point to which he would refer. The hon. Gentleman called his (Mr. Gladstone's) right hon. Friend near him his subordinate. The hon. Gentleman did not appear to be very well aware of what was the constitution of the British Government, or else he would not have made such a statement. He could not, for a moment, suppose that any Cabinet Minister could be subordinate to the First Lord of the Treasury. Every Cabinet Minister was in that country a responsible Adviser of the Crown. He was not subject in the affairs of his Department to the orders or the injunctions of the First Lord of the Treasury. He was, therefore, not the subordinate of the First Lord of the Treasury, and that difference he noticed in order that the hon. Gentleman might forego that mode of indulging his desire to irritate—but, happily, that had been found impossible—to irritate, if he could, the mind of his right hon. Friend. But, putting aside those matters, let them look at the point before the House. The hon. Gentleman requested that three Members of Parliament who were unhappily detained in Ireland upon suspicion—[" Hear, hear!"]—yes, very unhappily detained—[An hon. MEMBER: On suspicion]—very unhappily detained on suspicion. Nobody would ever hear him speak with levity of the serious nature of the case. He never had undervalued it. He never had attempted to gild over the character of any law which set aside the Constitutional privileges with which Members of that House were invested. Those Gentlemen who were unhappily detained upon the responsibility of the Government in gaol in Ireland had made a request to be allowed to come over to this country for the very limited purpose of voting in this House upon one particular division. They disclaimed, he understood, even the privilege of speech; and he might say that—knowing as they did the general experience of that House—he appreciated the enormous sacrifice which must be made by these Gentlemen in such a disclaimer. They offered their parole as a security that they should come here for one purpose, and for one purpose alone, and that, having satisfied that purpose, they should return to their gaols in Ireland; and, moreover, the hon. Gentleman said that they founded themselves upon the allegation that there was an unapproachable gravity in the occasion of Thursday next. The hon. Gentleman's allegation was—first, that there was a perfect security against the misuse of that release upon parole for any purpose forbidden by the Protection of Person and Property Act. To that proposition he entirely subscribed. He had not the least doubt as to the sufficiency of the parole, or as to the faithfulness with which it would be kept. He quite admitted that no direct stimulus would be offered by virtue or by means of it to the passions that were active in Ireland; and, in fact, that no abuse whatever would be made of the licence thus asked. But then hon. Members would, he hoped, concede to him that when an extraordinary Statute of that kind had been passed, those who administered it must be prepared to do so with something like consistency. The hon. Gentleman had impeached the consistency with which the Act had been administered. He stated that various prisoners had been temporarily released—some of them upon what he called domestic occasions, by which he (Mr. Gladstone) imagined he meant to refer to cases of death or sickness in the family, or occasions connected with their private affairs. His right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland was not prepared to accede to the correctness of that statement. The hon. Gentleman had given no details to support it. If the hon. Member had details, or called for details in order to support it——

Mr. HEALY, interposing, mentioned the names of Messrs. O'Toole, of Baltinglass, and Reddington, of Maryborough.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, it was not for him to contradict the hon. Gentleman; but he was not acquainted with the case. But what he was going to say was this—If such cases existed they must be judged upon their own merits, and they were of a totally different character from the case that was now before them. No inference could be drawn from them. If such cases existed—which he was not prepared to admit—they might be right or they might be wrong, and they ought to be repeated or not be repeated accordingly. But he contended that they were totally distinct and different from the case before them. He had admitted that the parole was safe. There was no danger whatever—nay, more, he would admit that even if they came there to speak on the subject he made no doubt they would speak in the spirit of that parole, and that they would not make use of their liberty of speech in that House for the purpose of stimulating to outrage in Ireland. But what he denied was this—that parole on that occasion was better than parole upon any other occasion. He had not the least doubt that if they requested to be released on parole once a week, and once a week to be under an engagement not to contravene the Act by virtue of their liberty for any certain time, and then went back to prison, the security of their parole would be precisely the same. But was he prepared on that account to say that wherever an unexceptional parole was offered, when a proper engagement was made not to make use of temporary freedom for purposes alien to the Act, therefore release should be given? [An hon. Member: Certainly not.] He was much obliged to somebody whom he did not see for supplying the answer he was about to give. He said certainly not. The mere fact that parole was trustworthy was not a sufficient ground for releasing a prisoner under an Act of the kind. Well, but then the hon. Gentleman said there was an unapproachable gravity in the occasion of Thursday, and not only so, but those whom they were asked to release in order that they might come there were to come there as witnesses and judges. But that was not applicable to the occasion of Thursday alone. Every day, every hour, every Member of the House of Commons was not only a witness of what took place, but was a judge of the proceedings of the Government;

and, therefore, the argument of the hon. Gentleman was a great deal too wide, and showed that, if once they admitted that because these Gentlemen were witnesses and judges they might be brought there on Thursday next, they should have no plea to stand upon when, upon any other occasion, a request was made that they might come there to take part in Parliamentary Business. The hon. Gentleman said there was an unapproachable gravity on this occasion. Well, he would not contest that proposition; but he would say that, in his opinion, the division which was taken about a couple of weeks ago on the Parliamentary inquiry into the working of the Land Act in Ireland was, in their view, an occasion of gravity quite as unapproachable as that. [*Laughter.*] It was all very well for those to laugh whose object it was to destroy the Irish Land Act. ["No, no!"] He was speaking of hon. Gentlemen who laughed when he stated that the vote of that House on Parliamentary inquiry into the Land Act was a matter of gravity as great as the one now before them. He said it was very well for those to laugh who sought to impair, to undermine, and to destroy the working of that Act, for they knew that that Act was the one efficient instrument for counteracting their views. But for the Government, who believed that the Land Act was the instrument by which they might hope to do justice to the people, and to save order and property in Ireland, for them a Motion touching an inquiry which, as they thought, went to sap the authority and operation of that Act, such a Motion was a Motion of quite as unapproachable gravity as the division of Thursday next. Well, then, they might say the division of Thursday next had been declared to be a division involving the fate of the Government; and did they suppose, then, that in the division of March 9th the fate of the Government was not involved? There was just as much reason for those hon. Gentlemen being present on that occasion as on Thursday next. [*Laughter.*] It was a question upon which those hon. Gentlemen had a far nearer and more immediate right to appear, if a distinction were to be drawn between one Parliamentary question and another.

Mr. CALLAN: They did not ask to. [*Cries of* "Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he was extremely sorry that these practices of laughter and jeering and ridiculing those who were in the performance of a public duty, the cessation of which was not required on any other public ground but that of courtesy and good sense, should be persisted in. They were practices that did not contribute to raise the character of those who indulged in them. He would look at the matter a little more nearly. It was proposed that three hon. Gentlemen should be released from confinement in Ireland, to come and give a vote on Thursday next on the 1st Resolution. But that vote on the 1st Resolution was not to be a conclusive vote. It was not to be a vote which was to determine what should be the contents of the following Resolutions. The right hon. Gentleman in the Chair had told them that after that vote had been taken every Amendment on the Paper might be put; and each went, in the view of some, to determine the character and bearing of the Resolution more than the vote that was to be taken on Thursday next. [Mr. Sexton: To determine the course of the Government.] How did the hon. Gentleman know how many votes would determine the course of the Government? Did the hon. Gentleman mean that whenever the Government proposed, as they proposed a few weeks ago, some Resolution or some measure upon which their fate depended, that then, and then only, these three hon. Gentlemen were to be brought over from Ireland? Why, it would, he said, place the House of Commons and the Executive Government in a position nothing short of ridiculous were they to say that three hon. Gentlemen so confined—unhappily and unfortunately from necessity confined in Ireland——["No, no!"] Well, he would not make any further comment. He did not wish to repeat what he just now said. He was only compelled to inflict upon the House the commencing part of the sentence. It would place the House of Commons and the Government in a position nothing less than ridiculous, in connection with this most grave subject, were they to allow that those three hon. Gentlemen were to come over to that House in order to give a particular vote on the first Amendment that came up to the 1st Resolution; and then to say they should take no further part in any decision or in any vote that might come up on other Amendments, or upon the final question of the adoption of the Resolution itself. He hardly thought that hon. Gentlemen could be serious in the contention that they made. He quite understood their being serious in the desire that their three Friends should be free, even for a brief period, to breathe the air of liberty. That he could quite understand, that he could sympathize with; but what he could not understand was that they should gravely state to that House that it would be possible for them to bring these hon. Gentlemen there for the purpose of giving a particular vote—a very important vote, no doubt—and then, with regard to other votes, which might be just as important, or which might be indistinguishable in point of importance by any line of principle from that vote, that they should cancel the privilege, and say they would refuse such an application. That appeared to him so plain that he did not think it was necessary for him to dwell upon it. He had shown it was not the security of the parole. They might have plenty of security of parole from these and from many other prisoners in whose honour they would have perfect confidence—the question was not whether they were witnesses and judges, but whether, because they were witnesses and judges, they ought to be there that day. ["Hear, hear!"] Yes; that was a very fair admission, for the proposition really meant that they ought always to be there. That was the meaning of the proposition, and that was a candid admission. Yes; but if that was what they were asking for, they were then asking of the Government to import into the operation of the law a principle which Parliament deliberately and advisedly excluded from it—namely, that a distinction was to be drawn between Members of Parliament who came under the reasonable suspicion described in the Act, and other persons coming under that reasonable suspicion. The Government believed that they would be acting contrary to the spirit of the Act and the intentions of Parliament if they admitted any such distinction. It was only on the latent ground of such distinction that the proposal could for a moment be justified. They could not, in their opinion, separate between the occasion for which the request was made and any other occasions. They could not admit that special treatment was to be made applicable to those personages who had brought themselves, as the Government held, within the scope of the law; and, therefore, they were compelled to say to the hon. Gentleman, without making light of his request or the subject he had raised, that it was impossible to comply with the request that he had made.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he had listened with profound regret to the Prime Minister's speech. He must confess that he was one of those who were sanguine enough up to the last moment to hope that this very reasonable request might have been granted by the Government. He should say that he listened with regret to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, not only because of its substance, but also, in some measure, because of its tone. The right hon. Gentleman had displayed too great subtlety in his argument that, though a parole might be perfectly safe, the Government were not therefore bound to grant a person his liberty. What rational being wanted convincing of that? What the Irish Members contended was, that this was a most remarkable and exceptional case, that these men had made application to be released on parole, that that application could be safely granted, and that it was only reasonable, and the public duty of the Government, under the special circumstances, to comply with the request. The right hon. Gentleman had asked what distinction could be drawn between this and any other applications? and immediately went on to say that every application ought to be considered on its merits. The Irish Members fully admitted that if this application were granted, the Government would not, therefore, be bound to grant any other; but the present occasion was a special and momentous one, and for a most important purpose. He was astonished at the right hon. Gentleman saying that if he granted the application in this case he must grant it in every other case. His hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) showed most clearly that there was a precedent for granting a release on parole to prisoners confined under this Act. It had been done over and over again. Under the present

Coercion Act permission had been given to prisoners to attend to their private business, to see a sick relative, or even to attend a funeral; and he asked the House whether any such occasion, however momentous it might be to the individual himself, could be so important as the desire of a man to perform a great public duty to his constituents and to his country? The Prime Minister had denied that this was so important an occasion as they had attempted to make out; and he had declared that he considered the vote given on the 9th March to be much more momentous. He (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) was quite ready to accept the assurance of the right hon. Gentleman that he did regard the occasion as more important; but he would venture to say that if the right hon. Gentleman so regarded the relative importance of the two votes he was the only Member of the House who did anything of the kind. At the very most, the last was a Motion to prevent inquiry into an existing Act of Parliament. It concerned one Act of Parliament only. But the vote of Thursday next would relate to the making of Acts of Parliament for all future time. The Premier did not seem to regard the vote of Thursday as necessarily involving the fate of the Ministers; but he (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) could not see how it could be otherwise. It could only have one of two results—it must either make the Government victorious, or inflict a substantial defeat upon them. The fate of the Government, therefore, depended upon it. If upon it they got a strong and substantial majority, they could pass the other Resolutions, and entirely alter the Constitution of Parliament. But if they failed in that purpose their whole scheme fell to the ground; and whether they afterwards remained in Office or went out, they were shattered as a Government, and would have no strength whatever either in the House or in the country. If that was so, it was impossible to contend that this was not a serious crisis in the history of the House and of the Constitution, and one upon which every Member of the House should be allowed to record his opinion. What comparison was there between a vote of that kind and a vote on some casual, unimportant question of the ordinary Business of the House? He did not believe the subtle argument of the right hon. Gentleman could convince hon. Members that there was any comparison whatever between them. Every week some man was allowed, for some reason or other, to leave prison on parole. Could the right hon. Gentleman say that the purpose for which each prisoner was so released was more important than the vote of next Thursday? He could not think how the right hon. Gentleman could do so with consistency. All the Government had to do in this case was to exercise that discretion which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had already done in the case of other "suspects;" and until he could convince the House and the country that the occasions on which other "suspects" were released were not as important as this he could not consistently refuse the request.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN said, he also regretted that the Government had not consented to the very moderate request made by his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). It was very little to ask. The concession could have done no one any harm, and it would have been looked upon in Ireland as a symptom of a return to a more kindly feeling on the part of the Government toward the people. The votes of the three hon. Members in Kilmainham would not imperil the Ministerial majority on Thursday. The division was not likely to be so close as that; and if the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had allowed them to come there, even for a few hours, the act would have been regarded as an olive branch—a small one, it was true, but still an olive branch—by the people of that disturbed and distracted country. But his (Mr. Cowen's) object in rising was not so much to plead for the release, on parole, of his three hon. Friends, as to remark on an observation made by the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman took exception to the speech of the hon. Member for Sligo, and he censured him very strongly for the language he used, or rather for the imputations conveyed by it. The language itself could not be condemned, as it was both moderate and correct. His hon. Friend had expressed a fear that the request he was preferring would be rejected, because the Government were afraid of the influence that these three votes might have on the pending division. The Prime Minister conceived that that was an imputation on Ministerial honour. He (Mr. Cowen) scarcely saw it in that light himself. He was not squeamish; but he was very far mistaken if he did not hear in that House, daily, remarks much more severe which passed without notice. But whether the observation did or did not wander beyond the legitimate bounds of discussion, he was quite sure that one of the remarks of the Prime Minister had exceeded those bounds; for while censuring the hon. Member for Sligo for imputing improper motives to the Ministry, he broadly and emphatically accused his three Friends, now prisoners in Kilmainham, with having deliberately, intentionally, and knowingly, incited to rapine, murder, and outrage. Now, he (Mr. Cowen) undertook to say, on behalf of those three hon. Gentlemen, that the charge against them was absolutely unfounded. There was not any justification for it. The Land League, with which those hon. Gentlemen were identified, had avowedly and openly advocated "Boycotting"—that was, they had counselled their countrymen to put a social ban upon such of their neighbours as did not act faithfully to the Land League, and in accordance with Land League principles. That course might be wrong, or it might be right, and the practice might be made an instrument for inflicting much cruelty and hardship. He was not defending it, or apologizing for it. It was a weapon that was used constantly in political, social, and private life, with a view to accomplishing given ends. It was a recognized instrument in the hands of English trades unionists. In the event of a strike they "picketted" factories, and "blacklegged" those of their craft who deserted them. If the custom was not only tolerated, but upheld in this country, he failed to see the justice of condemning it so severely when put in requisition by the peasants' trades union in Ireland. He knew there was one code of law and liberty for this country, and another for Ireland; that a man could say things here that he could not say across the Channel; that newspapers could be printed and circulated in England that were confiscated in Ireland; and that meetings could be held here that were there suppressed. The difference was marked and glaring. It was only a legal difference—not a moral one. The use of such terrors could only bring discredit on their organization; they could serve no good cause, and the Land League leaders knew that. They also knew that every crime of the kind was a detriment to them, and a disservice. For the Prime Minister to stand up in Parliament and accuse three hon. Gentlemen of the House with being inciters to, and participants in, such horrible outrages was unjustifiable. If these hon. Members were guilty, either by act or implication, of such proceedings, they should be brought to trial, and no punishment would be too severe for them. To utter the imputation, and refuse to try them, was a much greater breach of the courtesies of debate than anything that was involved in the very mild remarks of his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo. As for the request itself, he would have been glad if it had been more comprehensive. Instead of asking that the three Members should be permitted to visit Westminster and vote in one division, he thought a request should have been made for them to attend altogether. According to the Government's own showing, such a demand would have been reasonable. They admitted that the Coercion Act only applied to Ireland, and even more than that, that it only applied to certain districts. The three Members, if released, would remain in London, in the discharge of their duties. They would not go to Ireland, or come within the operation of the Act; and it was fair to ask that they should be allowed to attend to their work as Representatives. The reasonableness of such an application, and the injustice of refusing it, was seen in the fact that there were three Members sitting opposite for whose apprehension warrants had been issued; but they managed to get away from Ireland before they were served, and the consequence was that they could be in Parliament, when, according to the Government's own confession, they were just as guilty as his hon. Friends, Mr. Parnell, Mr. O'Kelly, or Mr. Dillon. The desire to have them released, in order that they might look after their Parliamentary duties, therefore, was a moderate and fair one. The Prime Minister had denied that any prisoners had been liberated for the purpose of attending to their business—planting their potatoes, or looking after their shops. Of course he (Mr. Cowen) assumed that the Prime Minister was well informed before he made that statement; but his (Mr. Cowen's) information conflicted entirely with it, and he believed that prisoners on several occasions had been released in such a way. The fact that the release was refused to these three Members went to show that they were treated more harshly than others. He did not wish to drive the case against the Government too hard or too far; but it was quite open to say that the Ministers themselves had contributed as much to the outrages in Ireland as the Land League. They did not mean to do that: they meant to do the very opposite. What, however, had been the effect of their coercion? They had promised to arrest the village ruffians, but instead of that they had arrested the village politicians—the men who acted as a restraint upon the ruffians. Any moral assistance that they otherwise might have obtained from the population in the enforcement of the law had thus, in consequence of the Ministers' own act, been withdrawn. Coercion, indeed, had helped the disorder, and in a sense increased the outrages. It was a very effectual way of silencing a political opponent to lock him up in prison—to lock him up in prison, too, without accusation, without trial, and without affording him an opportunity of either defending or explaining himself; but it was a very cowardly way. It was a course of action that had never been followed in this country since the dark and dismal days of the Stuarts. Amidst all their troubles and disorders, no Representatives of the people had for centuries been arrested in such a high-handed fashion. It had remained for a Government that ostentatiously boasted of its liberality, that pretentiously proclaimed its regard for the principles of nationalities and the rights of struggling peoples, to resort to a practice that brought dishonour upon themselves and humiliation upon their country.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he could not, looking at the right hon. Gentleman the Premier as a governing man, as a statesman responsible for the good government of this country—could not, regarding him in that light, but express his astonishment at the great opportunity he had lost on that occasion. That opportunity would not soon recur, seeing that the division of Thursday next would be exceptionally momentous to the Government and the country. If there was one measure more than another calculated to relieve the painful tension and embarrassment in Ireland, it was the measure which was pressed on the Government that day. With reference to the arguments of the Premier, it was the first time that the securities for the liberties of that House were proposed to be placed at the mercy of the majority, and it was useless for any hon. Gentleman to tell that House that it was not an exceptional occasion. The position of the Government would be vastly improved if the imprisoned Members were permitted to vote on Thursday, for they would then show that they were not afraid of three additional votes, especially if, in addition to permitting the hon. Members to attend that House, they were afterwards to say—"We release you from your parole; but, although we may feel it our duty to re-arrest you if you return to Ireland, we make you a present of your liberty to discharge your duties in this House." If the Government had assumed such a position, although far below the rightful demand of the Irish people, it would be a position on which they could trust themselves to the best feelings and best sentiments of the Irish people; but, unfortunately, the Government had determined, with Shylock, "to stand upon the letter of their bond," and, in consequence, there was not a son of Ireland who would not think night and day of the best means of avenging that treatment on all who supported Her Majesty's Government. They deliberately thrust back the proffered hand of the Irish people, and had thrown down the gauntlet in response to the olive branch that had been tendered to them. By the refusal of the Government they had deliberately renewed that strife in Ireland, and this was but another instance of the inability of the Government to appreciate the situation. They evidently wished, or, perhaps, in spite of their wishes, were fated to blunder blindly into a position from which escape was impossible. One day or other they would have to set free the three Members, blanched with prison life, enfeebled in health, and objects for the commiseration of men who did not agree with them in politics, and which would re-kindle and enflame the resolution of every Irishman throughout the whole world. They might not let them out to-day, or for a month, or six months, or 12 months; but the day would come when, dead or alive, they must let them out, and the chances of death in the hon. Member for Tipperary (Mr. Dillon's) case were weekly increasing. Dead or alive, they must let them out; and, if it were deferred, the day they let them out the beginning of a new era of increased difficulty would arise between the British Administration and the Irish race. The Prime Minister had indignantly repudiated the idea that his decision had been formed with an eye to the main chance; but was it more outrageous and more insulting to be reasonably suspected of wishing to reduce a dangerous minority by three votes than to be well known to have issued a four-lined Whip for one purpose ostensibly, but in reality in order to bring up their Party for another? Was it not notorious that they had endeavoured to do so, and, but for circumstances over which they had no control, would have snatched a division by surprise? Under the *clôture*, he supposed, such four-lined Whips would not be uncommon. The truth was that the presence of the three imprisoned Irish Members was feared by the Prime Minister, who had shown all the marks of the danger caused by apprehension. The arrest of the Irish Members was futile and without justification, and was made because the Prime Minister had objected to their criticism of the Land Act. He knew that if they lifted a finger they could send 250,000 tenant farmers into the Land Court, who would completely break down its machinery, already hardly pressed by the number of applications to it. The Members had been imprisoned because they criticized the Act, though the Liberal Party had now admitted that every defect that the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) and his Party had pointed out in the Land Act were seen to be real blots on the measure. The Government knew very well that they must very soon release these men. Let them not expect kindly feelings, gratitude, or any feeling but the sense that Her Majesty's Government no longer found it safe to refuse the Irish demand, if in a month or in a year they found themselves obliged to allow into the House the men whom they feared to meet upon equal terms that day. He was sincerely sorry, quite apart from any question of Party, at the action of Her Majesty's Government that day. It was, perhaps, explicable on the ground of the slight acquaintance which Her Majesty's Government had with the state of Ireland; but there were larger questions involved in this than the resignation of any particular Government. All the wisest and most philosophic observers of Irish affairs had agreed in regretting that every concession made by the English people came too late. That which would have been accepted at one time with feelings of kindly gratitude was delayed so long that when at last it came it was felt to be insufficient for the altered state of circumstances. There was the question of the possible conciliation of the Irish by the English people; and he said it was a misfortune of England that she seemed to have so few men of the mental and moral courage of the hon. Member for Newcastle-on-Tyne (Mr. Cowen). He (Mr. O'Donnell) told the majority of the House that one speech such as fell from that hon. Member's lips that day did more to keep alive the hope of ultimate reconciliation in the breasts of the more sanguine of the Irish patriots than all the measures of Coercion at the disposal of the united Front Benches. Beyond that, it would have more influence in Ireland than arguments even in *The Irish People* or *United Ireland*. Some years ago, when he (Mr. O'Donnell) thought that English Liberals possessed some true Liberalism, and not merely the Liberalism of Party, he could not have believed that only one man would be found to raise his voice above Party interest. The Government were simply playing into the hands of the Separatist Party, and destroying their own influence in Ireland.

Mr. BRAND said, he had to complain of the waste of time caused by the Irish Members. The hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Cowen) thought it would be better if the three Members now in Kilmainham were released. But, he (Mr. Brand) should like to ask, was there any indication of a better spirit on the part of those three hon. Gentlemen? The hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) said that there was more chance of conciliation in a speech like that of his hon. Friend (Mr. J. Cowen) than all the powers of coercion possessed by the Government. He challenged the hon. Member for Dungarvan, and asked him whether he, or any single Member of the Party who were Members of the Land League, had ever, by word or deed, or by any sign, denounced the outrages and horrors prevalent in Ireland?

Mr. O'DONNELL: Yes; every one of them.

Mr. BRAND said, he distinctly remembered a challenge of this character being addressed to the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) in the House, and on that occasion the hon. Member said he was not prepared to express to the House any disapproval of it.

Mr. HEALY: I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon. ["Order, order!"]

Mr. BRAND, proceeding, said, the Land Leaguers had issued manifestoes more than once. Had they ever issued one to the Irish people advising them to abstain from these outrages?

Mr. HEALY: Yes. ["Order!"]

Mr. O'DONNELL: My hon. Friend will reply in due course.

Mr. BRAND said, he had watched their proceedings for some time, and had never yet heard of one instance in which hon. Gentlemen opposite had exercised the power they possessed of pacifying their country. He could only say that if the Leaders of the Party had done that, there would be many men on his (Mr. Brand's) side of the House who would make the same sort of speech as the hon. Member for Newcastle, and urge the Government to release these men from imprisonment on suspicion. He felt a sense of indignation at the proceedings of that day. What had been done that day was a waste of time, and was only a repetition of similar proceedings in that House, which had been carried on by a small minority who were determined to exercise their powers in such a way as to make the position intolerable. Over and over again, since the Session began, hon. Members came to the House and considered themselves lucky if they got home by 4 o'clock in the morning, because of the conduct of a small minority. The condition of things had now arrived to be almost a national scandal; and yet there was, he regretted to say, a tendency on the part of some hon. Members of the House to ignore the gravity of the occasion, when the Government were introducing remedies which would put a stop to these discreditable proceedings. Under the circumstances, the truth should be told in this matter; and the truth was that the Members of the Land League, whether in or out of that House, who had signed the "no rent" manifesto, were distinctly responsible for the anarchy and disorder now existing in Ireland. No Party had violated their feelings so much as the Liberal Party had done—at least, some of them—in consenting to the passing of the Irish Land Bill; and yet the only answer to their efforts from hon. Gentlemen opposite was a constant endeavour to thwart and obstruct it in every possible way. He contended that if they wanted to show their good faith to the House and the country, and to show the sincerity of their wish to have their Friends liberated from prison, a very simple course was open to them if they chose to take it. The House should disabuse its mind of all superstition in regard to Rules of Procedure and good government in Ireland. So long as there were Representatives in that House whose object was to disintegrate the Empire, they must have Rules to keep them in order; and if Parliament desired peace, order, and liberty in Ireland they must have a strong and capable Government. It was impossible to have a strong and capable Government, if their action was crippled and hampered as that of the present Administration was by perpetual Obstruction. Locking up men on suspicion merely, and without trial, was, in his opinion, contrary to the principles and liberty of the Constitution. It had failed, or at the best it was but milk-and-water coercion. His firm conviction was that crime might be more effectually dealt with by other means than imprisonment without trial. What Parliament should do was to fight these men in Ireland with their gloves off, and to punish those who were guilty of these crimes and outrages. His opinion was that if the Administration only had the time of the House, means would soon be found not to put men in prison without trial, but means to punish the guilty and to relieve the peaceful and orderly inhabitants from the burden of the grievous terrorism under which they were now suffering.

Mr. HEALY said, he felt bound to contest the assertion that there had been great wasting of time in the consideration of the Estimates. He was afraid that many of the statements of the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. Brand) were very inaccurate. That hon. Member had challenged them to say why they had never denounced outrages in Ireland. He would answer the hon. Gentleman by showing that they had strongly denounced outrages; and lest the hon. Member should be inclined to distrust his (Mr. Healy's) assurance, he would reply to him out of the mouth of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. That right hon. Gentleman, upon the memorable occasion on which he introduced the Coercion Bill, said, speaking of the decrease of outrages—

> "The improvement at first was only slight; but the outrages are now becoming smaller in number every day. And why are they diminishing? I believe there are two reasons for it. One is, that the gentlemen at the head of the Land League are using every power they possess to put a stop to outrages."—[3 *Hansard*, cclvii. 1230.]

MR. BRAND: Was that before or after the issue of the "no rent" manifesto?

MR. HEALY said, he would deal with that interposition. The right hon. Gentleman made the statement just quoted on January 24th, 1881, and the "no rent" manifesto was issued in October of the same year. The original statement of the hon. Member for Stroud was an absolute allegation that at no period had the leaders of the Land League denounced outrages, and he had never attempted to confine it to any space of time, either before or after the issue of the manifesto. In answer to the hon. Member, he (Mr. Healy) would give two proofs to the contrary, one before the issue and one after. The first was an extract from a circular memorandum of instructions issued by the League in December, 1880, to the organizers and secretaries of branches. He might inform the hon. Member that the writer was Michael Davitt, and that within one month afterwards Mr. Davitt found himself within Portland Prison, which was no great encouragement to others to take a similar course. Having noticed that they could not believe the numerous reports of outrages upon dumb animals which appeared in the landlord newspapers, and declined to believe that any member of the Land League organization would be guilty of participating in the few cases that had been authenticated, Mr. Davitt used language of condemnation which, probably, the hon. Member for Stroud could not make stronger—

> "No injustice in the power of Irish landlordism to perpetrate upon our people can justify in the least degree the unfeeling brutality which inflicts injuries or sufferings upon homeless and defenceless animals in return for wrongs done by man."

He supposed it was for penning this circular that Michael Davitt was arrested. The hon. Member for Stroud wanted a denunciation of outrages subsequent to the "no rent" manifesto. If he (Mr. Healy) might intrude a personal matter upon the House, he would inform the hon. Member that since his return from America he had been writing a series of articles in an English newspaper, and if hon. Members opposite would turn to the pages of *The Newcastle Chronicle* — [*Laughter.*] He was not aware that *The Newcastle Chronicle* was not as respectable as the organ of the hon. Member for Northampton. [MR. BRAND: Are those anonymous articles, or signed?] They were not anonymous; and he might tell the hon. Member also that the portion in which he denounced outrages in the strongest terms was quoted in the London *Echo*, an organ which might find favour in the eyes of those who discredited *The Newcastle Chronicle.* He believed that at the present moment those articles were being published in *The Freeman's Journal.* When the hon. Member for Stroud challenged him to stand up and say whether he had denounced outrages, he refused to do so. They would never find an Irishman consenting to be dragged on by the tail in answer to the call of any Englishman for Party purposes. They had their own standard of speech, their own standard of conduct, and they were, he was happy to say, in no way influenced by English opinion. They despised English opinion, and when he was asked by any Englishman to stand up and make a statement, because he (John Bull) desired it, and thought he ought to do so, he (Mr. Healy) begged respectfully to tell John Bull, "Mind your own business." It was for them to choose their own way and their own time for denouncing outrages. Furthermore, he wished to ask the hon. Member for Stroud, did Englishmen think they could dance upon Irishmen, and walk over Irishmen, and slap Irishmen in the face without getting a blow in return? That day was past, and if the "no rent" manifesto had produced anarchy and outrage, it was those who put the authors and the leaders of the Land League in prison who made that manifesto necessary, and who were responsible for the crime and outrage in Ireland. Was the theory of the hon. Member for Stroud this—that no matter what outrage was committed on the liberty of Irishmen they were to sit quietly under the rod of the chastiser? He declined to accept such a theory, even though it had been promulgated by that new prophet of the Liberal Party, the hon. Member for Stroud. He had dealt sufficiently with the hon. Member, and, perhaps, had accorded more notice to his observations than they deserved. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had charged the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) with having applied the word "subordinate" to the Chief Secretary for Ireland in an offensive sense; but if the Chief Secretary for Ireland were not a subordinate Member of the Government, why did the Prime Minister make himself the mouthpiece of the Irish Government on this question, instead of allowing the Minister of the Crown, responsible for affairs in Ireland, to answer for himself. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, while chastising others for offensive language, did not abstain from using it himself. Having first discharged himself of offensive language, the right hon. Gentleman said that in the remainder of his speech he would use no words calculated to hurt anyone. The right hon. Gentleman did not scruple to say that the hon. Members for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), Tipperary (Mr. Dillon), and Roscommon (Mr. O'Kelly) were responsible for the rapine, murder, and mutilation going on in Ireland, and he made that statement while he said he would say nothing calculated to offend anyone. The Chief Secretary for Ireland, however, might remember that he himself was at one time publicly charged with being a member of an organization which might have been justly charged with rapine, murder, and mutilation. It had been publicly stated that the right hon. Gentleman had been a contributor to the funds of the Carbonari in Italy, by whom serious outrages had been inflicted. [*Laughter.*] He (Mr. Healy) was not the author of the statement, and he assumed no responsibility for it. The statement had been made in the House, and outside, that the right hon. Gentleman subscribed to the funds of those friends of Italy, who were known at one time as Mazzinists, and at another as Carbonaris. If the constructive theory put forward by the Premier were to be pursued, was the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland not morally responsible for all the crimes and outrages by his friends, the gentlemen of Italy, to whom he subscribed money? Hon. Gentlemen on the Liberal Benches had almost wholly devoted their speeches to the outrages in Ireland, because they had no arguments to advance against the liberation on parole of the hon. Members for the City of Cork, Tipperary, and Roscommon. He congratulated those hon. Members opposite upon the ingenuity they had displayed; but would remind them that they wandered very wide of the question before the House, which was the desirability of liberating on parole three imprisoned Members of that House. He had followed that speech of the Prime Minister in vain to perceive any argument against the liberation of those hon. Gentlemen, except these—First, that the division likely to occur on Thursday next was not one of supreme importance; and, second, that if these hon. Gentlemen were released for that division, they might make similar applications once every week; and, finally, that the division in reference to the Lords' Committee was of as great importance, and one upon which those hon. Gentlemen might as properly have been released. With regard to the last argument, the Prime Minister might have perceived a very important distinction, which was this—In the division upon the Lords' Committee, his hon. Friends made no application for leave to vote. In the division to take place on Thursday next, they had asked leave to vote. The right hon. Gentleman ought to know sufficiently the character of those three hon. Gentlemen to perceive that they were not likely to make applications either to him or his subordinates of their own motion, nor were the Irish Party likely to imagine every week that occasions of importance were likely to arise to justify them, as reasonable men, in expecting that the Government would favourably entertain such applications, though they did think that upon this occasion the application would be successful. It was undeniable that the approaching division was without parallel. Suppose their application were now granted, and that the Government should find they abused their parole, what would prevent the Prime Minister using his Coercion Act to send these hon. Gentlemen back to the Lord Lieutenant's purview, and the Government would have the moral support of the country and the House of Commons in refusing those applications once a week which he appeared to dread? The right hon. Gentleman went on to say that the Government must be prepared to administer the Coercion Act with consistency. That was exactly their claim. They claimed that when Dick, Tom, and Harry had been released on parole to sow their potatoes or attend their shops, Charles Stewart Parnell, the Leader of the Irish race, and his Colleagues, ought at least to be allowed to attend at the House of Commons in order to record their votes on so vital a question. He was sorry to say they were not likely to get the consistency which the Prime Minister seemed to admire so much. Perhaps the discriminating Members on the Liberal Benches would discover the consistency of the Government. At present it appeared to him very microscopic. The Prime Minister ignored the fact that the Chief Secretary for Ireland had frequently, in twopenny-halfpenny cases in some County Court, released "suspects" on parole. But that having been done by the right hon. Gentleman, the Irish Party demanded that the three imprisoned hon. Members be permitted to record their votes on an occasion of extreme gravity. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister resented, with noble indignation, the allegation that the Government was influenced by the consideration that three votes were ininvolved. He (Mr. Healy) made the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues a present of that indignation, and, using a phrase which the Liberal Party had imported into political life, and which was likely to be associated with the name of the Chief Secretary for Ireland for some time to come, he would say the Government might be "reasonably suspected" of entertaining that consideration when they refused to release the three hon. Members. Of course, such a "reasonable suspicion" could not have the status of one of the right hon. Gentleman's "reasonable suspicions." The one was supported by an Act of Parliament, and the other had only common sense at its back. Any way, far stronger grounds existed for that "reasonable suspicion" than for the "reasonable suspicion" on which those hon. Members had been deprived of liberty. The Government, according to the right hon. Gentleman, would be placed in a ridiculous position if they acceded to this request. He (Mr. Healy), however, feared the Government would be placed in a worse position by refusing it. Ridicule they might withstand; but scorn and hatred, if they aroused it, would count in future times for something. The Government should remember that—

> "The patient watch and vigil long
> Of him who treasures up a wrong"

was a more powerful thing than any ridiculous position they might occupy. It might be that the votes of the three hon. Gentlemen in prison would decide the fate of the *clôture* and turn the right hon. Gentleman's Government out of power, and then they would be absolved from all liability in the matter. But the right hon. Gentleman, counting on a mechanical majority, and believing his Government would retain Office, refused this request lest he might be in a ridiculous position. Let the right hon. Gentleman take care lest he might find himself not to be in any position at all. The division had yet to take place, and they could not yet know its result. Therefore, the right hon. Gentleman need not be so sensitive about having to occupy a ridiculous position. Finally, the right hon. Gentleman said it would be against the spirit of the Act to release these three hon. Gentlemen. They had heard a great deal about the spirit of the Act. The only spirit he could perceive about it was the spirit of malignity. The Chief Secretary for Ireland claimed the Coercion Act to have as its object to imprison village ruffians and dissolute scoundrels, and to put under lock and key men who committed midnight outrages, and he assured the House that it would be used only as a means of prevention. If that was the spirit in which it was obtained, where was the consistency on which the Prime Minister prided himself? The spirit of 1881 was prevention—the spirit of 1882 was punishment and deprivation of Constitutional privileges; and as years rolled on, they would find the Government assuming new spirits and inventing new stories to justify them in their downward course. He confessed it was with reluctance that he, as a Member of the Irish Party, consented to the Resolution asking his hon. Friends to request the Government to release them on parole. He was not in favour of asking the British Government for anything. He was in favour of making them give all that could be forced out of them by the Irish people. He knew that in making the application their Friends would be placing themselves in a position in which they would be refused; but his voice was overborne by the superior consideration which should influence them on occasions like this, and he assented to the Resolution. Perhaps it was as well that the application had been made; perhaps it was as well that the last shred of the garment of decency which might be supposed to surround the Government in this coercion business should be thrown aside; but, for his part, he regretted that any such application should be made to those who were without a shred of feeling in the uses to which they put the Act, and without an idea, except that of tyrants, with regard to those whom they had in their power.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that in the course of the tenure of his present Office he had had many attacks made upon him, both within and without the House; but that was the first occasion on which he had been called a *Carbonaro*. He was bound to say that the charge of being a *Carbonaro* was about as true and as false as most of the charges made against him. [Mr. Healy: I did not make the charge.] He understood the hon. Member to have made the charge. With regard to the application made on behalf of the three Members of Parliament confined in Ireland, the debate had wandered somewhat from the Motion; but the last speaker had brought it back to the original question—the proposed release of the three Members. It was not for him to repeat the arguments of the Prime Minister, with which he agreed; but a particular appeal was made to him to give the reasons why, having released some of the "suspects," he could not release the three Members, and he now wished to state those reasons. Hon. Members opposite had somewhat exaggerated the grounds upon which the release of private individuals under the Coercion Act had been made. He would at once admit that in that, as in other matters, he had tried to administer the Act with as little suffering to, and as little reasonable cause of complaint by, individuals as was compatible with due regard to their safe custody. In cases of domestic affliction, and when relations were on the point of death, he had consented to liberate prisoners; but he believed the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) was not quite fair in his interpretation of the grounds on which certain persons had been released, for he (Mr. W. E. Forster) could not recollect that any prisoners had been released on such grounds as that of attending to the stocking of their farms, and so forth.

Mr. SEXTON: Mr. O'Toole was allowed out.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he would look into the case of O'Toole.

Mr. HEALY: Mr. O'Toole.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: But there was no encouragement to administer the Act with as much consideration as possible, when it was found that every possible advantage was taken of a case to make out illustrations and precedents for using the Act as regarded cases of a totally different nature in a way which Parliament never intended it should be used. That was the way, if it were possible, to compel a harsh administration of the Act; but he did not suppose that was the object aimed at by hon. Members, and, if it was, they would not succeed. The distinction was very manifest between releasing men who could with safety be released upon private grounds and men whose release was claimed on public grounds. It would be impossible for the Government, without bringing themselves into ridicule, to admit that Members of Parliament should be allowed to attend to their duties in the House of Commons in a particular case without allowing them to do so in all cases; and it would also put them in the position of being unable to give a reason for refusing a release in one case or granting it in another. The hon, Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Cowen) put the matter into legitimate form, when he said that the question was—Why do not you allow these Gentlemen to come to Parliament and act as Members of Parliament? But the question was fully debated last year, and the House decided, by an overwhelming majority, that they would not take that view; and he must say that, in his opinion, if the House had taken that view it would have been giving an immunity to Members of Parliament which would have been unjust to the other subjects of the Crown. The hon. Member for Wexford asked why the Government brought in the question of crime and outrage in connection with the proposed release of the Members? They had so far this reason—that if it were not for crime and outrage, these hon. Gentlemen would not be in prison. The hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. Brand) challenged hon. Members opposite to say why they did not try to stop crime and outrage in Ireland. He (Mr. W. E. Forster) did not think the reply of the hon. Member for Wexford to that challenge was satisfactory. The hon. Member alluded to some remarks made by him (Mr. W. E. Forster) last year, and to some letters he had not seen which had appeared in *The Newcastle Chronicle;* but had the hon. Member written any letters to his own constituents advising them against outrages? [Mr. HEALY: Does the right hon. Gentleman ask me the question?] It would be more to the purpose that it should be known whether the hon. Member addressed such a letter to his own constituents, warning them against crime and outrage, and telling them how all Irishmen were disgraced by their occurrence. Allusion had been made to his statement, that at one time outrages were diminishing; but if the context had been given, the statement would have borne a rather different interpretation. He gave the reason for the diminution, and it was that the Leaders of the movement were trying to discourage them after the bringing in of the Protection Act; and, whether he said so or not, he thought what a pity it was that they had not done so before. And why did he think they were doing it then? Because they had some hope that they might prevent the Protection Act being passed. ["Oh!"] And, unfortunately, when it was passed, the efforts at discouragement were not persisted in. During the course of last year these outrages were constantly happening, and no resolute effort was made by the Leaders of the Land League to stop them. An occasional remark might be made; but, on the other hand, words were spoken and written which no one having a knowledge of the Irish people and of human nature could doubt would lead to the commission of outrages. Then came the "no rent" manifesto, and its publication over Ireland. But its track had been marked by letters of blood. Take the outrages that had lately happened. Almost all of them were outrages on men who disobeyed the "no rent" manifesto, and who paid their rent, or because it was thought they would do so, and the men who committed these outrages very reasonably supposed that they were carrying out the advice of those who issued and circulated that manifesto. The hon. Member for Wexford said outrages might have followed the "no rent" manifesto; but he says also—"If you slap an Irishman in the face you must expect a blow in return." Yes; but a blow to whom? Not to the Government. ["Yes!"] But the blow was given to poor men—as, for instance, the man he saw lying in his death agony from the injuries he had received. The blow was given to hardworking, honest men, who were torn from their beds, maimed, or killed. That was the way an hon. Member would wish his countrymen to act.

MR. CALLAN rose to Order. He wished to ask whether that was not an imputation of the most atrocious character made by the Chief Secretary for Ireland against Members of that House, and such that ought not to be permitted? He moved that the right hon. Gentleman's words be taken down.

MR. SPEAKER said, that the hon. Member (Mr. Callan) had appealed to him whether the right hon. Gentleman was in Order; he then proposed that the right hon. Gentleman's words be taken down. The hon. Member was too late, after his first appeal, to move that the right hon. Gentleman's words should be taken down. The hon. Member could not propose two courses to the House. At the same time, he (the Speaker) was bound to say that he had heard nothing fall from the right hon. Gentleman which was not in Order.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that not unfrequently it had been his painful duty, as the Representative of the Government in Ireland, to try to bring home to hon. Members opposite the effect of their influence upon sections of the people in Ireland, and it was no uncommon thing for some hon. Member to jump up and interrupt him, and to call him to Order. But the Speaker had declared that such attempts were not well-founded. The hon. Member, no doubt, rightly believed in the courage of his countrymen; but what he had said in that House was an extraordinary exemplification of the way in which he would exhort them to use their courage —that was, to return the "slap in the face"—by which he (Mr. W. E. Forster) supposed he meant the arrest of his Friends by the Government — with blows; blows not to the Government, but to those who might be honest enough to disobey the commands of the Land League.

Mr. HEALY said, he had never said so.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER begged the hon. Gentleman's pardon if he misinterpreted him; but he was in the recollection of the House.

Mr. HEALY said, he had never given such advice; he had said that was the explanation of the outrages.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: That might be so. But he believed the hon. Member had added, "what else could they expect but a slap in the face from the Government?" And when that was spoken of, they knew what must follow. Why, a blow back—a return blow—a blow which was not merely a blow to the cause of law and order, but a blow to the poor, hard-working Irishman who wished to do his duty. What happened in Tipperary two or three days ago? A band of men, at night, about 15 or 20—he was uninformed as to their number—attacked the house of a farmer, an isolated house, took a crowbar, and tried to break down the door, evidently with the intention of murdering the man who lived there. Why? Because he had disobeyed the "no rent" manifesto. Then the hon. Member said, "the Irish people would not tamely kiss the rod." They did not want them to kiss any rod. They asked them not to commit outrage and murder, and not to incite to such crimes, and they would prevent them from committing them, if possible. Even if in doing so it was their painful duty to keep three Members of Parliament in Kilmainham on an important division, they would do it. The hon. Member had alluded to some letters he had written and to his visit to America. He (Mr. W. E. Forster) was glad he had done so. When the hon. Member was speaking in America—if he might judge from the reports he seen, and which he had every reason to believe were faithful reports, as they had appeared in papers in the hon. Member's own interest—he spoke with entire freedom. He always spoke as freely in that House as in Ireland; but in America the hon. Member had spoken almost more freely than he spoke either in that House or in Ireland. Perhaps he would get up and deny that he ever used the words; but most certainly in *United Ireland* he was reported, in one of the speeches he had given in America, as saying, speaking of the "no rent" manifesto, "that the farmers would not dare to take the farm of an evicted tenant." [Mr. Healy: Hear, hear!] "Hear, hear!" That was the meaning, then, of the "no rent" manifesto. Hon. Members would excuse him if he spoke with some degree of earnestness in the matter. He had been blamed—and perhaps with some justice, as holding the Office he did—for not having been in the House to answer every Question put on the Paper. Why had he not been in the House? Because he had higher duties to perform in Ireland—to try and restore peace and order there, despite the "no rent" manifesto, and despite the men who had issued it—duties which were to try to make impossible that fear to take a farm whose former tenant had been evicted, of which the hon. Member had spoken. The hon. Member for Stroud had said that the Protection Act had failed, but he gave no reason for that statement. But he (Mr. W. E. Forster) could not allow such a remark to pass unnoticed. The Protection Act, certainly, had not succeeded to the extent they had hoped, because the remittances from America had been too constant, and those hon. Gentlemen whose efforts naturally and inevitably led to those outrages were too persistent. They might have underrated the power with which they had to contend. To some extent he acknowledged it was the case, for they did not fully estimate the motives and feelings of the men with whom they had to contend in carrying on the movement. It had been often said that the Act had been passed for the purpose of arresting the "village ruffians," and that they had not done so. He acknowledged that at the time of the discussions on the Bill he thought that was the class of men they should mainly have to contend with. He did not expect that anyone not a village ruffian would have pursued the course that had been taken, that men of influence and position would act as they had done. Certainly, as he had said, the Protection Act had not succeeded to the extent which some of them hoped it would suceed; but it had done much, and that was what he wanted his hon. Friend to bear in mind. Had it not been for the Protection Act, the law of the land would have been displaced by the unwritten law. It was only just passed in time to prevent that. The hon. Gentlemen now in Kilmainham, with hon. Members opposite, would really have been the Law Administrators in Ireland. They would have fixed what rent should be paid, and what trade should be carried on, and what men should take advantage of the Land Act. That had been prevented. The Protection Act had prevented that. Again, the Protection Act had to some extent struck down that weapon, that pike, which was so eloquently described as being more powerful to aid those who would assert the unwritten law against the written law than any weapon in all the power of the Government. Without the Protection Act the Government could not have struck down that. One other thing had been done. There were, no doubt, secret societies in Ireland, and societies whose object was murder, and who had much to do with the outrages which had been committed. He did not mean that the arrest of a man under the Protection Act was the punishment that ought to be given to a man who was implicated in murder; but, as he said before, their object was prevention, not punishment. They had stopped murders in some districts — they had stopped them, for instance, in Loughrea, by arresting large numbers of the people, who, if they had been at large, would have continued those murders; and he thought the number of them had, in consequence, been less than it otherwise would have been. He admitted the Government had not entirely succeeded. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), who had been his Predecessor, had asked whether the Government still saw signs of improvement in Ireland? Well, he had only just returned from Ireland, and he might give the House his honest opinion as to its condition. He would admit that the state of things was still terrible; the Government was still in desperate conflict with the powers of lawlessness, with a conspiracy against law and order, with the men who maimed and murdered, and those who were reckless whether they fomented crime or not; but, to some extent, he saw hope. The "no rent" manifesto had failed. Rents, in spite of it, had been paid, and were being paid, to a larger extent in Ireland than before, and that, he thought, was an important sign of improvement. Why did he say that that was a sign of improvement? Not merely because of the individual cases, but because it was a conquest of law and order, a defeat of that conspiracy which would put the unwritten law in place of the law of the land, and which would determine whether rent should be paid or not. The "no rent" manifesto, though it had been followed by outrages, though it had succeeded, as he believed to have been the case, in causing many a murder and many a mutilation, had not succeeded in depriving the landlords of their rents. The pith of one of the hon. Gentleman's (Mr. Healy's) remarks was "Mind your own business." That motto he (Mr. W. E. Forster) took home to himself. As Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, he was as responsible for the maintenance of law and order as any man could be, and he meant to stop outrages; that was his business — the business which he had been requested to mind, and, let him say, that was the business of that House also. The signs of improvement in the future might be much greater than at this moment; but it might turn out, in order to maintain law and order, and to stop those murders which were a disgrace to their country and to humanity, that some stronger measures even yet would have to be resorted to. And if the House was convinced of the necessity, it would mind its own business, and resort to them. He could only say that if the Government saw the necessity of such an application they would not hesitate to make it.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN said, in the speech that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. E. Forster) had just delivered, and in other speeches, the charge had been again and again laid against the Irish Members that they had not condemned crime and outrage in Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"] Hon. Gentlemen who cheered that statement proved their ignorance of the facts by doing so. He believed there was no Irish Member in that House who had taken part in the Land League agitation who had not denounced outrages thoroughly and earnestly. He was a witness to that fact in his own person, and he could also affirm the same of others. He had denounced from Irish platforms the perpetrators of crime and outrages, and had never failed to do so, unless when that work had been done by the preceding speakers. He had the honour also to be a journalist, and in the journal which he owned and edited, he had written articles, not one, but several articles, in strong and earnest repudiation of crime and outrage. What was, therefore, the honesty of hon. Members opposite who, knowing nothing about the matter, dared to give them the contradiction implied in their ironical cheers? The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had laid great stress on the statement said to have been made in America, that no man dare take a farm from which another had been evicted for the nonpayment of an unjust rent; but he (Mr. T. D. Sullivan) would point out that before the "no rent" manifesto was issued the same thing had been said both in Irish newspapers and on Irish platforms over and over again, and no exception was taken to it by the constituted authorities in that country. The meaning of that phrase had more than once been explained in the fullest and clearest manner by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), who said he wished to substitute for the old methods of dealing with people who offended against their neighbours in that way the new and comparatively harmless system of simply shunning them, turning away from them when meeting them in the street, and having no communication with them. He (Mr. T. D. Sullivan) was present with the hon. Member for the City of Cork on the platform at Ennis when he gave that advice in a memorable speech often quoted in that House, and which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland could scarcely have forgotten. That course was advised as being not illegal, not immoral, and not beyond the rights of everyone. No man was bound to speak to another, nor was a man bound to have dealings with another whom he believed to be base and disloyal. ["Oh, oh!"] Now, would such advice be an incitement to murder and mutilation? [Mr. Mitchell Henry: Yes.] Then the hon. Member for Galway was not accessible to reason. It was to be noticed that in all the speeches that had been made from the Government side of the House there was one important fact left entirely out fo view. How did it happen that the right hon. Gentleman never once alluded to harsh landlordism, unjust eviction, and constantly-increasing unfair rents during that debate? It was these evictions that were the real parents of crime and outrage in Ireland. Harsh landlordism and unjust evictions led to crimes and outrages in Ireland before ever the Land League was founded. He contended that so important a factor in the production of crime and outrage in Ireland as these rent-raisings and evictions should not have been kept out of view by any man speaking on the subject and wishing to deal fairly with it. The resources of English civilization had been contrasted with Irish barbarism by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister; but no one had noticed the now fulfilled prediction of the Irish Members that barbarism would result from the Coercion Act. As for the release of the three imprisoned Members, he asked the Prime Minister only to be consistent, and to remember that other prisoners had been released on parole. It was true that these hon. Members had not asked to be set free on a former occasion; but that was no reason, except to the Prime Minister, why they should not be released now. The right hon. Gentleman, if he believed in such an argument, might as well reply to the man who wanted a few days of liberty in order to sow his potatoes, that he had made no application three weeks before to attend to his cabbages. He saw in the Government's refusal of this small request the old historic spirit of England against the Irish people. He saw in it the result of the old spirit of tyranny and cruelty under which the Irish people for generations had been suffering. Did the right hon. Gentleman think he was sending a message of peace to Ireland that night? He (Mr. T. D. Sullivan) believed that the refusal would sting the Irish people very deeply, and would give a shock to the sentiments of all well-disposed people in the country. Since the time when three Irishmen were executed on the gallows at Manchester, he remembered no act of the British Government which should create in Ireland such a feeling of intense indignation and exasperation, which would be felt from one end of the country to another, as the curt and churlish and ungenerous refusal of this small favour by the Prime Minister that night. The Government was unable to rise even to the small height of that little occasion, and preferred to stand in that uncompromising attitute of hostility to the Irish people; and assuredly now or hereafter they would have their reward for it.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY said, he most earnestly protested against the sanction which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Westmeath (Mr. T. D. Sullivan) had just given to the practice of "Boycotting." In fact, he thought the justification put forward by the hon. Member of the advice given by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) was a matter which ought not to be passed over by the House. Civilized and Christian society was dependent on the mutual association of mankind for support and comfort, and for anyone in the position of a Member of Parliament to advise poor ignorant men to shun one of their fellows who had paid his rent, and make his life a hell upon earth, was most reprehensible. He knew of no advice that could be given by a Christian more wicked than that advice given by the hon. Member for the City of Cork. In consequence of it, many unfortunate men and their families had been reduced to starvation in isolated country districts in consequence of their neighbours refusing to sell them the necessaries of life. Could the hon. Member for Westmeath justify such conduct in the face of the House of Commons? [Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN: Yes.] Did his conscience justify it? [*A laugh.*] Did the hon. Member who laughed justify it? [Mr. BIGGAR: Yes.] Let him give such advice in this country, and the law would soon stop it. [Mr. BIGGAR: Trades unions do.] It was illegal. The practice of picketing, to which the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Joseph Cowen) had referred, was illegal and had been punished repeatedly. He wondered that the hon. Member could possibly speak of it without reprobation. He (Mr. Mitchell Henry) had spoken thus strongly because of the advice that had been given, and he would continue on all occasions to denounce the "no rent" manifesto and the cruel practice of "Boycotting." If more hon. Members were to do likewise, perhaps they would produce some effect upon the hardened consciences of those who gave the advice.

MR. DALY said, that, while claiming to be as conscientious as the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry), he was prepared most earnestly to maintain that "Boycotting" pure and simple, as it was laid down by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), and not exercised for the gratification of malice and the avenging of private quarrels, was perfectly fair and justifiable under the circumstances now existing in Ireland. Why, as regarded England, before the institution of the ballot any man who voted against his landlord was "Boycotted." With all his respect for the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, he (Mr. Daly) was greatly disappointed at the disingenuous way in which the Prime Minister had met some of the arguments put forward by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). He would almost infer from some parts of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman that the Government intended imprisoning other Members of Parliament, and did not want to create any precedent by releasing those already confined to vote. Those hon. Members had been spoken of as witnesses and judges—perhaps, if they were released, they might become the executioners of the Government. The Prime Minister described the Land Act as an efficient means of preserving peace in Ireland, and taunted the Irish Members with not supporting it. He (Mr. Daly), in return, charged the Government with being responsible for the crime and outrage which had been taking place in Ireland. The Estimates before them supported the charge. He found that they required only £96,000 for the working of the Land Act, notwithstanding that tenants in arrears were beseeching for admission to the Land Courts, and denied it because of insufficient facilities, while the landlords were allowed to put them out of their homesteads. But an excess sum of £140,000 was on that occasion asked for the Constabulary, or, in other words, for the landlord interests. When the excitement caused by the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had died away, he thought that hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite would see that many of the crimes, the commission of which he (Mr. Daly) deplored as much as any man, had arisen from the imbecility of the Irish Administration.

Mr. A. MOORE said, he had heard with very great regret the decision the Government had come to on the question under notice. He thought the condition of Ireland was so critical, and the whole situation was so complicated, that the Government ought to have grasped eagerly at such an offer as was made by the three hon. Gentlemen to come forth from their prison on parole. The Government ought to take that offer, unless they were prepared to bring them to trial. Indeed, they ought to go further, and to invite those hon. Members not merely to come there on Thursday night to register their votes, but to attend to their Parliamentary duties throughout the remainder of the Session, accepting the parole which they offered. While saying that, he need hardly say he had no sympathy with the policy of those hon. Gentlemen, or with the "no rent" manifesto which, indeed, he had denounced, together with the outrages connected with it, in every possible way. But he believed that these hon. Members would be less dangerous in the House of Commons in the discharge of their duties than in Kilmainham, and that their release would remove a great deal of the irritation at present prevalent among the lower classes of Ireland on account of their arrest. He was sorry to hear hon. Gentlemen opposite speak in slighting tones of the consequences which had undoubtedly followed from the "no rent" manifesto. As long as he had a seat in that House he should always raise his voice against the crime, misery, and misfortune which had followed from the propagation of that disgraceful document. Another point which hon. Members opposite glossed over very gracefully was the question of "Boycotting." They were told it was no harm to tell people not to deal with a man. Was it no harm to order people not to deal with him under pain of burning, mutilation, and perhaps death? Nothing could exceed the extraordinary tyranny practised under the system. At that very moment a gentleman in Tipperary was "Boycotted" because he gave a site for a police barrack to the Government. ["Hear, hear!"] Was it a crime to support the authorities? He certainly did not understand these new doctrines; he did not understand why the law should not be maintained without peril, and he regarded it as the duty of every citizen to help to do it. This gentleman in Tipperary was a kind neighbour, a good landlord, and had not even asked for his rents; and merely because he gave the site of a police barrack where a barrack had previously existed, he was "Boycotted," his land was kept idle, and he had no one even to attend to his horse in the stable. Could there be anything more tyrannical than a system under which notices were posted on the walls telling men, under pain of death, not to work for such and such a person, and where even an unfortunate woman was threatened that if she did not leave her employment her mother would be burnt in her bed? In her case, however, he was glad to say the menace had failed, for she had not yet left her employment, and did not mean to do so. He was sorry that the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Daly), for whom he had a sincere respect, and who, being an urban Member, did not know what was going on in the country, should give the weight of his character in recommending a practice which was most demoralizing and misleading to the people.

Mr. GORST said, he had paid the utmost attention to the arguments urged by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister to show that it was impossible for the Government to grant the request to allow those three Irish Members to record their votes on Thursday. The only reason for the refusal, however, which he could understand was, that the three votes, if given, were likely to be given against the Government. If, as they had been often told, the Coercion Act was intended for prevention and not for punishment, he should have thought that the admission of the right hon. Gentleman himself, that no harm would be done in Ireland and no ill would be produced on the population of that country by those three Members coming to the House, would have been a sufficient reason for giving them leave to come. He, however, rose chiefly to call attention to the very grave statements made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. The right hon. Gentleman was in the habit of making vague announcements of changes in Irish policy in casual speeches. They never understood those statements when they were first made, they always required subsequent explanation; but he understood the right hon. Gentleman to say he admitted the present Irish policy of the Government to have failed. [MR. W. E. FORSTER: No; I did not.] The right hon. Gentleman admitted that it had failed to restore peace and order in Ireland; and if he had not done so, and an opportunity were given for discussing the question, there would be no difficulty in showing that the policy of the Government had absolutely failed to restore peace and peace in that country. But he had understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that, in view of the comparative failure of his past measures, he was preparing some new and more severe policy; that there were some measures of a more stringent character in the background which he shadowed out in rather a mysterious manner, and which would be shortly introduced.

MR. W. E. FORSTER (interposing): The hon. and learned Member must not suppose, because I have not an opportunity of making any lengthened remarks, that I admit the correctness of his statement.

MR. GORST said, that he was quite accustomed to that sort of thing. ["Oh, oh!"] The Irish policy of the Government was always announced to the House in a piecemeal way. He understood from the right hon. Gentleman's speech that there was to be some change in their policy. The present measures of coercion had entirely failed to restore order in Ireland. The Assizes just concluded showed that the amount of crime now was double what it was in all the various districts last year; in almost every case the juries failed to convict; and, therefore, there must be some new departure on the part of the Government. They could not go on holding Office and refrain from taking some fresh step or other in order to ameliorate the present state of things in Ireland. He, therefore, wished to know whether the announcement of the new Irish policy would be made to the House in a distinct and formal manner, so that they might be able to understand and discuss the measures of the Government?

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he thought it was understood the other night, although he was not then present, that the Report of Supply would be taken to-day, and he hoped that, as they were now near the hour for closing the debate, the House would be allowed to take that step. It would be altogether inconvenient at the present moment to enter into the large question to which the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had adverted, and which might, no doubt, be fairly raised upon some of the language that had been used by the Government. In a matter of such very great importance he thought the responsibility of the Government ought to be left as unfettered as possible, and he should be sorry if anything interfered to prevent the debate being brought to a close.

MR. BIGGAR (who rose amid great interruption) said, he did not intend to talk the Motion out; but he felt bound to take some notice of the language of the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry) with respect to "Boycotting." He (Mr. Biggar) did not see why such attacks should be made on Irishmen for that practice, seeing that it was in use in every part of the world. Moreover, it could be defended from its analogy with what had recently occurred at a particular Club, the Reform Club, in London. A number of its members, among whom were many Members of Parliament, had refused to hold any personal communication with gentlemen of whose opinions they disapproved, and, therefore, they had "Boycotted" them to the extent of their power by voting against their admission to the Club. As to the imprisoned Members, the proceedings of the Government that afternoon were such as they had consistently followed when the question of the treatment of political prisoners was under discussion. They had attempted to raise a false issue. But the real question at the present moment was, whether certain hon. Members should have an opportunity of voting against the Government on Thursday next? The Government were making special efforts to get up their Supporters, and they ought not to hinder their opponents from voting.

Resolution *agreed to.*

It being now five minutes to Seven of the clock, the House suspended its Sitting.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

MOTIONS.

ECCLESIASTICAL AND MORTUARY FEES.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON, in rising to call attention to the subject of Ecclesiastical and Mortuary Fees; and to move for a

> "Select Committee to inquire into the Law which authorizes the demanding of Mortuary Fees, and into the Ecclesiastical Fees levied by Ministers of Religion upon the occasion of Burials and the erection of Monuments in Cemeteries and Parish Churchyards; and to report to the House whether any legislation is desirable with a view to their regulation or reduction,"

said, the subject was not one which he should desire to approach, if it could be avoided, and, indeed, few cared to do so. He brought it forward in no spirit of hostility to the Established Church; the grievance was one which pressed on members of that Church as well as upon Nonconformists. It was a civil wrong which was felt by people generally, and which ought to be remedied. That it might not be supposed that he brought the subject forward as a hobby of his own, he would read a short extract from a letter written by one who was entitled to great respect—he meant the Archbishop of York. In a letter written in September, 1880, after a great many burial scandals had occurred in his Province, the Archbishop of York said that the whole subject of fees required careful consideration; that it would be desirable that a table of fees should be adjusted on one scale to be approved of by the Chancellor of the diocese; that the present state of things was extremely painful; that it produced conflicts even at the grave side; and that no time should be lost. There was also a letter from the Vicar of Sheffield, Canon Blakeney, who stated that the Clergy of the rural deanery did not object to a Select Committee to inquire into the whole question; indeed, the Vicar of Sheffield added, he might say the Clergy courted investigation. He (Sir Alexander Gordon) had also two notes from country vicars, who took the same view. Those reverend personages had seen the Bill he had brought in last year, and they stated that the Church would be under an obligation to him, if he would bring in a Bill to regulate marriage as well as burial fees. Now, there were two classes of fees connected with deaths and burials—mortuary fees and burial fees. The first, mortuary fees, were legalized so far back as the time of Henry VIII., in the early period of whose Reign such exorbitant fees were demanded by the Clergy that the Act of 1530 was passed, which prohibited the collection of any other fees than those which were specified by the Act. They were said to have been originally an offering to the Church for any possible omission by the deceased person of the dues of the Church during his lifetime. That might have been necessary in the year 1530; but he did not think Parliament would levy a duty now on such a basis. Though the Act had become non - effective by disuse in large towns, it still remained in force in many country villages in England, except with regard to Chester and some parts of Wales, which were exempted in later Reigns. Small villages and country parishes were still taxed upon the basis of that Act, and it was a great grievance. Strange to say, the fee exacted in some cases exceeded the amount authorized by the Statute. The fee was limited to 10*s*., but in some cases 10*s*. 6*d*. and 11*s*. were charged. Nonconformists especially complained of this burden, and he thought the House would agree with him that these complaints alone constituted a case for inquiry. But the other class of fees—namely, ordinary burial fees—were far more common. To show the variety of fees that were exacted, he had a list of fees, taken at random from Acts of Parliament and Returns presented to the House, and he found that they varied from 1*s.* 6*d.* to £1 3*s.*—these two rates being found in adjacent parishes. In fact, they were levied without any regular system. A committee of the Salisbury Diocesan Synod, appointed to inquire into the subject, had recommended that no fees should be demanded for the burial of a parishioner, and that monumental and other fees should be reduced practically to one-fourth; but, of course, these recommendations could only be carried into effect by Act of Parliament, and that was why he asked the House to institute an inquiry—that they might have material for legislation on the question. If any hon. Member should object that this was a clerical subject with which Parliament ought not to interfere, he would remind them that Parliament had twice interfered to prohibit baptismal fees. In 1872 the late Bishop of Winchester had carried a Bill prohibiting baptismal fees; and when they remembered that baptism was not required by the State, but burial was, he thought Parliament had a much stronger ground for interference with a view to the regulation of burial fees. He would not detain the House, because the subject did not require much comment. What he wished to point out was that while these burial fees were a benefit to a few thousand clergymen, they were injurious to 25,000,000 Englishmen. The whole population, rich and poor, but mostly the poor, were affected by these fees, except persons who belonged to the Jewish community, who had their own burying-grounds. The hon. and gallant Baronet concluded by moving for the Select Committee of which he had given Notice.

MR. BRINTON, in seconding the Motion, said, that the interests of both Churchmen and Nonconformists were bound up in this question. There was, he thought, fair and reasonable ground for such an equalization and reduction of burial fees as would satisfy a great number of the poorer portion of the community, especially the agricultural classes. The oppressive character of burial fees, as well as of mural and other monuments, &c., in churches might be learned by consulting Returns which were in the Library of the House; and he thought they were justified in bringing this matter before the House and asking that it might be inquired into by a Committee—and the more particularly at the present time, when so many churchyards were being transferred to Burial Boards and Cemetery Companies, who, as a rule, had to take also the rights or customs previously imposed on the Church. In a large number of parishes 5*s.* was charged as a fee for permission to inter by the Clergy. That charge was entirely separate from the interment charge, the charge for making the grave, the sexton's labour, &c. In some parishes 7*s.*, 8*s.*, and even 10*s.* was charged for interment. He regretted to say that this fee was found to be heaviest in populous places. For instance, a servant of a friend of his had to pay 10*s.* interment fee for the burial of a child in Kensington. In Brompton, also, the charges were excessive. He wished to do justice to members of the Clergy, who were at times most reluctant to make the charge, on account of the poverty of those who had to pay it, but still it belonged to their office; and, indeed, he had been told by some of the Clergy that a clerical fee of 2*s.* 6*d.* in each case would be to many of their body riches itself. He thought it would be much more desirable to augment the incomes of the Clergy from some other source, and to remove these oppressive charges on burial. In regard to memorial and monumental charges, there was a strong feeling throughout the country that the option given to the clergyman to make any charge he thought proper was one that ought to be controlled by the Legislature. The subject, as a whole, might be regarded as a not unfair or unreasonable corollary to the Burials Bill which was passed last Session; and if this Committee were given, it would tend to remove some of the difficulties which prevented the Burials Bill from being all that it should be to the community. As a member of the Church of England, he supported the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the Law which authorizes the demanding of Mortuary Fees, and into the Ecclesiastical Fees levied by Ministers of Religion upon the occasion of Burials and the erection of Monuments in Cemeteries and Parish Churchyards; and to report to the House whether any legislation is desirable with a view to their regulation or reduction."—(*Sir Alexander Gordon.*)

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) said, he ought, perhaps, to apologize for intervening in this matter, which was in no way connected with his Department. But his right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir William Harcourt), possibly because he thought that by the interest he (the Judge Advocate General) had taken in the Burials Question, he had familiarized himself with this subject, had requested him to take charge of it, and he had willingly consented to do so. He thought it was impossible for anyone who had studied the subject, or had listened to the hon. Members who had moved and seconded the Motion, not to feel that the law on this subject was in a very unsatisfactory state. He thought he might go further, and say that there was no law at all on the subject—no law in the sense of any inflexible or general rule. The fact was, that the practice of exacting fees had grown up by custom, which in time acquired the force of law. Sir Robert Phillimore, in his learned work on Ecclesiastical Law, laid down that by the Canon Law and the Common Law also it was absolutely unlawful to charge fees for the burial of parishioners. In a leading case decided in the last century, it was held that a vicar was not entitled to demand fees for burials under either law, though such fees might be exacted by custom. The Civil Courts, however, had long since arrogated to themselves the right of determining whether the custom of exacting burial fees existed in a particular parish, and whether the custom in question was of a reasonable character. Now, in many cases, the measure of burial fees was what the clergyman in each case chose to exact, and what the parishioner could well pay. In that part of the Principality of Wales with which he was specially connected, he might observe, in passing, a very peculiar custom existed. In many parts of the Principality no burial fees were demanded; but it was customary for the friends of a deceased person to lay voluntary offerings upon the coffin, and in that way the clergyman was remunerated. There was no process, however, by which these offerings could be exacted. In 1852, as the House would remember, Statutes were introduced for the purpose of closing burial-grounds in urban districts and of opening cemeteries instead. Those Acts gave an incumbent power to exact such fees in connection with burials in cemeteries as he would have been entitled to exact in connection with interments in the old churchyards. In the subsequent Act, known as Marten's Act, there was no provision whatever affecting burial fees, so that in cemeteries constructed under that Act clergymen had no power to demand fees. The Burials Act had not altered the law in any way. Not only was the exacting of these fees a thing unknown at Common Law; but a clergyman had, neither by Common Law nor Canon Law, any right to exact any fee for the erection of a monument. His right to demand such a fee depended upon custom. Reference had been made to the Burials Laws Amendment Act of 1880, and, although it had only been in operation 18 months, no Act of Parliament ever passed had more completely falsified the predictions of its opponents. Thousands of burials had taken place under the Act; but there had been no appreciable decrease in the decorousness or reverence with which the funeral ceremonies were observed. That was largely due to the way in which the Clergy of the Church of England had received the measure, and had shown their desire to carry it out, not only in its letter, but in its spirit. There had, however, been some exceptional cases, such as that of the Rev. Mr. Hall, who refused to enter upon his register the burial of a Dissenter; and there had been cases brought to his knowledge, in which an incumbent had used his arbitrary power of exacting pretty nearly any burial fees he chose, as a sort of screw to compel Nonconformists to bury their deceased friends, not under the Act, but with the Service of the Church of England; and this was the way in which it had been done. A known Dissenter went to a clergyman and said—"My friend, my son, or my wife," as the case might be, "has died, and I want the burial to take place according to the Act." He asked what was the fee. "Oh," said the clergyman, "If you choose to bury him or her with my Service the fee will be 5*s.*; if you insist upon burial under the Burial Act it will be £5." Cases of that kind had occurred, and there was no doubt that this power had been used as a sort of screw for the purpose of evading the Act. On the other hand, as he had said, there were numerous cases in which the Clergy had cheerfully conformed to the provisions of the Act, carrying them out not only in the letter, but in the spirit. In Wales it was by no means an uncommon thing when a Nonconformist was buried, for part of the service to be performed in the Church by the clergyman, and for the remainder of the service at the grave to be performed by a Nonconformist minister. He was sure that occurrences of that kind had tended very much to knit together in Christian harmony the different members of the parish. There had, however, been these exceptions, and it was exceedingly desirable, not only in the interests of the public generally, but in the interests of the Clergy and in the interests of the Church of England, that such things should be made impossible. The abuse of this arbitrary power recoiled upon those who had recourse to it, and in every interest it was desirable that it should be taken away. The proposal for a Select Committee was an exceedingly reasonable and modest one; and, on the part of the Government, he was authorized to consent to it. Of course, a Select Committee could not legislate; but it could inquire into the whole question, and he had no doubt that his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Alexander Gordon) would be able to lay before the Committee information which might serve as the basis of their Report, which Report, he hoped, would serve as the basis of future legislation. Under these circumstances, he did not think the House would act wrongly in acceding to the Motion.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY said, the hon. and gallant Member for East Aberdeenshire (Sir Alexander Gordon) had already informed the House what was the feeling of the borough which he (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) represented in this matter. On behalf of the Clergy of that borough, he was authorized to say that they were far from deprecating any such inquiry as that to which the right hon. and learned Gentleman (the Judge Advocate General), on behalf of the Government, had given his consent. Generally speaking, where they had an existing inequality proved they had a *primâ facie* case for inquiry. There was no doubt that it was owing to that inequality that irritation had been produced. Of course, the House would see that in the speeches which had hitherto been made—he did not make this assertion in any invidious sense—only one side of the question had been stated. He would not detain them by showing that there was much which might also be said on the other side, and which an inquiry by a Select Committee would usefully elicit.

MR. BULWER said, that if the appointment of the Select Committee were agreed to, it must not be taken that all hon. Members present also agreed in the views which had been expressed. He agreed with the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Osborne Morgan) that burial fees were forbidden by the Canon Law; but his right hon. and learned Friend had also stated that they were not recoverable at Common Law, and he quoted the authority of Sir Robert Phillimore on the subject; but against that he (Mr. Bulwer) might place the authority of Lord Stowell, who said that, although burial fees were forbidden by the Canon Law, fee offerings came to be made, and essentially became customary; and the custom was founded on reasonable considerations. It was not the fact that parishes were left to fix any rates they chose, for they had to be submitted to the Ordinary, who satisfied himself of their propriety. These payments, though not due as of common right, depended upon custom, and were enforceable at Common Law, and the right to them thus stood, in that respect, upon the same footing as other rights founded on custom. It had been said that the parson was at liberty to ask any person demanding burial what he could pay, and to decide for himself whether the person was poor or not, and regulate his demand accordingly; but that could not be done. The burial fee was regulated by custom. One authority stated 3*s.* 4*d.* as the accustomed fee for burial; but, whatever it was, no clergyman had the right to demand a higher fee than was authorized by custom; if he did so, it could be reasonably and successfully resisted. His right hon.

and learned Friend had mentioned a case where a parson had said that if he performed the Burial Service the fee would be 5*s*., but if another performed it it would be £5. Unless that other was a stranger to the parish, or not a member of the Church of England, he did not see how that could happen, because, by the last Burial Act, it was provided that the fee should be paid to the person to whom it would have been payable if the burial had taken place with the Service of the Church of England. If with the Service of the Church of England, the only fee the clergyman could ask for his own services was the customary fee, and no one else had a right to perform the services, he might deny justice to a poor man; but, except in that sense, he could not act as his right hon. and learned Friend had stated. Then, as to the fees for monuments, that was a matter strictly regulated by custom; and it was, in his opinion, very desirable that some restriction should be placed upon the erection of mural monuments and sepulchral effigies. Everyone had noticed how churchyards were often disfigured by 6-feet iron railings enclosing monuments expatiating upon the virtues of the deceased. The proper legal process to be adopted by any person desirous of erecting a monument in a church was to obtain the leave of the incumbent, who might prescribe his own reasonable terms, or demand the accustomed fees. If the incumbent asked an exorbitant fee, the person might apply for a faculty. In strict right this ought always to be done, and the Judge of the Consistory Court, if the incumbent objected to the faculty being granted, would say whether the fees demanded was such as was customary and proper under the circumstances. On payment of the proper fee, the applicant's wishes would be carried out by legal authority. He was not opposing this inquiry; but he wished to point out that there was some exaggeration in the charges made against the Clergy. He thought that they had not laid themselves open to the reflections cast upon them by hon. Members. They were quite as desirous as anyone else that some rule should be laid down by which fees might be fixed upon a definite basis.

The JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. Osborne Morgan) stated, in explanation, that he did not mean to say that fees fixed by custom could not be enforced in the same way as payments authorized by the Common Law; but that fees varied according to custom, the result being that there was so much uncertainty that no one knew what he had to pay.

Mr. EVANS WILLIAMS said, that he should not have intervened in this debate, in which he would intervene for a few minutes only, were it not for some remarks of the two Members who spoke last. It was said an ounce of fact was worth a ton of argument. The hon. and learned Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Bulwer) doubted the existence of a grievance; but he could give instances of excessive charges in connection with the subject under notice, so far as monuments were concerned. He had been charged 20 guineas as a fee for erecting a simple stone cross with a low railing. That railing was not a high one enclosing ground beyond the grave, but one six inches high only, on a coping, just to mark the grave of two relatives—old parishioners in a borough which he represented. On his explaining this to to the incumbent, the latter replied still that 20 guineas was his fee. He took counsel's opinion whether he could resist the charge, but was told that there was no Common Law right to erect a monument in a churchyard at all, and that it was a matter of bargain with the incumbent. In many parishes in the neighbourhood in question, and by many of his clerical friends, no fee whatever would have been charged for the monument, which was an ornament. Poor persons in the same parish were often charged £2 for a simple head-stone. All this he could prove before the Committee. He did not understand what had been said as to these fees being limited by custom, unless that was applied to fees for burial only, for which he knew of no such extortionate fees.

Mr. BERESFORD HOPE said, that if it was the intention of the House to appoint a Committee, the inquiry, to be of any value, ought be a searching one, so that no injustice might be done by a superficial review of the circumstances. At the same time, he feared that the proceedings before the Committee would degenerate into amusing small talk about headstones and humorous epitaphs. He fully admitted that among the 15,000 Clergy there might be some gradations of opinion and of judiciousness; but, taking them as a whole, the Clergy were kindly and considerate in the performance of their duty and the exercise of their privileges. As to the question of the burial of non-parishioners, it must be remembered that no one had a right in any burial-ground where he was not a parishioner; so that whenever as, in such cases, anyone of the Clergy was asked to give up any of his rights, it must be remembered that the clergyman, in consenting, was granting an indulgence, and an allowance should accordingly be made for that fact.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

And, on April 3, Committee *nominated* as follows:—The JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL, Sir EDMUND LECHMERE, Sir ALEXANDER GORDON, Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON, Mr. BRINTON, Sir HENRY FLETCHER, Mr. RICHARD, Viscount FOLKESTONE, Mr. NELSON, and Mr. BERESFORD HOPE, with power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.

ARMY—CONDITION OF THE ARMY.

OBSERVATIONS.

COLONEL BARNE, in rising to call attention to the unsatisfactory condition of the Army; and to move—

> "That the chief command of the Army should be placed in the hands of the most experienced soldiers and administrators in Her Majesty's Service; that the youth of the men now serving in the Army renders them unfit to undergo the hardships of a campaign,"

said, he thought he expressed the opinion of nine-tenths of the Army when he declared that great discontent prevailed among the officers in consequence both of the slowness of promotion, and also of the rawness of the troops whom officers were called upon to lead in the field. In the old days, before the abolition of Purchase, promotion was rendered speedier by arrangement among the officers themselves. In place of that system they had another which was a source of great expense to the country, having cost them in the last year no less a sum than £1,116,112, without giving satisfaction to the Service. He attributed the inefficiency of the men to the short-service system, which had the effect of depriving the Army of men as soon as they became really efficient and serviceable. The youths who entered the Army, were, no doubt, good material, but they were too young to form really reliable soldiers in case of need. They had had three campaigns since the introduction of the short-service system, enabling them to estimate its effect with precision—the Afghan, the Zulu, and the Boer campaigns.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at a quarter after Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Wednesday, 29*th March,* 1882.

Their Lordships met at Two o'clock;—

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Royal Assent*—Consolidated Fund (No. 2) [45 *Vict.* c. 4]; Slate Mines (Gunpowder) [45 *Vict.* c. 3]; Pilotage Provisional Order (Tees) [45 *Vict.* c. i].

And having gone through the Business on the Paper, without debate—

House adjourned at a quarter past Two o'clock, till To-morrow, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 29*th March,* 1882.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—*Second Report*—Commons (Arkleside Common, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, Cefn Drewern Common and Bettws Draserth Common, in the county of Radnor). [No. 139].

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Public Health (Scotland) Act Amendment* [115]; Militia Storehouses* [116].

Second Reading—Agricultural Holdings, Notices of Removal (Scotland) [5]; Commonable Rights [23] Burial Fees [24], *debate adjourned;* Metropolis (Rating of Footways)* [110].

Second Reading—Referred to Select Committee—Civil Imprisonment (Scotland) [19].

Select Committee—Arklow Harbour* [96], Mr. W. J. Corbet and Mr. Henry Northcote *added.*

Third Reading—Duke of Albany (Establishment)* [112], and *passed.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS, NOTICES OF REMOVAL (SCOTLAND) BILL.

(*Sir Alexander Gordon, Mr. M'Lagan, Mr. Barclay.*)

[BILL 5.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it might be in the recollection of hon. Members that two years ago the question which he now brought forward in this measure was discussed in the House, and met with a very favourable reception from Members on both sides of the House. Since then the question of extending the time for notice of removal in Scotland had gained favour very rapidly throughout the whole of Scotland amongst the class which was most interested in it—namely, the farmer class and occupiers of land. The change that had been asked for by them ever since he had had the honour of a seat in that House had been to convert the notice of removal of 40 days—which was all that a tenant farmer was now entitled to—at the end of his lease into a period of two years. The present law of 40 days' notice came into operation so late as the year 1853, when an Amendment to a Bill relating to the procedure in the Sheriff Courts was carried, and altered the previous law, which had been in existence for 300 years, giving the tenants a longer notice. He said a longer notice, because the Act of 1555 required that the notice should be given 40 days before the Whitsunday of the year in which the lease expired—so that if a tenant's lease expired at Martinmas (in November), he required to have notice 40 days before the Whitsunday of that year. That gave him six months' and 40 days' notice; and so if the lease terminated at any period between terms he had the period after Whitsunday, whatever it was, added to the 40 days. The alteration was made without any discussion in that House as to the reasons why it should be made. Probably at 2 o'clock in the morning, when, formerly, Scotch Business was conducted, some hon. Member moved an Amendment in the interest of owners of land, and it was passed without discussion. The hard operation of the present law was this. The landlord had his tenant under his observation for 18 years and a-half, and he might be a good tenant and might wish to remain; but the landlord had it in his power to hold back information as to whether the tenant might continue in the farm for the term of another lease until 40 days before the lease expired. He had known cases where that had been done, and no doubt other Members acquainted with agricultural matters in Scotland could adduce other instances. Forty days was too short a period for the farmer to make his arrangements for taking a new farm, with the competition there was at present. Two years was the very shortest time a man ought to have to clear out of one farm and make arrangements for getting into another. When they considered the present change in the law was made in 1853, it was rather a reflection on this generation to find that they were so much less liberal and less considerate to their tenants than their ancestors were 330 years ago. He, therefore, hoped the House would be of a more liberal disposition and return to the practice of their ancestors. To show how this question was adopted throughout Scotland, and he might say in England also, he would read a clause in the Bill that had been brought before the country by the Scottish Chamber of Agriculture upon this subject. That was a Bill which had been discussed throughout the whole length and breadth of Scotland, and he had not heard of a single dissentient voice against the adoption of this clause, which ran as follows:—

> "Where in any proceedings relating to the removal or ejection of a tenant, under a contract of tenancy, an interval of 40 days is by law necessary and sufficient between the giving of warning or notice to remove, or the execution of a summons of removing and the term of removal, two years interval shall, by virtue of this Act, be necessary and sufficient for the same."

That was a clause which had been accepted by the great majority of the farmers of Scotland as one which they desired to have passed; and not only was there that expression of opinion, but he found that most—he believed he might say all—certainly most—of the leases of large landowners which had been drawn up within the last two or three years, adopted the two years' notice of removal. He had in his hand what was known as Lord Dalhousie's lease. That noble Lord stipulated—

> "That the tenancy should not come to an end until after expiry of three years' notice given by either party to the other of his intention to bring the tenancy to an end."

And three years' notice was certainly better than two; but he (Sir Alexander Gordon) thought two years was sufficient to be made compulsory by legislation, and any party could add a year or any number of years, but could not reduce it. Another large owner—Lord Aberdeen—bound himself

> "And his successors to give two years' notice before the determination of the lease to the tenant thereof, whether the said lease was to be renewed to him; and, if so, on what condition."

Lord Kintore's lease stipulated—

> "That if neither the proprietor nor the tenant should give the other notice three years before Whit Sunday of his intention to terminate such lease at its natural expiry, such lease should be held to be renewed on the same conditions and at the same rent for an additional year, and so on for as many additional years as might be allowed by the parties to elapse without giving notice, so that the proprietor and the tenant should always have three years' notice of an intention to terminate the lease."

Lord Seafield's lease contained the following provision:—

> "With the view of encouraging the tenant to keep up the farm and maintain its fertility, towards the end of the lease, the proprietor will be prepared, except in cases where he may consider it inexpedient, to enter into negotiations with the tenant for the renewal of the lease two years before the expiry thereof."

And, lastly, let him quote a landowner whose opinion would, he was sure, carry weight on the other side of the House —he meant the Duke of Richmond, who was so well known to take an interest in, and to understand, agricultural matters so well. He stipulated that—

> "New leases should be entered into two years before the expiry of the old leases, and two years' notice of intention to remove should be given on either side."

He thought that showed that the measure he adopted was popular with landowners, whose experience and opinion the House had a right to consider, as well as with the tenant farmers. He should like to show the House the contrary of that, where landlords did not give notice. He had before him a clause in a lease—he would not mention the name, because it would be invidious to do so—but it was very similar to clauses which they found in many of the standard leases of Scotland, some of which were held to be models of propriety. It ran in this way—

> "The tenant will be bound to remove at the expiry of his lease without any warning or legal procedure, failing which he will be liable in twice the stipulated rent of each year during which he shall continue in possession after such expiry."

He hoped that clause was not often put into operation; but the law allowed a landlord to do so, and, consequently, it acted disadvantageously to the farmer. He would also quote another Bill which had been discussed throughout the country very widely, and accepted by the tenant farmers of England—he meant the Farmers' Alliance Land Bill for England. One clause of that Bill—Clause 12—provided—

> "That where the tenant held from year to year, or at will, the tenancy should not be terminated, except by a notice in writing by the landlord to the tenant, or by the tenant to the landlord, two years at least before the time specified in such notice for the termination of the tenancy."

That was an indication of the wish of the tenant farmers of England; and he believed that already, in practice, contracts of tenancy in England usually included two years' notice of removal. So necessary was it under the present conditions of agriculture that tenants should have time to make their arrangements that notice of two or three years was practically coming into operation, and he wished to assist the introduction of that system by making it law. He would also remind hon. Members, and especially hon. Members opposite—if there were any who objected to the principle of the Bill—that the late Lord Beaconsfield had adopted that principle of two years' notice. He was sorry to say that, although there had been no opposition to this Bill from the tenant farmer class in Scotland, there had been some cases of opposition from the landowning class and from the factors who acted for them. There were two or three Petitions from them; but he was happy to say it was quite the reverse in the country to which he belonged, and part of which he had the honour to represent. These agricultural matters had been discussed lately in a very keen manner. The Commissioners of Supply for the County of Aberdeen, when the question of two years' notice came before them at a special meeting, agreed last year that—

> "The Bill seemed to be conceived with a desire to promote the coming to an understanding as to renewal (of lease) a considerable period before the expiry of the existing lease, and in principle, therefore, it deserves a general approval."

That was the opinion of the landlords of Aberdeenshire, who, he was glad to say, sympathized with their tenants in their desire to have sufficient notice of removal. There was also a Petition from the Society of Advocates of Aberdeen, who were mostly the Commissioners' land agents, in favour of the Bill. They wished one or two little changes, which he was quite aware would be of advantage. They wished the operation of the Bill to be restricted to occupiers of five acres of arable land, and more. It was an oversight of his that that had been omitted from the Bill, which would only apply to occupiers of holdings containing five acres and more of arable land. He would also remind the House that in the English Agricultural Holdings Bill of 1875, two years was specified as the period for the exhaustion of manures of the third class. The third class of improvements in that Act gave the tenant two years for these manures, as did also the Scotch Agricultural Bill brought in by the late Government two years in succession—1875 and 1876. In the corresponding clause, two years was held to be the time that the third class of manures should require for exhaustion. He might also remark that, with regard to Ireland, so lately as 1876, Parliament had passed an Act specially to extend the time of notice from six months to one year, though the custom of that country was that tenancies were held from year to year. If Parliament had passed a special Act to give that benefit to Ireland, he did not see why they should not do the same with regard to Scotland. It should be borne in mind that Scotch leases, he might say universally, were for 19 years. And, again, in 1875, the Agricultural Holdings Act had extended the time of notice in England from six to 12 months, unless the tenant contracted himself out of the Act. The law as it stood in England was 12 months' notice, even for a yearly tenancy; and how much more were Scotch tenants entitled to two years? He had put in the Bill a Proviso that the lease should be seven years or more, because he thought five years was quite sufficient time for the landowner to become acquainted with his tenant, and to know whether he would retain him. But, practically, there was no such thing as seven years' leases in Scotland. He would remind the House that the Prime Minister, when in Mid Lothian, had held out to the Scotch farmers that his view of the matter was that longer notices should be given. The right hon. Gentleman referred to what was called the Leicestershire custom, where, after 17 years, the farmer had to state to his landlord whether he wished to remain in the farm, and the landlord and he had to agree with regard to the new lease. If a new lease was agreed to, the farmer was at liberty to go on, and cultivate the land as he thought proper, as long as he did not abuse it. If they did not come to terms, then the land was put under a course such as would insure the landlord that the land would go over to him in good condition. He had that morning received a copy of *The Agricultural Gazette* of England, and he found in that a report of a meeting of the Sevenoaks Farmers' Club, at which Professor Wrightson had read a paper on *Legislative Remedies for Agricultural Depression,* in the course of which he said—

> "According to the present law, most farmers are subject to a six months' notice to quit. Nothing can be more arbitrary, and it must act as a severe check upon the outlay of capital, or, if it does not, it ought to so act. What a dependent position a capitalist must occupy who may on Michaelmas or Lady-day receive a six months' notice to quit. It is a humiliating position, and decidedly unfair. I maintain that the general status of agricultural tenants has been depressed by this law—socially, politically, and financially. Farming is a very agreeable occupation; but the risk of a six months' notice to quit, possibly brought about by a petty misunderstanding, game difficulty, or political divergence of opinion, is too great a contingency. . . . Two years' notice to quit would be none too long. I must confess that, for my part, I should like to know at least two years before leaving my farm, especially if—as I hope I am—I was farming in a liberal manner."

In the discussion which ensued on the reading of the above paper, Mr. Cawston, an agriculturist of the district, made the following remark:—

> "He fully agreed that the time a tenant had for leaving his farm should be longer. If a man had to give up his farm at six months' notice, it was impossible for him to farm in such a way as to do justice either to himself, the land, or to his landlord."

Professor Wrightson, after replying to the various views put forward by different speakers, concluded his remarks with the following suggestion:—

> "That there should be a legislative enactment providing that, say, five years before the end of the lease, the parties should agree what they would do with regard to the renewal of the lease or otherwise."

In the same publication he also found an extract from a discussion following a recent paper by Mr. R. Michell on the *Probabilities of Agricultural Legislation,* read before the Swindon Farmers' Club, and reprinted from *The Wilts and Gloucester Standard.* Mr. T. Arkell, an eminent agriculturist of East Gloucestershire, who spoke during the discussion, said as follows:—

> "He believed if the Agricultural Holdings Act were made compulsory, together with a two years' notice to quit, there would be little more required from legislation."

His (Sir Alexander Gordon's) object to-day was to ask the House to increase the 40 days' notice to two years, and it was with that view that he moved the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Alexander Gordon.*)

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL said, he understood the object of the Bill was to improve the condition of agriculturists in Scotland. He had only looked at the Bill that morning, and had not had an opportunity of consulting his friends, either there or in Scotland, on the subject. He might say that he fully sympathized with the object which the hon. and gallant Baronet had professed—namely, to improve the position of the tenant farmer, and give him greater security in his occupation and in the outlay of his capital; but he was not able to gather from the provisions of the Bill any prospect of his position being improved in any one respect. The hon. and gallant Baronet had quoted Lord Beaconsfield on a somewhat similar measure, and he quite agreed with him that there was nothing in the Bill that could be regarded as revolutionary. Supposing it became law to-morrow, he did not see that it would alter the relations of landlord and tenant in Scotland one bit; but he did consider it an unnecessary interference. He knew that at first sight it would appear in Scotland, and would be discussed among the farmers as one favourable to what they desired; but he did not think the Bill was what they were asking for at all. He had not heard the slightest expression in favour of a Bill or legislation going no further than the provisions contained in this Bill. He had often heard of a demand for a new lease to be entered into two or three years before the termination of the old one—that was to say, that the provisons of a new lease should be agreed upon before the termination of the old one; but there was no provision that would carry out that result in this Bill. The terms of the new lease were not to be defined, and what would happen in the majority of cases? The landlord, in order to safeguard himself against being committed to the terms of a new lease at a time when he might not be able to arrange those terms, might cause a circular letter to be sent to his tenants, whose leases were approaching to within two years of their termination, to say that their leases would not be renewed. That would put him in the position of being able to terminate the lease at the time if he wished to do so. An understanding which, at all events, in his part of the country was very general between landlords and tenants enabled the landlord and tenant to enter into such explanations as would, to a certain extent, counteract the effect of such a circular letter. That was to say, the tenant would come to learn that it was merely formal, in order to put the landlord in a position to terminate the lease, and give a new one if so disposed. The hon. and gallant Baronet had said that instances had come under his experience in which the lease had been allowed to run to within 40 days of its termination without notice being given to the tenant. Well, the hon. and gallant Baronet's experience was, doubtless, longer and more extensive than his; but he could say for himself that no such instance had he ever known or heard of; and he thought that if the tenant were to be allowed to run to within six weeks of the termination of his lease without any intimation, in the first place, that tenant would receive a very broad hint that he was not to obtain a renewal of his lease, and he would see that the sooner he looked out for a new landlord who would deal with him more generously, and in a more customary manner, the better. He thought 40 days' notice was more honoured in the breach than in the observance, as would also be the provision for two years' notice. He was not going to move the rejection of this Bill. He considered it would be absolutely inoperative. He did not see how it was to alter the position of matters at all. If it was to become law, he would suggest to the hon. and gallant Baronet that he should add to Clause 3 a provision such as he had already told them was contained in the English Farmers' Alliance Bill—that the notice should come from the tenant of his desire to renew the lease, and not only from the landlord. He would suggest that there be added to Clause 3 the following words, or words to that effect:—

> "And provided the tenant shall have given notice in writing to the landlord or the factor, within not less than two years of the termination of the lease, of his intention to apply for a renewal of the lease."

That would be carrying out the spirit of that legislation which the Prime Minister had alluded to in Mid Lothian as desirable. He thought it was only fair that the landlord should not be called upon to take measures for the renewal of the lease, unless the tenant had intimated his desire to remain. He thought that, so far from giving tenant farmers a sense of security in their holdings, this measure, if it became law, would rather tend the other way; because landlords, as he had already indicated, would give formal notices to quit at the two years' term, and the Act would not have any effect in giving the farmers a sense of security. He quite agreed with the hon. and gallant Baronet that it was most desirable that the spirit of the legislation indicated in this Bill should be carried out, as it very frequently was, by landlords in making leases with their tenants; but he did not think it was a subject for legislation. He trusted, if the House saw fit to agree to the second reading of the Bill, the hon. and gallant Baronet would consent to its amendment in Committee by the addition to Clause 3 of the words which he had read, or words to the same effect.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY supported the second reading of the Bill, and was very glad that the hon. Member opposite (Sir Herbert Maxwell) did not intend to oppose the measure. He thought it was decidedly a step in the right direction—one in the interest of the tenant farmers of Scotland, but quite as much in the interests of the proprietors. In fact, it was an attempt to impose upon all proprietors the course which the best and most enlightened landlords were adopting in practice. The hon. Member opposite thought that the Bill would not add to the feeling of security on the part of the tenant. He thought it would do so in a very considerable degree; because, two years before the end of the lease, the tenant would be aware whether he was going to remain longer in the farm, and whether he had a prospect of coming to an arrangement with his landlord. If he had failed to do by that time, he must make up his mind to go elsewhere. In almost every case, consideration was made as regarded the new lease about a twelvemonth in advance; but that had been found too short a period, and he thought the very minimum period ought to be two years. That necessitated negotiations being opened for the renewal of the lease about two and-a-half years before the expiry of the existing lease; and he thought that would be an arrangement which would be very much to the advantage of the landlords, as well as that of the tenants. Large outlays, necessary in good farming, had to be made a considerable period in advance of the time when the result could be hoped for; and the greater security a tenant had, the more interest he would have in endeavouring to improve his farm. The principle of the Bill was already adopted in legislation, and had been from time immemorial; and the real question before the House was this—"Was two years too long a period of notice to give, seeing it was held on all sides that notice should be given?" He thought it was the very shortest period that could be named. If they were going to legislate on the subject at all, he thought it ought to be two years. A good many landlords had voluntarily adopted a longer period, giving, in some cases, three years' notice. He had no doubt this notice was intended to urge upon the landlord and the tenant to come to an arrangement as to the conditions of the renewal of the leases some time before the expiry of their old one. He believed it would have that effect, and he did not think landlords would be guilty of sending out a circular letter, such as that to which the hon. Member for Wigtownshire (Sir Herbert Maxwell) had referred, because that would merely be keeping the tenant in a period of uncertainty; and if the landlord persisted in giving these notices to quit, it might be very well assumed that he did not wish the tenant to have the farm again. He hoped the House would pass the Bill with such Amendments as might be considered necessary in Committee. He did not think it at all necessary that the Amendment which the hon. Member opposite (Sir Herbert Maxwell) had suggested with regard to Clause 3 should be made; because the landlord or his agent could easily ascertain from his tenant whether he wished to remain. He not only thought the proposal an unnecessary one, but believed there would be disadvantages connected with it. What the tenants complained of was that they did not know till very soon before the expiry of the lease whether they were going to have the farm again or not; and it was impossible for them to find out on what terms they would get a renewal of the lease. He hoped the House would agree to the second reading of the Bill, as it would go very much to improve the position of the farmers in Scotland, and because it was a step in the right direction, and one which, at all events, would induce both landlords and tenants to endeavour to put the tenure of land in Scotland on a more satisfactory footing.

DR. FARQUHARSON said, he thought he might say, on behalf of his constituents, who adjoined those of the hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir Alexander Gordon), that they would gladly accept this Bill as an instalment of progress, because it really only touched the fringe of a question which must be considered ere long. Since they were not to have a Land Bill for Scotland introduced into the House this year, he was quite sure that the agriculturists of Scotland would meantime be glad to accept such small mercies as they could get. He was sure they would be very glad, indeed, to be told by this Bill that there was no longer a chance of their being turned out of their holdings at short notice. It was all very well to be told that few landlords did this at present; but if all the landlords were good they should have no need for legislation at all. It was conceivable that under the existing law oppression was possible; and they had been told by the hon. and gallant Baronet who proposed the second reading of the Bill that such cases had occurred in connection with the present arrangements. Under the new arrangement of two years' notice, facilities would be given to tenants and to the landlords to arrange between themselves for compensation for unexhausted manures, which, he thought, might be very well arranged in that way. He hoped that, as the hon. Member for Wigtownshire (Sir Herbert Maxwell) had only had an opportunity of seeing the Bill that morning, further consideration and study would enable him to alter his views as to its provisions.

MR. R. PRESTON BRUCE must say that he thought there was considerable force in some of the observations regarding this Bill made by the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Herbert Maxwell). He (Mr. Bruce) thought it was very doubtful whether the Bill, if passed, would succeed in producing the good results which were expected by the Mover. The idea of the Bill seemed to be that the giving to a tenant of this two years' notice would enable him to know whether he was going to get a new lease of his farm or not; but he failed to see how the mere notice would effect the purpose desired. The intimation which would be conveyed to the tenant would be this—that unless he made an agreement with his landlord within the two years he would be liable to have to quit his farm; but that was telling him something which he was perfectly well aware of. It was possible that the existence of a statutory notice of this kind might in some cases suggest to the two parties the propriety of negotiating rather earlier than they might otherwise do. If it operated in that way, he thought, so far, it would be beneficial; but he thought it was questionable whether that was sufficient reason for making a new law on the subject. It had sometimes appeared to him that a notice of this kind might be made really useful if it were combined with a simple and workable provision for compensation for unexhausted improvements. If, in the event of a new lease not being concluded within a certain time after the service of such a notice, then a statutory rate of compensation for artificial manures or feeding stuffs used or consumed on the farm should come into force—in that case he thought such an Act as this might really be operative and useful. A good deal of reference had been made to the law in England and Ireland as to notice to quit; but he must say it appeared to him that arguments drawn from the law affecting tenants from year to year, were totally beside the point. The law in England, he believed, was, that a tenant under a lease for 19 years, or for any other definite term, had no right to a notice to quit at all. That notice was only required in cases where the tenancies were indefinite in duration. In such cases the tenant was unaware when he might be called upon to quit his farm, and therefore the law rightly laid down that a certain notice should be given. He thought, if this Bill was to go on, it would be worth while for the learned Lord Advocate to examine the relation of this Bill to the present law in Scotland in regard to notice of removal. That law, he believed, as it stood, was somewhat complicated, and he feared the present Bill would introduce further complications and distinctions. He also believed that it was uncertain in this respect, as to how far the condition of lease by which the tenant undertook to remove without warning was operative or not. If legislation was to take place on this subject, it seemed to him that the opportunity might be taken to remedy any defects or ambiguity in the existing law.

Mr. M'LAGAN said, the hon. Member for Wigtonshire (Sir Herbert Maxwell) had told them that he had only read the Bill that morning, and had had no time to consult his friends. It was a great pity he had not read the Bill sooner, because he was sure they should have had a better opinion of the Bill from the hon. Member, and they should not have had such crude ideas as to the principle of the Bill. His hon. Friend who had just sat down (Mr. Bruce) had evidently intended to curse the Bill, and instead of that he had blessed it. He believed some of the remarks the hon. Member had made would make a waverer against the Bill be in favour of it. The hon. Member had said that the effect of this Bill would be to make proprietors and tenants endeavour, before the end of the lease, to come to terms as to the new lease. That was a most important consideration; and if the Bill had no other effect than that, it ought to be passed. In regard to other arguments which the hon. Member had put forward, he had to point out that the law had already given notice to quit in Scotland. It had acknowledged the principle by giving 40 days' notice to quit; and this Bill, therefore, was not introducing a new principle at all—it was simply extending a principle which was already acknowledged. As it had been very properly put by the hon. Member for Forfarshire (Mr. Barclay), if it was right to give a 40 days' notice where there was a lease at the present time, and to give a year's notice where there was no lease, surely it was far better and far more necessary to give a two years' notice where there was a 19 or 21 years' lease. The hon. Member for Wigtonshire could see no use for the Bill at all, though the hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir Alexander Gordon) had stated many instances in which the want of sufficient notice was a great hardship. He could corroborate the statement of his hon. and gallant Friend behind him (Sir Alexander Gordon), because he had known instances in which the landlord had not given notice to the tenant till it came within 40 days of the termination of the lease, and the tenant had been put to very great loss and inconvenience. The landlord had even come forward and told the tenant that he had no intention whatever of parting with him. When such insufficient notice was given the farmer might not be able to find a residence for his family, or a farm, and would be compelled to sell off his stock and implements at a great loss, besides being deprived of a home. This question of the tenant's residence was too much neglected, for where there was a demand for farms he might be left without a roof to cover himself and his family. He cordially agreed with his hon. Friend (Mr. Barclay) that if this Bill became law it would be a very good thing to join with it some system of compensation for unexhausted manures that might be made between the landlord and tenant. He would like very well if, instead of the notice extending to two years, it could be made four or five in certain cases. The logical conclusion to which they must come in this matter was that notice to quit should be given according to the rotation of crops. Where the course was five years the notice should be five years. Still, he did not wish to push legislation too far, and, of course, there were many instances in which the courses were not so long; but he agreed with his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for East Aberdeenshire and his hon. Friend the Member for Forfarshire that the shortest notice that should be given was two years. He trusted the Government would support the Bill, and would carry it, as had been very properly said, only as an instalment of that large question which was before them—the reform of the Land Laws in Scotland. He had much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

MR. J. A. CAMPBELL said, he was not opposed to the principle of the Bill, and he thought his hon. Friend the Member for Wigtonshire (Sir Herbert Maxwell) had said enough to show that he also recognized the object which the promoters had in view as a good one. It proposed, in fact, to legislate in favour of what had been the usual practice of landlords; but when they came to legislate on a practice, it was necessary that the legislation should be accompanied with proper safeguards, and his purpose in rising was to ask some explanation from the promoters of this Bill on that point. As the Bill stood, there were only two cases to which the proposed measure would not apply. These were the case of a tenant being sequestrated under the Bankruptcy Act, and the case when the tenant had renounced his lease, and the renunciation had been accepted by the landlord. There were, however, other cases where the application of such an Act as was proposed to be passed would interfere with existing contracts, and introduce considerable complication and difficulty. He would give one instance. Two years ago, an Act had been passed for the abolition of agricultural hypothec in Scotland, in which Act there was special provision made to enable landlords, after losing the right of hypothec, which they previously held, to get their land out of the hands of insolvent tenants in a more summary way than had been possible for them while they enjoyed the right of hypothec. Now, was it intended by this Bill to repeal those provisions? He hoped that on that point they would have some explanation. Perhaps there might be other questions of a similar nature; but he had great hopes that his learned Friend the Lord Advocate would indicate some improvements which he would recommend in this Bill, and with improvements he thought it might be made a useful measure.

SIR EDWARD COLEBROOKE thoroughly concurred as to the expediency of a long period of notice, because it was obviously right that the tenant should know whether or not he was going to have a renewal of his lease; but he had considerable doubt whether that object would be advanced in any perceptible degree by a compulsory measure like this, requiring landlords in all cases to give two years' notice. In his experience the difficulty often came from the side of the tenant, who, when a farm was likely to rise in value, was slow to make up his mind whether he would give an increased rental, and that led to uncertainty being prolonged until a few months before the lease actually expired. The general rule, according to his experience, was that a year before the lease expired the parties came to an understanding, and the lease was virtually renewed at the time. But he thought that if they attempted by law to compel a two years' notice, the results would be that a mere formal notice would be given, and the tenant would be no better off than he was now. Any attempt to force an earlier period than 12 months' notice would not fall in with the usual practice; and, therefore, he entertained great doubts as to its efficiency. At present the lease was a notice in itself; but, of course, it was most desirable that the parties should come to an agreement some time beforehand. That could be only arrived at by good sense and good feeling on each side; and the common interest of both was that the prolongation of the lease should not be put off indefinitely. It was well worth the consideration of the parties whether the law might not be extended to a notice of one year. That notice would not degenerate into a mere formality, and it might stimulate the parties to come to terms in good time before the expiration of the lease. He hoped that in Committee the desirability of substituting one year's notice would be considered.

SIR DONALD CURRIE said, he hoped the Government would support the Bill. He had known many cases in which the tenants were kept waiting until almost the end of the lease before notice was given; and he trusted the Government would accede to the proposal of the hon. and gallant Member for East Aberdeenshire (Sir Alexander Gordon), and give the tenant farmers relief.

Mr. ORR EWING said, this Bill would have been especially useful if brought forward a few years ago, when there was a great demand for farms. The Bill was entirely in the right direction, and he believed it would give great satisfaction if carried. It was conceived in the true interests of agriculture. A Bill of this kind was only necessary for a country like Scotland. In England, where the conditions as to leases were quite different, it would be unnecessary. At present a tenant was perfectly at a loss to know whether he was to be continued in his farm or not. The Bill tended to bring landlords and tenants together in order that they might make terms, and that was an object which he heartily supported. Nowadays a landlord was anxious to keep a good tenant and make terms with him.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL remarked that since his hon. Friend the Member for Fifeshire (Mr. Bruce), who had given much attention to the subject, expressed some disappointment with the Bill, it might be well that a Fifeshire man and a Fifeshire Member should express his approval. They did not expect too much from the Bill; but it seemed to him that the passing of a law of this kind would certainly do good by introducing a practice into Scotland of making renewals of leases a considerable time before their termination. He thought the measure would be an advantage to the farmers, and would do no harm to the landlords.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour) said, he had much pleasure, on the part of the Government, in assenting to the second reading of the Bill. As he understood the Bill, the object of it was to fix the period at which, if a landlord did not give notice that he intended that the lease should come to an end, what would be termed in the law of Scotland "tacit re-location"—that was, "tacit re-letting"—would take place, or, in other words, that the lease would run on for another year. It had been said by one or two hon. Members that that was not necessary. He could hardly agree in that view. His hon. Friends the Members for Fifeshire (Mr. Bruce) and North Lanarkshire (Sir Edward Colebrooke) both seemed to think that such a notice would be telling the tenant what he knew already, and that the tenant had sufficient notice in his lease. That was not quite correct, because even by the present law 40 days' notice was necessary in order to prevent tacit re-location from taking effect. So that, he took it, the question really came to be whether the 40 days' notice which now was required by the law was adequate or not. He thought he might say that there was practically a consensus of opinion in Scotland that that period was too short; and he might very well appeal to what his hon. Friend the Member for Wigtonshire (Sir Herbert Maxwell) said in support of that view, because he observed that if the landlord had not made any approach to the tenant a considerable time before the expiring of the lease, the tenant might understand from that silence that he had already notice to quit. He thought that was testimony to the effect that 40 days' notice was not enough to enable new arrangements to be made on either side, under the conditions of modern agriculture. It had been said that the Bill probably would not be of any great importance. No doubt, it was not a large measure; but so far as it went it was entirely in the right direction. The hon. Member for Dumbartonshire (Mr. Orr Ewing) remarked that if it had been enacted some years ago, in a time of greater prosperity, when there was a great demand for farms, it might have been of greater value. He (the Lord Advocate) hoped they should soon see a return to that time of prosperity in Scottish agriculture which would give that vitality to the Bill. It would be, of course, entirely open to the Committee to consider the period at which notice should be given. Some Members thought one year enough, and, of course, a matter of that sort would be duly considered in Committee. With respect to what had been said by the hon. Member for the Universities of Glasgow and Aberdeen (Mr. Campbell), he might remark that he had already called the attention of his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for East Aberdeenshire (Sir Alexander Gordon) to that matter. It was quite plain that there were various particulars in regard to which it would be necessary, in order to make the Bill a workable measure, to introduce additional provisions. For example, the Bill as it stood might possibly be held to override or overrule various conditions under which a tenancy might come to an end—as by a failure to fulfil the conditions of the lease, or by the operation of so much of the Law of Hypothec as still survived, or the compensatory remedies given to the landlord for its abolition by the Act of 1880. But his hon. and gallant Friend the Mover of the Bill at once indicated his readiness to assent to any Amendments in that direction. He did not think it necessary to detain the House by going into matters of detail; because he was quite sure, from the attention that had been given to the Bill on both sides of the House, that it would be put into such a shape in Committee as would give it the maximum utility and value.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

CIVIL IMPRISONMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.—[BILL 19.]

(*Dr. Cameron, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Fraser Mackintosh.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

DR. CAMERON, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he had introduced in 1880 a Bill, which was passed in that year, and which abolished imprisonment in Scotland in cases of ordinary debts. He had the honour of presiding over the Select Committee which sat to consider the subject at that time. In the course of their investigations, the Committee received a considerable amount of evidence regarding civil imprisonment on other grounds than for ordinary debt; but they passed a Resolution declaring it to be inexpedient in that particular Bill to deal with those other matters. Since the passing of that Act he had had his attention drawn to the operation of the law in the excepted cases; and he would lay before the House what he thought was a case, if not for the passing of this Bill exactly as it stood, at least for a Select Committee to consider the matter with a view to reform. In the evidence which came before the Committee over which he presided, it transpired that very long periods of civil imprisonment were liable to be incurred; and in order to provide against such cruel prolongation of imprisonment in the excepted cases, a clause was inserted in the Bill, requiring all prisoners for debt to have their cases brought before the Sheriff once a month, and limiting the amount of imprisonment to one year. These provisions had turned out a dead letter. Although on one warrant there could not be more than one year's imprisonment, another warrant could be issued for another instalment due, which involved further imprisonment. That was a point which he hoped the House would carefully consider. In order to show the difference between the old and new systems, he last Session moved for a Return of the number of civil prisoners in the various prisons in Scotland, and various particulars concerning them. He found by that Return that the Act of 1880 had had the effect of reducing the number of civil prisoners in Scotch gaols, in round numbers, by two-thirds; and that the large majority of prisoners still remaining were cases of alimentary debts—that was, orders upon putative fathers for the maintenance of illegitimate children. So much was that the case, that out of a total of 47 prisoners in Scotch prisons on the 30th of March and of June last, no fewer than 38 were alimentary cases, where persons had been imprisoned for the support of illegitimate children, two for the support of wives, and four as being *in meditatione fægu*, two for non-payment of rates, and one *ad factam prestandam.* He knew that the question of doing anything for the prisoners in gaol for the non-payment of alimentary debts was unsavoury; and he should certainly not have taken it in hand had it not been for the manner in which he was connected with the Scotch Act of 1880. His connection with that Act, however, had brought under his attention a state of things which placed him in this position—that, however unpleasant and however unsavoury it might be, he could not conscientiously sit still without doing something on his part to remedy a state of things which urgently required reform. Previous reforms had been effected in the Scotch law regarding the treatment of civil prisoners; but in these reforms the persons imprisoned for alimentary debts had been overlooked. In 1875, imprisonment for debt in Scotland was abolished for all debts under £8 6*s*. 8*d*.; but an exception was made against alimentary debts. A few years ago, his hon. Colleague (Mr. Anderson) passed a Bill, the effect of which was to abolish the arrestment of wages when they did not exceed £1 per week. Again, in that Bill, an exception was made against alimentary debts; and, lastly, the Debtors Act of 1880 made a similar exception. On the other hand, during this whole period, Scotch Judges had been pushing legal presumptions against the unfortunate alimentary debtor with more and more severity, until now they had arrived at such a position as he did not hesitate to say was a disgrace to the Scotch law. Now, he had not the slightest desire to deprive the mothers in any such case of any legitimate remedy which could be placed in their hands; but for alimentary debts, from all he could learn, civil prosecution was no remedy. As the law at present stood, if a man had any means, by the process known as *cessio* he could be deprived of his means by his creditor. Amongst the witnesses examined by the Select Committee was a local Judge of great experience — Sheriff Clark of Glasgow—and he said that he never knew a case of alimentary debt in which imprisonment was resorted to in which it was effectual, except so far as it had been the means of inducing the friends of the prisoner to advance the funds required to obtain his liberation. He (Dr. Cameron) knew it had been argued that imprisonment for such debt was a fitting punishment for immorality. Now, it was no punishment for immorality. The rich seducer, who was by far the most immoral, was not punished at all, but, of course, paid the aliment, and took good care that the case never came before the Sheriff Court. The present law afforded no protection to the poor, because a woman could not imprison a man for alimentary debt unless she was in a position to afford him aliment. For, as a matter of fact, if a woman was awarded aliment of 2*s*. 6*d*. a week, unless she could pay 3*s*. 6*d*. to 6*s*. a week she could not keep her debtor in prison. The absurdity of such a law was apparent. The process of *cessio* put into the hands of the creditor any means of which the debtor was possessed; and the creditor in alimentary cases was, as he had explained, entitled to arrest all the wages. But as long as the debtor was imprisoned his goods could not be taken to be applied to the payment of debts. During his incarceration the man could earn no wages, so that the woman was not only obliged to pay this 3*s*. 6*d*. or 6*s*. a week; but if he had effects they could not be seized, and though he was capable of earning wages no wages could be earned. If he were asked what substitute he proposed to provide for what he took away, he would answer that none was necessary. The Act of 1880 placed very summary powers in the hands of the creditors where there were effects; and where there were no effects, imprisonment could not enforce payment. If a prisoner were to attempt to fly he could be seized and imprisoned on a *fægu* warrant; and if he allowed his child to come upon the parish the parochial authorities would be entitled to proceed against him criminally as a rogue and vagabond. It must not be forgotten that there was another side of the question. The state of the affiliation law in Scotland was such that if a young man of the working classes courting a girl of the working classes discovered that she had been unfaithful to him and broke off the engagement, if that girl chose to swear that that man was the father of her child, hardly anything in the world—so he was informed—could save him from having the parentage established upon him. Under the English law an investigation took place in the absence of the putative father; but in Scotland a decree might be given in absence for inlying expenses and the first quarter's aliment, which brought the total up to £12 or £13, and unless the debtor paid that he might be imprisoned. If he chose to contest the case the expenses would be £20 or £30, and if he appealed they might amount to twice as much. He (Dr. Cameron) contended that though his friends through his imprisonment might be induced to pay the debt, that was not a healthy thing. There was no reason why the struggling mother of a man who had lived loosely should be compelled to pay his debts, and in many cases the power of imprisonment was used as a compulsion to induce the reputed father to marry the girl. If a man had no effects it was formerly held that it was absurd to detain him at the cost of the woman, who in that case must aliment him. This rule had been abolished, and a rule adopted in its place that the debtor should not be released from prison, and should not have the benefit of *cessio*, until he had given security for the debt. Civil prisoners were formerly careless, good-natured fellows. They clubbed together, and if one had no money he got assistance from his fellow-prisoners. But now a man might find himself in prison alone, absolutely without funds, in a very unpleasant position.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners;—

The House went;—and being returned;—

Mr. Speaker *reported* the *Royal Assent to* three Bills.

Dr. CAMERON said, that when interrupted he was directing attention to the case of the civil debtors in Scotland, whose condition had been growing worse and worse in recent years. He had mentioned that they were deprived of the rights they formerly possessed of obtaining liberation in cases where they had evidently no goods like other debtors; and he had mentioned that in consequence of the general abolition of imprisonment considerable hardship had been entailed upon them. The prisoners had been compelled by circumstances to club together in numbers in order to live cheaply; and when one of their number was without funds he received assistance from the others. Recently they had another grievance to complain of. Since the passing of the Prisons Act, a few years ago, it had seemed good to the Prisons Commissioners to charge these unfortunate prisoners 1*d.* a-day for the use of fire. Now, as the prisoners' allowances, in certain cases, did not exceed 4*d.* per day, and in the great majority of cases did not exceed 6*d.* per day, this docking off 1*d.* per day left them in such a position that they were certainly not likely to get fat. Perhaps the best way of showing the House the state of the law in Scotland would be to submit a few practical examples of cases which had absolutely occurred. The first case was that of a man named Walker, imprisoned in Ayr—and he might mention, in passing, that for some reason the county of Ayr seemed to be the great centre of these cases. Perhaps the magistrates in Ayrshire had some peculiar ideas on the subject; but, at any rate, there were more cases of imprisonment for alimentary debts in Ayrshire than in any other county. One of the men imprisoned there for 19 months was named William Walker. Now, he did not want to say a word in Mr. Walker's defence; he knew little about him, and, from anything he could learn, he was not a man whose habits and peculiarities were calculated to excite their sympathy. But his case spoke for itself. He was arrested on Saturday, August 21, 1880, and when apprehended he had a farthing in his pocket. On the same day he applied to the town clerk for aliment, as he had nothing to support himself. On the Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday following, he tasted nothing. On Wednesday an acquaintance called at the prison, and when going away left him 4*s.* The town clerk called on him towards the end of the week with a petition to the magistrate for aliment. The petition was signed by Walker. The town clerk informed Walker he would require to pay 7*s.* fees before any aliment could be granted. He was not able to pay the fees, and, consequently, he received no aliment until the beginning of October; and he would not have got it even then had he not authorized the gaoler to keep the fees off the first of the aliment out of his allowance. The allowance was 7*d.* with 1*d.* deducted for the use of the fire. Before receiving the aliment he managed to live on a pittance received from a poor sister, who was the only support of his aged mother, and whose wages in the winter amounted to only 5*s.* a-week. Although fees had been twice abolished by Act of Parliament the practice still existed. Mr. Walker had anticipated that, under the Debtors Act of 1880, he would be entitled to release in the year 1881; but just as he was expecting to be released he was served with another warrant, and laid by the heels for another 12 months. He wrote to the Lord President of the Court of Session, who directed the case to be taken up by the law agent of the poor; and, in the Outer House, Lord M'Laren, who was Lord Advocate when the Bill passed, held that the clear intention of the Legislature was that imprisonment in such cases were to be limited to one year, and that that intention would be defeated by the issue of new warrants, under which, as he pointed out, a debtor might be kept in gaol, when the payments were to be made annually, for 10 years, and in cases where the money was to be paid in quarterly instalments, for 40 years. The case was carried to the Inner House—a somewhat expensive luxury, as an appeal costs money—and it was there held that Lord M'Laren was mistaken. They admitted that a man imprisoned in this manner might be detained for life; but in that case they said the remedy for a prisoner, if he was an honest debtor, was to sue out for *cessio*—that was to say, to apply for liberation on making a declaration that he had handed over all his goods. This case was brought to his notice, and he (Dr. Cameron) instructed his agent to take up Walker's case, and to take what the Lord President of the Court of Session said was the true way to obtain liberation. Walker, accordingly, applied to the Sheriff Court in Ayr for *cessio*. His agent cited the old law on the subject, under which debtors were entitled to liberation on giving up all their goods; but the Sheriff intimated that that was not the law nowadays. Walker's aliment was 4*s*. 1*d*. per week, and his agent pointed out the folly on the part of the mother of the child of paying this allowance, while the aliment she was entitled to for her child was only 3*s*. 1*d*. The Sheriff refused the *cessio*, and said he had no sympathy with the prisoner, even should he be kept in prison all his life for not attempting to pay his debts. Walker offered to pay one-sixth of his wages, but he was asked for security; and as he failed to find security his offer was not accepted. An appeal was made to the Sheriff Principal, who confirmed the decision, and said he could not understand why the man's relatives would not become security. It might be a very inexplicable thing to a Judge; but the man's relatives knew that if, through sickness, Walker was unable to fulfil his obligations they might be called upon themselves to pay, or be sent to prison in default. At any rate, the Sheriff allowed Walker a fortnight to look for security; but he could not get any, and was liable to be sent back to prison whenever his creditor thought fit. He (Dr. Cameron) wanted to test if that was the law, and he instructed his agent to try the point in a second case. In May last another man, a travelling draper, was imprisoned in Ayr on a decree of aliment on the 12th of that month. He received a subsistence allowance of 6*d*. per day. He had a debt of £100 with a merchant. The merchant joined the prisoner in applying for a sequestration; but the man was still kept in prison. Lord Fraser refused to let him out. He offered to pay £1 a month towards aliment; but he could not find security, and that offer was refused. He was a bankrupt; every farthing was in the hands of his trustees. He (Dr. Cameron) accordingly instructed his agent to apply for a *cessio* for him. The Sheriff Substitute dismissed the application. If the man could not give security he must stay in prison. The Sheriff Principal, to whom the case was appealed by him (Dr. Cameron), confirmed the decision, and in a manner which was rather amusing. He was under the impression that the prisoner himself was paying the expenses of the application, instead of giving his money to the mother of the child of which he was the putative father, and this roused the indignation of the Sheriff Principal. Again, a married man in Glasgow had an action brought against him by the mother of twins. He protested he was innocent, and would not pay the aliment awarded, and was sent to prison. It was alleged that he was the proprietor of a shop and able to aliment himself, and the result was that he was refused aliment. On the other hand, his wife, naturally annoyed, refused to aliment him; and as the man was without support altogether, the gaoler had ultimately to aliment him, for fear of being held responsible for his death. Frank Cosgrove, now in prison at Edinburgh, was alleged to be the father of a child born in May, 1880. He went to Spain on the 15th of November, 1880. An action was raised against him in his absence, and when he returned he was put into prison. He received an allowance of 6*s*. per week. The aliment he should have paid for the child was 2*s*. 9*d*.; so that, for the sake of receiving this 2*s*. 9*d*. a week, the mother of the child was actually contributing 6*s*. per week. When the case was brought into Court, the amount due, including expenses, was put down at £12. He had not £12, and could not get security; so still remained in prison. Another man was imprisoned in respect of a child born when he was 15 years old. He got out of work, became unable to continue paying aliment, and was put in prison. He contended that if a debtor was in prison he could not be reached by *cessio*. If the woman was poor she could not aliment him and keep him in prison; and therefore the law, as it presently stood, was no remedy for the poor woman. If the woman had friends who were rich enough to pay 3*s*. 6*d*. a week for the purpose of keeping a man in prison, and the prisoner had no friends to become security for him, he might be kept in prison his whole life, and be kept there, not because of any immoral act, not because he was unwilling to pay, but simply because he had no friends and could not find security. Now, it had been said if he took away, as he proposed, the power of imprisonment in such cases, he would strike a blow at Parochial Boards. He denied that altogether. As he had said, parochial authorities could prosecute a father as a rogue and a vagabond for neglecting his child, and punish him with a definite amount of hard labour as a criminal. He had nothing to say against such a punishment as that. What he objected to was the indefinite imprisonment at the hands of an irresponsible party actuated by vindictive motives, whose character, by the very fact of her position, was not of the best. He wished to abolish this sort of imprisonment altogether. The details could be considered by a Select Committee. The next question dealt with in the Bill was that of rates. He proposed to limit the imprisonment to one month. It might be necessary to have a *compulsitor;* but that *compulsitor* should be reasonably equivalent for any rates that could be left unpaid by persons whose effects were not more than sufficient to cover the hypothec. The Act of 1880 modified the law as to *fugæ;* but these warrants were of little or no use now for their purpose. He proposed to modify it, so at once to mitigate its security and restore its usefulness. He also proposed to abolish the Law of Lawburrows, which was an utterly effete process of Scotch law, which was not needed nowadays, but which had been grossly abused, and which consisted in allowing any person who had a grudge against any other person, and who chose to go before a magistrate and swear that he was in fear of the action of another person, to obtain a warrant against that person, who, if he did not within 48 hours produce security against any breach of the peace, would be sent to prison. In such a case a person might be kept in prison for years. Sheriff Barclay was the greatest authority in Scotland on this subject; and in a paper which he read at the Social Science Congress at Aberdeen he expressed a decided opinion that something must be done by legislation to prevent the iniquitous effects of this system. He mentioned the case of a woman who had been kept in prison for five years under Lawburrows until she became insane. No proof was required of reasonable grounds for the fear entertained. The only means of checkmating the operation of the law was for the accused to make a similar complaint against the accuser. In Sheriff Barclay's opinion the law was a blot on the Statute Book, and the sooner it was wiped out the better. He (Dr. Cameron) proposed no substitute, because by the law of Scotland it was a crime to threaten, and he did not think any additional powers were required by the authorities. Another change which his Bill contemplated related to the law of imprisonment *ad factam prestandam*. If a man was ordered to produce or sign a certain document, and refused to do so, he was committed to prison for contempt as it was called in England—*ad factam prestandam*, as it was called in Scotland. He proposed that where a man refused to sign a document, the Court should have power to order the Clerk of Court to sign it, and that the signature should be held valid for all legal purposes. These were the details of his Bill; but as it dealt with complicated and technical matters, he was not wedded to them. He thought he had shown to the House that there was need for reform, and that he had made out a distinct case for reading the Bill a second time. If that were done, he should propose the reference of the measure to a Select Committee. In conclusion, he had to thank the House for the patient and attentive hearing which it had so kindly given him.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL, after expressing regret for the absence of Scottish Members who sat on his (the Conservative) side of the House, admitted that the hon. Member for Glasgow had shown considerable grounds for an alteration of the law—perhaps not to the extent he proposed; but, at all events, for a modification of the existing law. It was his intention on reading the Bill to have moved its rejection; because, while it proposed to remedy certain existing abuses, it did not seem to him to afford any adequate safeguard against other abuses. He was a Member of the Committee two years ago, presided over by the hon. Member for Glasgow, and the question of imprisonment for alimentary debts was considered. That Committee, by 8 votes to 3, resolved to retain the power of imprisonment for such debts.

Dr. CAMERON: The Committee resolved that it was not expedient to abolish the power of imprisonment in the Bill which was then before them.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL said, that that was no doubt so; but, at the same time, his recollection of what took place was that the sense of the Committee was decidedly against any alteration of the power of imprisonment for alimentary debts. He quite admitted, however, that the hon. Member for Glasgow had made out a very strong case; and he would be able to agree to the second reading of the Bill on the condition, which he understood would be accepted by the Government, that it would be referred to a Select Committee. He therefore withdrew his opposition to the Bill.

Dr. WEBSTER said, he was glad to find that there was no opposition to the second reading, on the understanding that the Bill was to be referred to a Select Committee. He confessed that but for that assurance, he should have found some difficulty in agreeing to the second reading. It was true that almost all the questions—there was scarcely an exception — brought forward in the present Bill were before a Select Committee only two years ago. That Committee deliberately considered every point but one that was embraced in the present Bill. Still, there were differences of opinion in that Committee, and especially upon the point of aliment for the affiliation of natural children, and he thought a strong case had been stated by his hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow on that point. In the appointment of a Committee to consider abuses in the law of Scotland imprisonment for aliment must deserve consideration. It would not have escaped the observation of the House that almost the whole statements and arguments of his hon. Friend were confined to arguments for the affiliation of illegitimate children. He proposed, however, to make the Bill go further than that. He proposed to repeal the imprisonment for aliment in all cases, which included also cases of aliment for which judgment was passed, against husbands for aliment to their wives and to their lawful children. That would deserve consideration. He did not know either that the hon. Member had made out a sufficient case with regard to other cases and matters included in the Bill. Full time and full opportunity would, no doubt, be afforded to the trading, commercial, and legal bodies in Scotland to consider the Bill, which was one in which he knew they felt considerable interest. It also deserved consideration on the part of the hon. Member, whether some information should not be obtained by the Committee in regard to the system of imprisonment for debt in England. That question was attracting a good deal of interest, and he saw there was set down for to-day a Bill dealing with the subject. It would deserve consideration by this Committee whether the practice of the law in England was not a matter which might require attention when considering civil imprisonment in Scotland. With these remarks he agreed to the second reading, on the understanding that the Bill was referred to a Select Committee.

Mr. J. A. CAMPBELL said, he should have had considerable hesitation in consenting to the second reading unless the Bill were to be referred to a Select Committee. The hon. Member for Glasgow had made out a strong case in favour of considerable changes in the law. At the same time, the questions with which this Bill dealt were numerous and important. Important legal questions were dealt with, and it was necessary that they should be thoroughly considered. He agreed with the hon. Member for Aberdeen (Dr. Webster) that it was to be hoped that time would be given to hear the opinion of traders and legal gentlemen in Scotland who were in a position to judge of the necessities of the case. His objection to proceeding with the Bill now would have been that it was only distributed on Thursday last, so that there had been no opportunity afforded those in Scotland who were competent to do so to give an opinion on its merits. He had every confidence that, with the aid of a Select Committee, considerable improvements would be introduced in the law of imprisonment, and on that ground he agreed to the second reading.

MR. A. GRANT said, he was glad Her Majesty's Government intended to agree to the second reading of this Bill. No doubt some details of the Bill would require to be looked carefully into, and perhaps altered; but in Committee any changes for the better that were desirable would be made. The principal reform which the Bill proposed to deal with was the abolition of imprisonment for debts in alimentary cases. He was one of the Members of the Select Committee which, two years ago, sat on the abolition of debt in Scotland. He remembered very well the question of imprisonment in alimentary cases being before them, and the hon. Member for Wigtonshire (Sir Herbert Maxwell) had called attention to the fact that the Committee, by a majority, decided to introduce into their Report a recommendation that imprisonment for alimentary debts should not be exempted from the Bill. He (Mr. Grant) happened to have been one of the minority who objected to that; and his reasons were that he thought ample evidence had been placed before the Committee to the effect that no good whatever was done by imprisonment for neglect to pay aliment, especially in the case of illegitimate children. It was shown to them very clearly by the hon. Member for Glasgow that no good was done by such imprisonment. In the first place, no doubt the majority of the cases were due to the vindictiveness of the woman, and not to any real desire on her part to recover the money due as aliment. In many other cases, the imprisonment was resorted to in order to force the friends of the imprisoned person to pay the money; and that, of course, was not a legitimate object of imprisonment, and ought not to be encouraged. Then they had to consider that the men so imprisoned had usually no estate or property out of which they could pay the aliment, or, if they had, it might be taken from them by the ordinary diligence of the law. Imprisonment did not oblige them to give up their property; and, on the other hand, it deprived them of the means of earning wages or a salary out of which they might otherwise be able to pay the aliment demanded of them. On these grounds, he thought, in the case of alimentary debts, a very good case had been made out for the abolition of imprisonment. The Select Committee decided on the general principle that it was desirable to abolish imprisonment for debt. And now he thought that the feeling of the House would be in favour of the principle being extended to those few remaining cases which were exempted in the Bill two years ago.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) wished to suggest, on the part of the Government, that the Bill should be read a second time, upon the understanding that by agreeing to that course the House was not assenting to the principle of total abolition of imprisonment for alimentary debts; but, on the contrary, that the Bill should be sent before a Select Committee, and that it should be entirely open to that Committee, or to the House upon its Report, to consider that matter. There were various points in the Bill as to which he should suppose there would be a very general assent—various improvements upon some obscure and technical legal proceedings, which would be quite inappropriate for being discussed in the House, but which were well deserving of consideration in the Committee. But the main principle of the Bill was that imprisonment for alimentary debts should be abolished. While he was perfectly alive to the importance of much that had been urged on that point, and had, like his hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow, had occasion to become acquainted with cases of great hardship in the administration of the existing law, he should not, as at present advised, feel disposed to assent to the total abolition of imprisonment in cases of that particular kind. He thought one matter well deserving of the consideration of the Committee would be, whether somewhat of a middle course between indefinite imprisonment—imprisonment that might practically become perpetual—and total abolition might not be adopted. He found an example of such a course in the clause of the present Bill providing for imprisonment for four weeks for non-payment of rates, and it might very well be considered whether some similar provision might not be made for the case of alimentary debts. He was afraid it was true there were persons who incurred the liability for the aliment of illegitimate children who had not, perhaps, much property, but who, from some source or another, found means to pay their other debts, and whom they could not reach, to make them fulfil their obligations without some such *compulsitor* as imprisonment. But it might very well be that by an imprisonment, either limited in duration, proceeding upon the order of a Judge, not upon the option of the pursuer in the action, they might get rid of the evils of almost perpetual imprisonment, and, at the same time, preserve the *compulsitor*, which might be useful, and almost necessary. He did not propose to argue out the question now; but merely indicated that in assenting to the course of the Bill being read a second time he desired that all these questions should be kept perfectly open; and they were very much more appropriate for being discussed in the Committee than in the House.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he was very glad to hear the hon. and learned Lord Advocate put in his caution; because if they were to assent to the principle that imprisonment was to be absolutely abolished, he thought the poor women, who were the chief sufferers in the cases alluded to, might very often not get the remedy they were entitled to, and some screw was necessary in order to protect their interests. He asked the Home Secretary whether he had looked at the Bill carefully, so as to see whether it affected the law of England?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he was assured by his hon. and learned Friend the Lord Advocate that the Bill was entirely confined to Scotland—not that he himself desired to express any opinion adversely to the diminution, to a great extent, of imprisonment for debts in England.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that what he wished to be assured upon was, that if they passed this Bill for Scotland it would not be looked upon as an argument in any way for a similar measure for England.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, that a measure for a particular country did not advance argument in respect of applying it to another country.

DR. CAMERON assured the right hon. Gentleman that the law of Scotland was perfectly different in respect of this subject from that of England; and the proposed reform of the law of Scotland would not in any way affect the law of England.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.

COMMONABLE RIGHTS BILL.—[BILL 23.]

(*Mr. Cheetham, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Buxton.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. CHEETHAM, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that it dealt with the moneys paid by Railway Companies, &c., to Committees of the commoners. In the case of Tottenham Common, £6,000 was paid; but no one could make any use of the proceeds. A similar case occurred in regard to the Malvern Hills. The money paid was lying idle. The Bill proposed that it should be applied in improving the remainder of the common land, in defraying the expenses of proceedings for protection, management, regulation, and preservation of common land; in the purchase of additional land, or in the purchase of recreation ground. In order to ascertain the views of the commoners, it was provided that a meeting should be summoned on the application of a certain number of them, and the decision of the majority of those present should bind the minority and the absentees.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Cheetham.*)

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he was very happy to support the Bill. He had consulted the Inclosure Commissioners, who said they were favourable to the Bill. But the Bill proposed to vest the land in the Inclosure Commissioners. The Inclosure Commissioners said they had never been incorporated for the purpose of holding land; and he would suggest to his hon. Friend that before he went further he should communicate with them upon the subject of vesting the land rather in some other Trustees than in the Inclosure Commissioners.

Mr. MORGAN LLOYD stated that in Committee he should propose Amendments to meet certain cases in which the provisions of the Bill would work injustice to owners of sheep-walks with defined limits.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT felt bound to say that the hon. Member who moved the second reading of the Bill (Mr. Cheetham) had made a statement that few in the House understood, and had neither shown the necessity for such a measure, or how the money was proposed to be applied. He referred the House to the provisions of the Bill without stating his views on them, and the reasons that induced him to put them in the Bill. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary was quite pleased with the provisions of the Bill, with the exception of one clause; but he did not enlighten the House at all with regard to the provisions of the Bill. Now, it might or might not be important, and in many cases it might be of use, as in the case, the only case, the hon. Member mentioned—that of the Malvern Hills; but the Bill went a great deal further, and dealt with property in a summary and off-hand way. It provided that at a meeting called, a decision should be taken by the largest number of people there, though those people might be people who owned a very small portion of right in the common. Yet they were to bind what might possibly be the majority of copyholders of the common and the lord of the manor, whether they were the largest representatives of property or not. They were, however, to give a binding decision for all time. That provision was a great defect, and would require very careful handling in Committee. The hon. Gentleman did not say whether the Bill would apply to commonable as well as common land. He mixed the two together. Commonable land absolutely belonged only to a certain number of owners, and must be dealt with in an entirely different way from common land. He was not going to oppose the second reading; but he did not think the Bill was so small as the Home Secretary and the hon. Gentleman thought it was. He thought there was a great deal in the Bill which would require revision; and he hoped the Motion for going into Committee would be put down for some distant day, to enable those who were interested in these matters to consider the Bill.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Tuesday* 25th April.

BURIAL FEES BILL.—[Bill 24.]

(*Mr. Brinton, Sir Alexander Gordon.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. BRINTON, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, explained that he should wish it to be referred to the Select Committee appointed on the previous evening to inquire into the mortuary fees. His Bill was not framed in the interest of any one class, either of Churchmen or Nonconformists; but was meant to promote the interests of the whole community by regulating, equalizing, and reducing those burial charges which, in many cases, were of a very onerous character. It would deal not only with the fees for interment in old parish churchyards, but also with fees for interment in public cemeteries. The Bill would affect the question of burial charges and the question of fees for monumental inscriptions. It, however, did not seek to deprive the clergy of their control over inscriptions, or to interfere with the rights of existing incumbents. It might be described as a fair corollary to the Burials Bill; and in it it was proposed that no fee should be exacted except for services actually rendered. When the clergyman's time was taken up it should be paid for; but where no service was rendered, though the church and churchyard should remain in the hands of the clergyman, he should not be allowed to obtain fees for matters that cost him personally nothing. Life interests would be reserved. Notification of the charges to be made should be put up in a suitable place where all persons applying for interments could see what they had to pay. Very often fees were exacted according to the supposed circumstances of the applicant. The status of non-parishioners was not to be altered by the Bill. After what he had said on the previous night, he would not unnecessarily occupy the time of the House. He hoped that no opposition would be shown to the Bill, and that it would be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Brinton.*)

Mr. J. G. TALBOT, in moving that the Bill be read a second time upon that day six months, said the Bill was objectionable, because it was, in fact, a disturbance of a settlement arrived at some two years ago, and was a Bill which might be called a Bill for the partial disendowment of the Church of England. The Burials Act was passed in opposition to the feelings of a great number of Gentlemen on that side of the House; but the decision of the House having been arrived at, he thought they might have been allowed some respite before the question was brought before Parliament again. The effect of the measure would be that certain pecuniary rights would be taken away from the clergy of the Church of England, who were still the guardians of the freehold of the churchyards, and that their control over the churchyards would be done away with. The hon. Member who had moved the second reading tried to gild the pill which he asked the House to swallow by providing that the measure should not affect the position of existing incumbents. This, however, did not in the least diminish the force of the fact that the Bill was a disendowing Bill. It would come into operation whenever a vacancy should occur in any benefice, and would, therefore, ultimately diminish the incomes of the clergymen of the Church of England by interfering with the present practice in connection with fees. He thought the 2nd section of the Bill was very objectionable. It proposed to enact that the fee for reading the Church of England Burial Service, applicable to cases in which the corpse was taken into the church, should be 2*s.* 6*d.*; but that it should only be 1*s.* 6*d.* in cases in which the corpse was not taken to the church. Surely there seemed to be contemplated in that distinction a system of first and second class burials. It seemed a questionable kind of arrangement that a Service in the church should be dispensed with because a poor parishioner could not afford a slightly higher fee. There was this further objection—that such a provision would legalize "lawlessness" on the part of the clergy, for, by the directions of the Book of Common Prayer, the body of every person over whom the Burial Service was to be read was supposed to be taken into Church. Nothing could be more inconvenient to the incumbent of a parish than that a churchyard anthority should have the power to fix for him a time for free burials; and he did not know what right people had to say that a clergyman should bury without the customary fee. Clause 6 appeared to give liberty to any persons to erect tablets, gravestones, monuments, or railings at their own will; and he had never known so sweeping a proposition made with so little ostentation. It was a matter affecting æsthetic considerations for churchyards, which had too often been neglected, and were now being turned into gardens and places of beauty. It would now be the more remarkable if gravestones and monuments were allowed to be erected without control. It would be a novelty in a churchyard to set up a board stating the fees, as required by Clause 7. Clause 9 introduced the *odium theologicum*, by providing that there should be no restriction to the free selection of a grave on account of the religious or other opinions of the deceased person. Had such a restriction ever been made? He never heard of Liberals being put in one part of a churchyard and Conservatives in another, or Dissenters in one part of a churchyard and Churchmen in another. It was one thing to appoint a Committee to inquire, as the House did last evening; but it was another thing to affirm the principle of a Bill by giving it a second reading, and to interfere in an uncalled-for way with existing arrangements as to churchyards.

Colonel MAKINS, in seconding the Amendment, said, it was inconsistent to appoint a Committee of Inquiry, and then to attempt to legislate before that inquiry had been opened. The Bill had been described as a corollary to the Burials Act; but it seemed to him to go a great deal further than that Act. And, within two Sessions of the passing of that Act to remove grievances which some deemed imaginary, it was very early to bring in another Bill not dealing with difficulties of conscience, but touching the endowments of the Church

If it were anything at all the Bill was a Disendowment Bill, for although it preserved existing rights, it nevertheless cut off fees in future, which were an essential part of the clergyman's income where the endowment was small. There was no analogy between burial fees and baptismal fees, because the latter were payable in respect of a Sacrament of the Church of England, and, therefore, might be conscientiously objected to by Nonconformists. This was piecemeal disendowment. The question of the disendowment of the Church of England should be dealt with openly, and by means of a comprehensive scheme to be brought forward on the responsibility of the Government. Seeing that the whole subject of ecclesiastical fees had been referred to a Select Committee, he thought that the hon. Member should be content with the discussion that had taken place, and should withdraw his Bill.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. John Talbot.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. ILLINGWORTH remarked, that, after what had taken place in regard to the extension of public rights in these ecclesiastical matters, nothing could be clearer than this—that Parliament had made up its mind that no class of people in this country should be debarred of their civil rights on the ground of any ecclesiastical fancy or caprice. Although it might be admitted that in most cases clergymen were reasonable and considerate towards the poorer portion of the population, yet, unfortunately, there were many notorious cases in which clergymen had acted in a most inconsiderate manner, and, he would venture to say, in a wholly un-Christian spirit towards their parishioners, in order to exhibit that petty spirit of objection on ecclesiastical grounds which that House had so generally regarded as reprehensible. All the Bill did was to complete the work of the measure of his right hon. and learned Friend the Judge Advocate General (Mr. Osborne Morgan) of two years ago. Beyond question the tendency of public opinion in this country in regard to the Established Church was that the people's rights must be asserted and vindicated; and it was too much to ask that in all the parishes of the country the parishioners should rest merely upon the goodwill of the clergyman. He was a public servant and State officer—[Mr. WARTON: No!]—and nothing was more obvious than that public servants were subject to public and defined regulations. Therefore the clergyman, whatever had been his position in the State in the past, must take his account, with the certainty that Parliament would not hesitate to define his true and legal position, so that his assumed privileges might not interfere with the rights of the public. He pointed out that, unless the Bill were read a second time, it could not be referred to the Select Committee on Ecclesiastical and Mortuary Fees which within the last 24 hours had been agreed to by the House. If it were then shown that there were objectionable features in the Bill, the House would by no means be committed to its main proposals.

MR. SALT must acknowledge that he could not regard the question before the House as a very large question. It was simply this—should they read the Bill a second time and refer it to the Select Committee already appointed, or allow the matter to rest upon the Committee only? On the whole, he was disposed to agree with his hon. Friend who objected to the second reading of the Bill. He thought that hon. Members opposite should be content to wait until the Committee appointed to consider the question of Ecclesiastical Fees had made their Report before proceeding further in this direction. It was a most unusual course for any Party in that House to attempt to carry out their views at once by Resolution and by a Bill. He was not altogether sorry that a settlement of a vexed question had been arrived at by means of the Act of 1880; but he objected to the whole question being re-opened by a Bill like the present before two years had elapsed since the passing of that measure. There was a third reason why the Bill should not be read a second time, and that was that in reading it a second time the House committed itself to its principle. In a few years another Bill, a "corollary" of that Bill, might be brought forward, and the House told that in reading the Bill of 1882 a second time it had assented to the principle embodied in that future Bill. Besides, that Bill went beyond the scope of the

Resolution agreed to on the previous night. The Select Committee then agreed to was—

> "To inquire into the Law which authorises the demanding of Mortuary Fees, and into the Ecclesiastical Fees levied by Ministers of Religion upon the occasion of Burials and the erection of Monuments in Cemeteries and Parish Churchyards; and to report to the House whether any legislation is desirable with a view to their regulation or reduction."

The Bill went into other questions than those into which the Select Committee was to inquire. It went into the question of the time of burial in the most awkward and difficult manner; and if he was to criticize the Bill, he should say that the clause relating to the time of burial was a very unfortunate, if not impracticable, clause. He thought the wisest course to adopt was to remain by the Committee which had already been appointed, and to put the Bill on one side, as he thought much good might come of the inquiry by the Committee. Before sitting down he would like to refer to two points. First, he objected to Clauses 6 and 9, which did away, if he read them correctly, with all the power of the authorities who had to deal with churchyards in respect to what monuments should be put in churchyards, where they should be placed, and what space they should occupy. Under those clauses someone who had no connection whatever with the parish—excepting parishioners' rights, which he fully acknowledged—might go in and say—"Please let me have three-quarters of the churchyard." He thought that must have been an oversight on the part of the draftsman of the Bill. Whoever the churchyard belonged to—whether the clergyman, or parishioners, or anyone else—they must have some authority; and the clause, in its present form, would do away with all authority, and did not substitute a new authority. His second point was rather a peculiar one. He had noticed for some years that Bills which were suggested for consideration on Wednesday afternoons always did one of two things—they either desired to take away from somebody something that belonged to them, in order to hand it to someone else, or they proposed to lay additional burdens upon someone. After a fashion, it might be argued that this Bill indirectly did both. It was proposed to take away the fees very largely, and churchyards required to be supported. They had already taken away the church rates; so that if they took away the fees, one of two things must happen—either the churchyards must be entirely supported by the Church people for the benefit of others, or they must fall into disuse, and they must have parish cemeteries. But they could not create parish cemeteries without expense to the ratepayers; and if they were moving in that direction, then he would go further, and say that a great deal was to be said in favour of closing the churchyards and having parish cemeteries. But the great difficulty about it was the expense; and he would warn the House not to do that without knowing what they were about, and seeing where they were going to. Let them understand that in closing the churchyards more or less they had the sooner or later to go to the ratepayers. It might be perfectly right; but do not let them do it without distinctly saying and knowing that such a change was proposed.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) said, he was more disposed to agree with the earlier than the later remarks of his hon. Friend who had just spoken. His hon. Friend treated the matter at first as a small matter; but in his hands it soon became a burning question. He (Mr. Osborne Morgan) would call the attention of the House to the Resolution appointing the special Committee to which he assented on the previous evening, the words of which were that the Committee was to inquire whether any legislation was desirable, with a view to the regulation or reduction of ecclesiastical and mortuary fees. As a matter of fact, this Bill both regulated and reduced them. The ground on which his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Alexander Gordon) proposed to do so, and on which he, on the part of the Government, agreed to the proposition, was the extreme uncertainty and the absolute want of uniformity which existed in regard to this question of mortuary and burial fees. Burial fees were authorized neither by the Common Law nor by the Canon Law. The clergyman must rest his payment upon the custom of the particular parish, and the result was that they had different fees for every parish, and different fees in some cases in the same parish. The Burials Acts introduced a second system, and an Act passed about three years ago another system, so that they had got confusion worse confounded. With regard to the Burials Amendment Act, 1880, he thought the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Beresford Hope) would agree with him in saying that there was never an Act of Parliament which had so completely falsified the predictions made about it at the time it was passed. He believed that the admirable result of its working was due in a great measure to the excellent spirit in which it had been received by the clergy of the Church of England. But that excellent spirit had not been universally shown. When the amount of fees depended upon custom, and there was no fixed law, there were cases in which the clergyman charged whatever he liked or whatever the parishioners could pay. There had been cases since the Burials Act in which the clergyman had demanded one fee for the burial according to the Service of the Church of England, and another fee if the burial took place under the Amendment Act of 1880. That was what had prompted many persons to give their support to the present Bill. With this explanation, he came to the Bill itself; and it seemed to him that it did not, except in one respect, go beyond the Resolution passed for the appointment of a special Committee. This Bill both regulated and reduced the fees; but it did not take them away altogether. From his own experience the effect would be, in some cases, so far from reducing the incomes of the clergy, to very considerably increase them. There was no such thing as a burial fee which could be enforced in most parts of Wales. The custom there was to make an offering. There was one clause in the Bill which certainly did travel beyond the limits of the Resolution passed the previous evening, and that was the 9th clause. That clause had reference to the kind of religious service to be held at burials. But a provision of that kind had become absolutely necessary. His hon. Friend the Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. J. G. Talbot) had said that he never heard of a case where a clergyman was influenced in his conduct by the religious opinions of the deceased or his relatives. But everyone knew of a recent case in which the clergyman refused to allow a Dissenter to be buried by the side of his deceased wife, who had been a Churchwoman, simply because he had been a Dissenter. With regard to this Bill, he wished to point out that it could not be referred to a Select Committee unless it was read a second time. The reasonable thing was to read the Bill a second time, and then allow it to go before the Select Committee which had charge of the subject.

MR. BERESFORD HOPE felt obliged to refer to the good-humoured manner in which his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Osborne Morgan) had referred to the operation of the Act of 1880. He was not to be drawn out into expressing an opinion as to the failure or success of that Act. But assuming that all the prophecies about the Act had failed—which, however, was only a supposition—he had always contended, and would contend, that it was the pertinacious and unswerving resistance to that Act which took away its fangs. If the opponents of that measure had allowed themselves to have been won over by the dulcet notes of his right hon. and learned Friend, the Church would at the present time have been in a highly disturbed state. He had seen many curious situations in that House; but never a more curious one than had that day presented itself. The night before a Select Committee on the question had been agreed upon without prejudice to future action, and within 24 hours a Bill was brought on for a second reading which proposed to solve the question in a particular way, making particular and detailed provisions in respect of fees and other matters. Of all the corrupt practices in respect of legislation which had come into use of late years in that House, he thought the practice on that occasion was the most corrupt. Nothing could be more indefensible than the growing practice of bringing the second reading of a Bill into the category of things indifferent, and thus encouraging crude attempts at legislation by private Members. It was an extraordinary thing that the name of the Mover of the Resolution was the second name on the back of the Bill, while the Seconder of the Resolution was the same person who moved the second reading of the Bill, so that they reminded him of a firm which should be known in town as Dodson and Fogg, and at Liverpool as Fogg and Dodson.

The Bill would make a clean sweep of the right of the parishioner to interment in the parish churchyard, because it would introduce uniform fees for all, which would destroy the special rights of the parishioner. [Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN: The Bill does not touch the right of burial.] His right hon. and learned Friend could hardly have read the Bill when he contended that it made a difference between a funeral conducted by a clergyman and one by any other person, interring one at 2*s.* 6*d.*, and the other at 1*s.* What it said was that the fee for the full service—including bringing the body into church—was to be 2*s.* 6*d.*; and that for the mutilated service only in the churchyard—a bad legacy of an age of indifference—was to be 1*s.* 6*d.* He could not too strongly protest against the encouragement given to the latter corruption. As to the provision for doing away with the clergyman's fees on monuments, it was the exacting of high fees that had operated as a check upon the introduction into churchyards of unsightly monuments; and if that check were removed they would have an increase of offensive constructions and inscriptions. Everything that could fairly be asked had been conceded by the appointment of the Committee; and he, therefore, trusted the House would not assent to the second reading.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, no reason at all had been shown why the Bill should not be sent to the Select Committee. The House had determined that the subject deserved inquiry; that was an expression of opinion that there was a grievance, and it would assist the Committee to have before it the method proposed for redressing the grievance. It was quite in accordance with Parliamentary practice to read a Bill a second time for the purpose of referring it to a Select Committee, and this was substantially what would be done on the subject of the Law of Distress; a Committee had been appointed, and there would be referred to it two Bills, one proposing abolition and another submitting an alternative scheme. There was no ground for the notion that they prejudiced a case by sending to a Committee a scheme for dealing with a practical grievance. He would say nothing of the merits of the Bill; but would leave the Committee to judge of them. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Beresford Hope) said that the reason why the Burials Act had not done harm was because it had been resisted so long. No doubt it did take a long time to remove the alarm of the right hon. Gentleman and those whom he represented. After declaring for 10 or 12 years that the Church would be destroyed, the thing was done, and the Church had not been destroyed at all. They had to be treated like horses of uncertain disposition and temper, which felt great alarm at the first sight of a strange object; but which, having been frequently taken up to it, and having by degrees found that it was not mischievous, entirely overcame their first alarm, and became as good tempered as the right hon. Gentleman always was.

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY contended that the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary were irreconcilable with each other. It was undoubtedly in accordance with Parliamentary practice to read a Bill a second time for the purpose of referring it to a Committee. But that was precisely what had not been done in the case cited by the right hon. Gentleman. A Committee had been appointed on the Law of Distress. The House had two Bills before it — one had not been read a second time, and was never likely to reach that stage; the other had been read a second time, but was not referred to the Committee. He thought that the House had great reason to complain of the conduct of the Government in this matter. Most sincerely and cordially he wished to recognize the conciliatory and able manner in which the Judge Advocate General (Mr. Osborne Morgan) conducted the Burials Act in its passage through the House; but he also claimed credit for the loyal way in which the clergy of the Church of England had accepted it. With every disposition on the part of the Nonconformist papers to make up grievances there was not one case in 1,000—not 15 in all England and Wales—where any real ground of complaint against the conduct of clergymen with reference to this Act could be shown. After a Committee had been appointed last night without objection on that side of the House, it was not fair to come down that day and insist upon the second reading of this Bill. Everything that could with fairness be asked had been attained by the appointment of a Committee, and this Bill could only be necessary as an instalment—a first step in what had been called a burning question—the disendowment of the Church of England. He could not conceive a more offensive term by which to designate a clergyman than that used by an hon. Member below the Gangway (Mr. Illingworth)—namely, a "State official." The clergy were in no sense "State officials." They did not derive their order from the State; they were neither appointed by nor were they paid by the State. When they heard language of that sort used in favour of the Bill, coupled with the fact that those who supported it had already obtained all they could fairly desire, he considered that pressing the Bill to a second reading was nothing more than simple tyranny and insult to the Church of England.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY said, that the right hon. Gentleman (Sir John Mowbray) was singularly unfortunate in maintaining that the clergy were not State officials, when they had seen within a week reports in the newspapers of a clergyman in Derbyshire who had been compelled, by a peremptory mandamus, to register the burial of a Nonconformist in his parish after having tried every means in his power to defeat the law imposed upon him as a State official. The clergyman was distinctly a State official; therefore, liable to the most severe penalties if he made false entries in his registers, and as long as the Church of England remained an Established Church he would remain an official of the State. There had been several discoveries made of mistakes in this Bill which had no foundation, and among them was pointed out the case of hideous monuments. Now, there was nothing in the Bill for permitting any monuments. All that was done in the Bill was the abolition of the right to receive a fee for the erection of a monument. The legal course was to obtain a faculty for the erection of a monument. The clergyman himself had no right to grant permission for the erection of a monument; he might, by custom, have power to receive a certain fee. The Ordinary could grant a faculty in the teeth of any opposition. He would put it to the House whether it was more likely that under the Bill there would be more chance of having the churchyards disfigured with large, sprawling, vulgar monuments than there was now? At present 99 out of 100 of the monuments were erected without any faculty at all. It was done by an agreement with the clergyman; and the more liberal the donation the more likely was the clergyman to acquiesce in the erection of the monument. It was necessary, as this Bill proposed, that there should be some check upon the discretion of the clergyman in allotting places for burials. When they were told that there were no grievances it was remarkable that there should be two such cases as that in Derbyshire, and the case of the incumbent at Helmsley, who not only refused to bury a Nonconformist by the side of his wife in consecrated ground, but went so far as to force the mourners with the body to enter by a side gate, because, he said, the feelings of the Church of England people would be outraged by the body of a Dissenter passing over the consecrated ground. But there were, no doubt, many other cases of oppression and submission which had not come to light; because the Dissenters, being of comparatively humble station, were not in a position to quarrel with the parson and the squire. It was necessary, therefore, to have some protection in those cases. The Burials Act recognized the right of every parishioner to be buried in his own churchyard; and this Bill was consequent upon it, and it would be necessary to vest the management of the churchyard in impartial hands. It was quite true that a great many of the clergy had honourably acquiesced in the new state of things, yet there had been no measure the opposition to which was more distinctly ecclesiastical than the Burials Act. If they wanted to get rid of the bickerings of parochial jealousy these matters should be taken out of the control of the clergy, who had imported so much bad feeling into their opposition.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY reminded the hon. Gentleman that the Burials Act was first passed in the House of Lords by a majority of the occupants of the Episcopal Bench. If the House of Commons in 1880 had expected that the Burials Act would be followed by such a "corollary" as this it would not have given its assent to it. In being invited as a matter of Parliamentary precedent to consent to the second reading of this harmless little Bill, they were asked to consent to a larger measure of disendowment than its advocates seemed to realize. The Home Secretary said they ought to read the Bill a second time because it was the Parliamentary custom to do so; but this was one of the instances which proved that there were cases in which even a Parliamentary custom might have inconveniences. If a Select Committee was to examine the Bill hon. Members who supported it would have an ample opportunity of proposing it as a draft Report; and if the Committee accepted it *verbatim et literatim* that Report would come to the House, and the House could give to the principle a consent which had not been obtained for it in the dark. He used that expression advisedly; because, as he remarked last night, the speeches which had been made only dealt with one side of the subject, and there was a strong probability that material facts on the other side would be elicited by the inquiry. He therefore opposed the second reading.

Mr. THOMAS COLLINS said, that no doubt the clergy were State officials; though it was, perhaps, an offensive way of speaking of their position. In the main, they were like the ministers of any other denomination—a religious body—and accidentally they fulfilled certain functions cast upon them by the State. But what they had to consider was this Bill, and he maintained that the Committee appointed on Tuesday night had the amplest powers to consider the best mode of regulating burial fees. He thought many of the clauses of the Bill went in an entirely wrong direction. For instance, he thought no provision should be made whereby 2*s*. 6*d*. could be paid for a first-class funeral with a full service, and 1*s*. 6*d*. for a second-class funeral with a mutilated service. The Bill, being full of demerits, on what ground should it be read a second time and sent to the Committee, whom it must bias in a wrong sense?

It being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow*.

MOTIONS.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Dr. Cameron, Bill to amend "The Public Health (Scotland) Act, 1867," *ordered* to be brought in by Dr. Cameron, Mr. James Cowan, and Mr. Mackintosh.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 115.]

MILITIA STOREHOUSES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hastings, Bill to amend the Law relating to the application of moneys arising from the sale of Militia Storehouses, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Hastings and Sir Matthew Ridley.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 116.]

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 30*th March*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Elementary Education Provisional Orders Confirmation (West Ham, &c.) * (55); Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London) * (56); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Ballymena, &c.) * (57); Duke of Albany (Establishment) * (58).

REPRESENTATIVE PEERS OF IRELAND.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had received (by post) from the Clerk of the Crown and Hanaper in Ireland (pursuant to order of Monday last) Return respecting the election of Representative Peers of Ireland: Ordered, That the said Return be *printed*. (No. 54.)

SOUTH AFRICA—BASUTOLAND.

QUESTION.

Viscount BURY: Seeing my noble Friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies in his place, I wish to ask whether he has received any confirmation of the telegram which has appeared in the morning papers?

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: My Lords, in reply to the Question asked by my noble Friend opposite, I have to say that Her Majesty's Government have received intelligence on the subject. I will read a telegram received at the Colonial Office from Sir Hercules Robinson, dated the 28th of March. It is as follows:—

> "The Premier announced last night in House Basuto policy determined on by Government. It is briefly this:—That there shall be no abandonment under any circumstances; that there shall be no renewal of the war, nor confiscation, except as a last resource; that the disarmament proclamation shall be forthwith repealed; and that a Commission shall be appointed to assess the injury done to loyals and traders, and to pay for it in money; that Commission will also inquire into and report on the advisability of establishing local self-government, and as to propriety of giving the people some measure of representation in Parliament. With these concessions, and an efficient police, it is hoped disaffection may be subdued and law and order gradually re-established throughout the whole of Basutoland."

I have to add that Her Majesty's Government have received with much satisfaction this intelligence, in the hope that it will put an end to the difficulties in that country.

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS.

Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92. and 93. be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Easter, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the recess.

POLICE PROTECTION (IRELAND).

MOTION FOR PAPERS.

The Earl of COURTOWN, in rising to move for the Correspondence between the Irish Executive and the Director of the Property Defence Association on the subject of police protection to caretakers, said, in moving for these Papers, his main object was to justify the Property Defence Association publicly in the steps which they had taken. He thought this was more especially necessary if it should turn out, as he thought very likely, seeing that many of the peasantry were armed, that some of the men employed by the Property Defence Association should lose their lives in the discharge of their duty. Some time ago, when the Property Defence Association asked for protection, the Government not only granted it, but promised to give them full protection, and even tried to persuade them from arming their men with pistols; but now, as the Correspondence would show, they were encouraged to arm their men, and, of course, arming men meant that they were to use their arms. Captain Maxwell, the Director of the Association, had solemnly warned the Government of the responsibility they would incur should a collision arise between the men in their employment and the inhabitants of the districts in which they were called upon to perform, not only the simple duty of caretakers, but also to use firearms in case of need. On a former occasion he (the Earl of Courtown) had expressed strongly his sense of the responsibility that devolved upon the Property Defence Association in consequence of that policy of the Government. However, he was glad to see that since the intention to remove police protection from caretakers and houses was first announced, that intention had been to a certain extent modified, and that protection would be afforded in certain cases. An understanding had been arrived at that should protection be withdrawn from houses a notice would be given to the Director of the Property Defence Association. But that arrangement did not always work satisfactorily, for information had lately reached him that in one case where notice was served that the police protection of a house would be removed, the County Inspector would not wait for an additional number of caretakers to be sent, but withdrew the police on the 20th of last month, and on the night of the 24th the house was burnt. The Property Defence Association had heretofore chosen trustworthy men as caretakers; but now they had to look out for men who had the additional qualifications of discretion, judgment, and experience in the use of firearms. They were told it was justifiable, in certain circumstances, to repel force by force, and, if occasion required, even to take life; but they all knew that magistrates had made mistakes in that matter, and that where police officers had fired on a mob it had been afterwards decided that they were not justified in doing so. How much more likely was that to happen with caretakers? It was a very nice point for those men to say how far the circumstances of the case would justify the taking of life. It was said they might obtain additional protection from police patrols; but that very much depended upon how the patrolling was carried out, and on the number of men employed. The mere perfunctorily marching along one road at a stated hour, and returning by another, might easily be evaded by the strategy of lawless men. He, therefore, hoped that the officers in command of stations would be men who were capable of meeting strategy by strategy. The question of police protection to caretakers was daily acquiring increased importance from the policy of the Land League. Last year tenants were told by the agents of the Land League that if the landlords chose to evict them, let them—that they would find no one to take their land. That was found to be true; for when landlords had evicted they had barely found tenants to take their land. Even when the farms were taken by the landlords, the tenants, even when they had the money, had allowed the interest of their farms to go for a merely nominal price. One would have supposed that they would have strained every nerve to retain their farms; but, on the contrary, they allowed them to go in the most careless way. He had known cases in which the tenant's interest had been sold for £5. It was very hard to see what would be the result of this kind of policy; but it certainly caused the landlords great inconvenience. Some active young ladies were going about the country advising tenants not to pay their rents, and they would see that themselves and their families would be well taken care of. These people were causing a great deal of harm. He believed these associations, of which these young ladies were the agents, were very liberal in their dealings towards themselves, and were making a good living out of it; but that their payments to the labourer or the farmer were most parsimonious. It was to be expected that an increasing number of farms would fall into the hands of the landlords, or of the Defence Association as trustees. Those farms might ultimately be taken by tenants; but, in the first instance, they must be occupied by caretakers. In those circumstances, he trusted that the Government would be able to afford protection to caretakers and houses. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had, he observed, in the other House, the other night, described the state of things in that country as a terrible state of things, and spoke of the great struggle now going on between lawlessness and order. The Property Defence Association were prepared to bear their part in that struggle. They hoped that what they had done in the past had not been without effect, and they proposed to carry it further. He did not charge the Government with acting in a hostile manner towards the Association in withdrawing police protection; but, undoubtedly, their course had had the effect of increasing the expenses of that body, and also embarrassed its operations. He hoped that the Association would be able to give support to law and order; and he thought that as long as they did it in the manner they had done it in the past they had a right to count upon the support of the Government, and there was very little doubt they could count upon the support of the public feeling of the country.

Moved for, "Correspondence between the Irish Executive and the Director of the Property Defence Association on the subject of police protection to caretakers."—(*The Earl of Courtown.*)

LORD CARLINGFORD: I have listened with pleasure to the very fair and interesting speech of the noble Earl on behalf of the Property Defence Association, especially as he has expressed a desire not to make any charge against the Government in the matter. I can only say that the Irish Government had, and still have, a very strong opinion, founded upon the best possible information at their disposal, that it was their duty to make the change referred to, and to employ a number of police, who had been told off in small bodies, for the personal and immediate protection of caretakers for other duties—patrolling and other things—in the disturbed districts, in the performance of which they believed the police would render more effectual assistance in carrying on that struggle of law and order against crime and outrage of which the Chief Secretary for Ireland spoke in such strong terms the other night. I may add, with respect to this change of system, that the Government have been in full consultation with the special resident magistrates who are in charge of the most disturbed districts in Ireland, and their opinion has been most strongly given in favour of that change. It is also their hope and belief that they will be able by other means—means less direct, but they hope not less effectual—to give that protection to caretakers which the noble Earl and the Property Defence Association naturally and properly look for.

The Irish Government is very sensible of the valuable services rendered by the Association with which the noble Earl is connected. There have been services performed, and work done by it, which, on the one hand, could not be done in many cases by individuals, and which was, on the other hand, beyond the power and duties of Her Majesty's Government. In the feeling of gratitude we owe to the Association I heartily concur.

Motion *agreed to*.

Correspondence ordered to be laid before the House.

PRECOGNITIONS (SCOTLAND).

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF MINTO rose to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether any instructions have been given, in conformity with their intentions as expressed in the House of Lords on the 8th of last July, relative to the periodical production by the authorities of the Crown Office in Scotland of the number of investigations by procurators fiscal in each county of Scotland into cases of sudden death and death under suspicious circumstances, with the result of each inquiry; also of investigations in cases of accident and of incendiarism? The noble Earl said, there were very serious cases constantly occurring, and he thought it not only desirable, but necessary, that some such proposal as he had indicated should be carried into effect. He complained that hitherto the public had been kept in ignorance, in many cases, of the investigations which had been made in various parts of the country as to suspicious and other deaths. He contended that in all such instances there should be prompt communication made to the chief officials of the county in which a death took place, and that every facility should be given to enable the public to acquire full information with regard to it. He had before now stated that he was in favour of the names of the deceased persons being published officially; but he learnt that the Government did not approve the adoption of such a course, on the ground that pain and annoyance would be caused to the surviving relatives of dead persons. He had, therefore, relinquished that part of his proposition; but he could not impress too strongly upon the House the vital importance of taking immediate steps in reference to this matter, which he conceived to be of immediate consequence. What he mainly desired to insist upon was, that the chief officials in each county should be instantly apprised of all investigations taking place in such county, and that the public at large should be placed in such a position that they might have full opportunity for the acquisition of information on matters which, to many of them, were of serious and grave moment. He had on a former occasion, as their Lordships knew, brought this question before the House; but the answer he received upon that occasion was, he was afraid, not so satisfactory as he could have wished. He hoped that the answer he might now receive would be a satisfactory one; and that whatever action was taken would be taken promptly and without delay.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I am sure everybody is extremely indebted to the noble Earl for the trouble he has taken with reference to this subject, and the means he has taken, both inside and outside the House, to bring his exertions to a satisfactory conclusion. I think my noble Friend will consider that the answer I have to give him to-night is a satisfactory conclusion to the exertions he has made. Instructions have been given to the Crown Agents and the Sheriff Clerks in counties, and to Town Clerks in burghs, to make a Return of the cases reported to them under the heads — first, of sudden deaths and deaths under suspicious circumstances; second, fires and explosions; and third, accidents. They are also to specify those cases in which there is reason to suspect crime and culpability, and to state the number in each county. These Returns will be open to public inspection, and care will be taken that they shall be brought under the notice of parties who may be supposed to be more immediately interested. As regards the question of names, the noble Earl has correctly stated the reasons which disincline the Government to publish them; and, as regards the promptitude with which these measures I have indicated will be carried out, I can assure him that the arrangements made will insure their being carried into effect without any delay.

TURKEY — PASSAGE IN THE BOSPHORUS—RUSSIAN ARMED SHIPS.

OBSERVATIONS. QUESTION.

LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL: The statements I refer to in the Question I am about to ask Her Majesty's Government have proceeded from the Constantinople Correspondents of *The Times* and *The Standard*, March 11, from the Constantinople Correspondents of *The Times* and *The Standard*, March 24, and from the Constantinople Correspondent of *The Times*, March 27. The most important of them is that the Porte had entered a formal protest against the passage of the *Moskowa* with 700 soldiers on board through the Bosphorus. The *Moskowa* is described as one of the Volunteer Fleet, used in time of peace as a merchantman. She was bound from Nicolaieff, the naval arsenal in the Black Sea, to Vladivostock, on the East Coast of Siberia. There is a statement with regard to another vessel for which a Firman had been asked for and conceded. The necessity of maintaining the Bosphorus and Dardanelles against ships of war has been recognized in many Treaties. It is specifically laid down in the 1st Article of the Treaty of 1841, by which the Egyptian difficulty of that period was settled. No doubt the Black Sea Conference of 1871 enabled ships of war to ascend the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, but only at the desire of the Sultan. The allegations I have mentioned may be perfectly unfounded; but, if correct, ought not to be entirely passed over. The circumstances of the late war; the particular relations of the Treaty of San Stefano to the Congress of Berlin; the mysterious accession of the First Lord of the Treasury to the Offices he holds, create in Russia a not unnatural desire to surmount the barriers which, speaking roughly, guard the Mediterranean from the Black Sea, and which a few years back had nearly vanished altogether. A merchantman develops into a ship of war by easy stages. Whatever goes through the Bosphorus may possibly remain there for a considerable period. In this way, a naval occupation may be silently effected so as to add no little force to the Embassy with which it is connected. I have but one more remark to offer. Of all the fallacies the Eastern Question has created, possibly the greatest lies in the assumption that whatever the Sublime Porte is led to ratify should cease to be an object of distrust among the Powers which maintain its independence. Those Powers maintain its independence not for Ottoman, but European interests and objects. There are many instances in which the diplomatic influence of Russia may lead the Porte to ratify what it is anxious to oppose, and what, at least, ought not to be conceded. In the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, by which, in 1833, Russia and the Porte were bound for eight years to defend one another—a Treaty which drew forth a protest from France and Great Britain—this truth received a well-known illustration. But I will add no further preface to the Question. I have to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether they are prepared to give any information as to the alleged passage of Russian ships with armed men through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles?

EARL GRANVILLE: We are informed that a Russian transport called the *Moskowa* anchored at the beginning of the month of March in the Bosphorus with 700 soldiers on board, whom she was transporting from Nicolaieff, in the Black Sea, to Vladivostock, on the Eastern Coast of Siberia. This arrival, without previous communication with the Porte, caused considerable dissatisfaction to the Sultan, and the *Moskowa* was requested immediately to proceed upon her voyage. She had, however, started before the order reached her. The Russian Embassy contended that the soldiers were passengers and unarmed, and that it was, therefore, not necessary to obtain the previous assent of the Turkish Government to the anchorage of the vessel. An application was subsequently made to the Ottoman Government from the Russian Government for permission for another ship to pass through with exiles destined for the Pacific Coast in charge of a military guard. The Foreign Minister objected. We have not yet heard officially how the matter has been decided. There is no doubt whatever that with regard to men-of-war and to merchant vessels containing armed men the permission of the Ottoman Government would have to be obtained. I should not like to give off-hand an opinion with regard to Government vessels, which do not answer exactly to the description of the abovementioned vessels, without knowing all the facts of each case.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: Are we to understand that the question whether any communications will be addressed to the Russian Government is under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government?

Earl GRANVILLE: We must obtain further information before we decide whether we shall send any further communications or not.

ROYAL PARKS—RICHMOND PARK—THE ROEHAMPTON GATE.

QUESTION.

The Earl of DUNRAVEN asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether the Roehampton Gate of Richmond Park is barred to the public by a barrier across the road, within a few yards of the gate; and, if so, whether it is not advisable to close the Roehampton Gate until such time as the public are allowed access to that gate?

Lord SUDELEY: I am sorry that I am unable to give the noble Earl much information on this subject at present. It is quite true that a barrier has been placed across the lane by Mrs. Prescott, the lady who owns that property, thus preventing the public having access to the Roehampton Gate. The First Commissioner of Works is in communication with His Royal Highness the Ranger, and the whole matter is now under consideration.

Lord ORANMORE and BROWNE said, he thought that the public would be glad to buy up the lady's rights if she were willing to sell them. He understood that a few years back she would have accepted £2,000—a small sum, considering that the Roehampton Gate gave an access to Richmond Park two miles nearer than any other gate. Besides that, it was within half a mile of a railway station at Barnes Common. He was sure that the opening of the gate would be a great boon to every class of the public.

STATIONERY OFFICE (CONTROLLER'S REPORT).—RESOLUTIONS.

Lord THURLOW, in asking the House to concur in the Resolutions embodying the recommendations of the Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament which sat last Session to consider the first Report of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, said, that they were brief but important. The Treasury and the Stationery Office considered that, if carried out, they would not only lead to considerable economies being effected, but would also expedite and simplify all matters connected with the printing, storage, and distribution of Parliamentary Papers. There was only one other point to which he should allude—it was the promulgation list, to which a noble Lord (Lord Monteagle) referred last year. This list was now under revision by the Home Office and Treasury; and when it emerged from that process it would be found that the names of obsolete Offices and officials supposed to be supplied with copies of the Statutes had been expunged. He would only add that these Resolutions had already received the approval of the other House of Parliament, and he trusted their Lordships would agree to them. He begged to move the following Resolutions:—

"(1.) That the present system, under which this House employs for its ordinary work a separate printer, working independently of, and without reference to, other Government contracts, is inexpedient, and be at the first convenient opportunity discontinued:

"(2.) That the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury be authorised to make preliminary arrangements, and at the proper time to lay open to public competition, and enter into contracts to provide, in such manner as they may think best, for all the printing of this House, other than the printing of the Minutes of Proceedings and Journals; provided that such contracts made, either separately or in connexion with other printing for the Public Service, shall be laid before the House not less than forty days, and shall then take effect, unless disapproved by the House:

"(3.) That all Papers printed by order of this House, or presented by Command of Her Majesty, other than those required for the use of Lords or officers of this House, be placed under the custody of the Stationery Office; all such Papers to be as far as possible made easily accessible to the public by purchase, and the proceeds to be paid into the Exchequer."

Resolutions *agreed to.*

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROVISIONAL ORDERS CONFIRMATION (WEST HAM, &c.) BILL [H.L.] (No. 55.) A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Education Department under "The Elementary Education Act, 1870," to enable the School Boards for West Ham, Essex, and

Terrington St. John, Norfolk, to put in force the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, and the Acts amending the same: And

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (LONDON) BILL [H.L.] (No. 56.) A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Education Department under "The Elementary Education Act, 1870," to enable the School Board for London to put in force the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, and the Acts amending the same:

Were *presented* by The Lord SANDHURST; read 1ª, and *referred* to the Examiners.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (BALLYMENA, &C.) BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the towns of Ballymena, Clonmel, Fermoy, and Letterkenny—Was *presented* by The LORD PRIVY SEAL; read 1ª, and *referred* to the Examiners. (No. 57.)

House adjourned at Six o'clock, till To-morrow, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 30th March, 1882.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBER SWORN—Thomas Love Duncombe Jones-Parry, esquire, *for* the Borough of Carnarvon.

SELECT COMMITTEE—Turnpike Acts Continuance Act, 1881, *appointed* and *nominated.*

PRIVATE BILL — *Select Committee* — Regent's Canal, City, and Docks Railway,* *nominated.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Commons Regulation Provisional Orders * [117]; Corrupt Practices (Disfranchisement) * [118]; Copyright (Works of Fine Art, &c.) * [119].

Third Reading—Bills of Sale Act (1878) Amendment [108], and *passed.*

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

REGENT'S CANAL, CITY, AND DOCKS RAILWAY BILL.

Select Committee on the Regent's Canal, City, and Docks Railway Bill *nominated*:—Mr. PEEL, Mr. GILBERT LEIGH, Mr. DAVID JENKINS, Mr. ROUND, and Colonel MILNE HOME; and Four to be added by the Committee of Selection.—(*Mr. Ashley.*)

QUESTIONS.

LAW AND POLICE (METROPOLIS)—ALLEGED DETECTIVE CONSPIRACY.

MR. BURT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to the case of alleged conspiracy on the part of several officers of the Westminster detective police force to deprive a man named William Cook of his liberty; to a statement made by a convict named Laurence (alias Briggs) at the Surrey Sessions on the 8th of April 1881, and repeated subsequently to a solicitor employed by the Police Commissioners; to a letter from one of Her Majesty's Colonies purporting to be signed by a late officer of the Westminster detective police; and also to a statement made by the wife of the last-mentioned detective, all making serious charges against the detective police; whether, after investigation, one of the detective officers in question has been dismissed from the force without a pension, and another removed to a different district; and, whether, if the facts be as alleged, he will institute a public inquiry or prosecute the offenders?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, this matter has been carefully investigated by me, and I have come to the conclusion that there is no evidence to show that this is a case of conspiracy which could properly be the subject of a criminal prosecution. I have also come to the conclusion that there has been carelessness amounting to recklessness in proceeding upon evidence of an unreliable character. The parties have committed a most serious offence, and have been severely punished.

ARMY ORGANIZATION (AUXILIARY FORCES)—MILITIA UNIFORMS.

SIR JOSEPH BAILEY asked the Secretary of State for War, How many Militia Battalions have to adopt an entire change of uniform this year, and what is the total estimated amount of compensation to the officers of those Battalions at twenty-five pounds each?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to the hon. Baronet, I have to state that the total number of Militia battalions which will be compelled to change to or from red, green, and Highland uniforms is 31. Of these I am not certain whether more than 24 will have to change during the next financial year. If 31 change, the allowance to be paid to officers will be £15,175. If 24 only change it will be £12,475.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE APPEAL COURT.

MR. MACARTNEY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether, considering the great inconvenience and expense incurred by Irish landlords and tenants in attending at the towns where the Court of Appeal of Irish Land Commission at present hold their sittings for the purpose of hearing appeals from the decisions of the Sub-Commissions, arrangements cannot be made for holding sittings of the appeal court in the assize town of each county, so as to diminish as much as possible that inconvenience and expense which is now seriously felt by landlords, tenants, witnesses, counsel, and solicitors?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, I am informed by the Secretary to the Land Commission that, looking at the time at the disposal of the Commission, it is absolutely impracticable for them to hold sittings in every Assize town to hear appeals.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—PERSONS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state the total number of persons arrested in 1866, and the total number of persons from the date of the first arrest in 1881, to the corresponding date in 1882?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he was not able to give the exact number of arrests in 1866; but, as he supposed the object of the hon. Member was to compare the number of that year with that of the past year, he could give him some information which would assist him. From the 19th of February, 1866, to the 1st of March, 1867, the arrests were 961. Between the same dates in 1881 and 1882 respectively the number was 858, 15 of which were re-arrests, making a net total of 843.

MR. HEALY asked when the Return he had moved for, and which had been promised by the right hon. Gentleman, would be forthcoming?

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he did not remember the promise; but he would refer to the Motion of the hon. Member.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON asked if the occupation of the "suspects" would be stated in the Return?

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, that would be by no means an easy Return to make.

STATE OF IRELAND—COMPENSATION FOR MALICIOUS INJURIES.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What amount has been levied by the Grand Juries at last Winter and Spring Assizes in Limerick and Tipperary counties for arson and malicious injuries; and what number of persons have been brought to trial or arrested on reasonable suspicion of having caused the same?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, "levied" was not the correct expression, because the Grand Juries at present did not levy these sums. The amounts in which the Grand Juries at the Winter and Spring Assizes had condemned the counties of Limerick and Tipperary were £3,238 and £2,013, respectively. At Limerick three persons, and at Tipperary two persons, were arrested on suspicion of having committed the crimes of arson and malicious injury to property. In neither case were any brought to trial.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PRISONERS UNDER THE ACT.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, upon Catholic holidays, visits have been stopped to the suspects in Clonmel Gaol; whether he is aware that the suspects are not allowed to dine together, although they allege that the expense would be diminished by one-half, and the meals much more comfortably served, if this were allowed; and, whether it is a fact that, in the association room, out of 107 suspects, chairs are only provided for 20, and that, for the same number of suspects, the total number of visits per day is limited to 28?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he found that visits had been stopped on Catholic holidays in Clonmel Gaol owing to a misrepresentation of the rules by the Governor; but the matter had been put right, and would not occur again. The "suspects" did not take their dinner together in any prison, and no complaint on the subject had been received, except from one prisoner. There were 91 "suspects" now in the prison at Clonmel. There were 39 chairs and some forms in the association rooms. As many were admitted to the visiting rooms as could be accommodated each day, and an additional room was being got ready.

Mr. HEALY asked if the right hon. Gentleman would give directions that in future "suspects" should not be confined in any prison which did not afford sufficient room for the accommodation of visitors and for the prisoners during the hours of association?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he could only repeat that he had been endeavouring, and should endeavour, to carry out the rules as much as could be done in accordance with good discipline and the safety of the prisoners.

Mr. REDMOND asked if it was true that in Kilmainham the time spent in religious exercises was deducted from the hours of association?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he believed that was not so; but if it were, the matter would be set right.

Mr. HEALY: I am informed the right hon. Gentleman —— [*Cries of* "Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman has put a Question, and has received an answer, and is not entitled to speak now.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether two brothers named Daniel and Edward Flanagan were, upon the evidence of one Molloy, a farm-servant about sixteen years old, convicted in January last, at the Munster Winter Assizes, of having fired into the house of one James Moloney, and were sentenced by Mr. Justice Fitzgerald to seven and five years' penal servitude respectively; whether the learned Judge in charging the jury warned them that the case was one "requiring considerable caution" on their part; that "the whole case rested upon the evidence of Molloy;" and, that "it was for the jury to examine, with suspicion, with careful scrutiny, the statements" he had made; whether the said Molloy, since the trial, has been living in the Ennis Police Barrack; and, whether, a few days since, he was accused of stealing a silver watch from a constable, and of representing to a local watchmaker that he had won it at a raffle, and of obtaining another watch in exchange; and, whether the Government will examine the charge against Molloy, and review the evidence, verdict, and sentence in the case of the brothers Flanagan?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, the Flanagans, who were brothers, were convicted at the Winter Assizes at Cork of having fired into the house of a man named Moloney in Clare. Molloy was not the only witness examined for the Crown, and no witness appeared to have been examined for the defence. It was a fact that the learned Judge was reported to have made use of the words attributed to him by the hon. Member; but after the prisoners were convicted he not only expressed his approval of the verdict, but he was reported to have said that the indictment against Daniel Flanagan could have been for the higher crime of shooting with intent to murder his father-in-law. It was true that the lad Molloy had since been accused of stealing a silver watch from a constable; but as there were other witnesses against the Flanagans, he saw no reason for reconsidering the case.

Mr. SEXTON asked if it was not true that Molloy had since restored the watch to the constable?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he had not heard that.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that Mr. Martin O'Sullivan, who was arrested on the 23rd June 1881, was deprived by the Governor of Limerick Gaol of his necktie; whether, although Mr. O'Sullivan demanded it several times, the Governor refused to give it up; whether it is true that the flags in one of the yards in Limerick Prison on a wet day are so covered with water that the yard cannot be exercised in, and that in another yard there is a closet which sometimes emits such an odour as to prevent the suspects from going within a long distance of it; whether it is a fact that, when letters are stopped by the Governor of Limerick Gaol, he will not return to the suspects the penny stamps on the back of the envelopes; and, whether it is true that, in this and other gaols, suspects are charged for having their cells cleaned?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had directed a report to be made upon this matter.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Thomas R. M'Carthy, formerly a monitor in the Millstreet Male National School, was arrested under the Coercion Act on the 21st November last, and is still detained a prisoner in Clonmel Gaol; whether it is the fact that Mr. M'Carthy, on concluding his term of three years as monitor, obtained from the National Education Board a classification as third-class teacher, and was thereby deprived of his employment in the Millstreet National School, because the principal of the school was only a third-class teacher, and a rule of the Board forbade the employment under him of a teacher of the same grade; whether Mr. M'Carthy, having a family of three dependent upon him, and having remained a year and a-half without employment, opened a private school at Millstreet in April of last year, the result being a large and constant attendance of pupils, and the almost complete desertion of the Millstreet National School; whether, in November last, the Hon. Captain Plunkett, R.M. of the Millstreet District, sent for Mr. M'Carthy, informed him that he was doing an illegal act in teaching a private school, and threatened, unless he gave it up, to have him arrested under the Coercion Act, at the same time refusing to give any further explanation; whether Mr. M'Carthy, having continued to teach his school, the local sub-inspector and police dispersed the children on several successive days from the school, and subsequently from Mr. M'Carthy's private residence, where he endeavoured, when harassed by the police, to conduct the work of teaching; and, whether, about a fortnight after the intimation by Captain Plunkett, Mr. M'Carthy's school was finally broken up by his arrest under the Coercion Act; whether it is an illegal act to teach a private school in Ireland; and, whether the Government will now order the release of Mr. M'Carthy?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that Mr. Thomas R. M'Carthy was arrested on the 21st of November last. He was a teacher in the lower division of the third class. In the examination his answers were very poor, and did not entitle him to promotion; but he was not precluded from obtaining employment in national schools. M'Carthy being out of employment, having left the Millstreet National School, opened a school in Mill Street. To the best of the Chief Secretary's belief, he intimidated not only children, but parents into leaving the Millstreet National School and attending his own school. M'Carthy's school was a Land League school, and Land League doctrines were taught in it. Captain Plunkett sent for him, and warned him that if he persisted in these illegal practices he was liable to prosecution. Notwithstanding this, he continued to hold what were practically Land League meetings in the rooms of the Land League in Millstreet, and eventually he was arrested. The question of his release was now under consideration. He need not say that it was a perfectly legal act to teach a private school in Ireland.

MR. O'CONNOR POWER asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will now consider the advisability of recommending the release of Messrs. Thomas Lydon, John Sheridan, Patrick J. Craig, and Thomas Dunleavy, all of Kilmonee, county of Mayo, and now detained as suspects in Galway Gaol, the district to which they belong being in its usual state of tranquillity?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the question of the release of the prisoners mentioned in the first part of the Question was under the consideration of the Lord Lieutenant and himself. They had consented to the release of the gentlemen referred to in the second part of the Question.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that Mr. Abraham, at present a suspect in Kilmainham Gaol, complains that, on being first arrested and conveyed to Limerick Gaol, he was placed in a dark cell, where he had to sleep on a filthy matress, which in the morning was found covered with vermin; and, whether an inquiry into this matter will be granted?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, the statement in the Question was not true. There was no dark cell in Limerick Prison, and Mr. Abraham had a mattress supplied by his friends, and, when visited by a member of the Prisons Board, made no complaint of his treatment.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a further letter from Mr. Nicholas H. Devine, recently released from Armagh Gaol, in which he asserts that the hospital in that gaol is occupied by the chief warder and is not available for use of the prisoners; and, whether proper hospital treatment is afforded to suspects who have become invalided?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had not seen the letter, but he had received a report from the Prisons Board on the subject, which stated that the hospital accommodation was ample.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has received an affidavit sworn by Mr. James Dooley, a suspect in Clonmel Gaol, asserting his innocence of the charge upon which he was arrested; and, whether the district in which Mr. Dooley resides is in a peaceful condition; and, under these circumstances, whether he will order his release?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that he had received from Mr. James Dooley a declaration to the effect stated in the Question. Mr. Dooley was released on parole on 25th of February. The district in which Mr. Dooley resided was quiet, and he was glad to say that Mr. Dooley had since received his order of discharge.

LAW AND JUSTICE—THE MAGISTRACY—NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE—SEVERE SENTENCE.

Mr. P. A. TAYLOR asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is true, as stated in the "Newcastle Daily Chronicle" of the 22nd instant, that, at the Newcastle Police Court, Patrick Murray, a boy of 13, was, on the 21st instant, sentenced to receive twelve stripes of the birch for having stolen four scarfs, value one shilling and sixpence, from the door of a shop, the committing magistrate, Alderman Milvain, observing that the lad had been twice whipped before, and it was evident that he had not been whipped severely enough, or he would not have come back, and he therefore ordered the police to lay on the strokes till the blood should come from the boy's back?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that he was in communication with the Newcastle magistrates on the subject.

NAVY—THE "SATELLITE" CLASS.

Captain PRICE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, What is to be the speed of the vessels of the "Satellite" class now building, and for what purpose are they intended; and, have any of this class been tested for stability; and with what result?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the estimated speed of the *Satellite* class is 11 knots, and this they will doubtless realize. They were designed as an improvement on the *Cormorant*, in respect that they have much more accommodation and two more guns, and that they have a steel deck protecting their engines and boilers. No vessel of this class has yet been inclined; but there are no apprehensions as to their stability.

ARMY — RUMOURED ABOLITION OF CHELSEA HOSPITAL—ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC TO THE GARDENS.

Mr. FIRTH asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether there is any truth in a rumour current in Western London, and which has been recently made the subject of an official report to the Vestry of Chelsea, to the effect that it is in contemplation to remove or abolish Chelsea Hospital; and, if so, whether the hospital gardens will be preserved for the use and recreation of the public; whether, in order to such preservation, it will be needful for them to be purchased on behalf of the public; and, whether, in this latter event, a right of pre-emption will be accorded to any public authority willing to purchase?

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that a Committee, of which Lord Morley is Chairman, and the Members of which I gave to the House on the 16th instant, is inquiring into the prospective effect of short service on the great pensioner establishments at Chelsea and Kilmainham and the two schools, the Duke of

York's and the Hibernian, for soldiers' children. I have not limited their inquiry; but I cannot conceive that they will recommend any restriction on the present use by the public of the hospital grounds at Chelsea, and certainly I should not confirm any proposal to that effect.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS — LODGING-HOUSE TOUTS AT QUEENSTOWN.

Mr. A. MOORE asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been drawn to the violence and ill-treatment to which emigrants are subjected at Queenstown by runners and touts belonging to the different lodging-houses; whether his attention has been more particularly directed to a recent case where the baggage of some young girls, who were desirous of spending the night at Miss O'Brien's Emigrant Home, was seized and detained until a sum of money was paid for its recovery, which, sooner than lose their passages, the emigrants were compelled to pay; and, whether the Board of Trade, in conjunction with the Irish Government, will take steps to prevent such violence and extortion in future?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, my attention has been drawn to the subject of this Question by letters from Miss O'Brien and in other ways, and I am afraid it is a fact that the conduct of runners and touts belonging to the different lodging-houses in Queenstown has been extremely bad in some cases. I have communicated with the Irish Office, and I am informed that it is a fact that some young girls have been detained in the way mentioned by the hon. Member, and a charge of 5*s*. demanded. That sum was afterwards reduced to 2*s*., which was paid, but afterwards returned. The whole matter is under investigation.

METROPOLIS—THE THAMES EMBANKMENT.

Mr. Alderman W. LAWRENCE asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether the land on the Embankment in front of Scotland Yard has been let; whether the plans and elevation of the proposed buildings have been submitted to him; and, whether the new street (projected by the late architect and surveyor, Mr. Pennethorne) from the Horse Guards to the Embankment has been definitely abandoned?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Sir, the land in question forms part of the Crown Estates in charge of the Commissioner of Woods. Advertisements have recently been issued for proposals for building leases of it, and the replies are now under the consideration of the Office of Woods, who will report to the Treasury upon them. The formation, in 1873, of the public garden on that part of the Crown land which abuts on the Embankment involved the abandonment of Sir James Pennethorne's scheme of a street from the Horse Guards to the Embankment.

THE HALL OF SCIENCE, OLD STREET, E.C.—NOTICE OF MOTION.

Mr. P. A. TAYLOR asked the honourable Member for Harwich, If he will take immediate steps to bring before the House his Motion relating to the Hall of Science, Old Street, or otherwise remove the same at once from amongst the Notices of Motions, seeing that the terms of the Notice contain grave insinuations against the characters of several persons, viz., Doctor Edward A. Aveling, Mrs. Besant, and the daughters of Charles Bradlaugh, esquire, junior Member for Northampton?

Sir HENRY TYLER: Sir, in reply to the former part of the hon. Member's Question, I beg to say that I have been waiting for an opportunity when the House shall be delivered from the obstructive Resolutions which are constantly before it, and shall have resumed its ordinary position. I do intend to bring forward the Motion of which I have given Notice after Easter, and to ballot for a day with that view. In reply to the latter part of the Question, I cannot admit that my Motion contains any insinuations to damage the characters of the individuals referred to compared with their own connection with an infamous and blasphemous publication which advocates, week by week, the abominable doctrines of Atheism and Malthusianism and the disloyal principle of Republicanism.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CASE OF ROBERT WEBSTER.

Mr. REDMOND asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, in May last year, Robert Webster was summoned before the Gorey magistrates on a charge of intimidating men from bidding at an auction held upon his farm, from which he had been evicted; whether the case was sent for trial at the next sessions; whether, at the July Sessions, in spite of the objections raised by Webster's counsel, the hearing of the case was postponed to the Winter Assizes; whether the case was not called at the Winter Assizes; and, whether it is a fact that Webster has recently received notice that the prosecution has been abandoned; and, if so, if he would explain to the House what justification exists for a course which has entailed considerable loss and inconvenience to the defendant? He hoped that the right hon. and learned Gentleman would answer the Question in English. [“Order!”]

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, I am sure the House will not consider it necessary that I should notice the last observation of the hon. Member. In reply to his Question on the Paper, I have to state that in May last Webster was committed for trial by the Gorey Bench. At the instance of the then Attorney General, the case was sent on to the Summer Assize, 1881, where a true bill was found; but owing to the absence of some necessary documentary evidence the trial was postponed, and the Crown paid the costs of Webster's solicitor. The trial could not have taken place at the Winter Assize, inasmuch as County Wexford was not included in the Winter Assize Order. When, after this long interval, the case came before me as Attorney General for directions as to the Spring Assize, I found that Webster had not further interfered in reference to the farm in question, and had conducted himself peaceably since last summer. I therefore directed that he should not be further prosecuted, and should be informed of the reason for my decision. This was done, and, in my opinion, Mr. Webster has been very leniently dealt with, and has nothing to complain of.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—BOARD SCHOOL GRANTS.

MR. CHARLES PHIPPS asked the Vice President of the Council, If he can give any reason for retaining, now that the payment on result of examination is fully admitted, a rule which may prove so prejudicial to the continued development of good schools in rural districts as that by which the total annual grant, exclusive of any special grant, made in consequence of the smallness of the population, may not exceed a sum equal to 17*s.* 6*d.* for each unit of average attendance, or the total income of the school from all sources whatever other than the grant, and from any special grant made to pay the school fees for the year, of scholars holding honour certificates obtained before the 1st of January 1882?

MR. MUNDELLA: Sir, the hon. Member asks me the reason for retaining the rule limiting the annual grant to 17*s.* 6*d.* per scholar in average attendance where the local managers are not called upon for a larger contribution. My answer is, that the restriction is not imposed by the Code, but by Section 19 of the Education Act of 1876.

CORRUPT PRACTICES AT ELECTIONS ACT — THE MAGISTRACY — MR. CHENEY GARFIT.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he is aware that Mr. Cheney Garfit, whose name was removed from the Commission of the Peace for the division of Holland, on account of his connection with the bribery that took place at the last General Election, is still on the Commission of the Peace for the division of Lindsey?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, he was not aware that Mr. Cheney Garfit was still on the Commission of the Peace for the division of Lindsey. If he had not yet been removed it was through inadvertence. He would inquire into the matter.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether Mr. Robert William Staniland, holding the judicial office of registrar of the Boston County Court, was the same Mr. Staniland who was scheduled for bribery by the Boston Election Commissioners?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, he had no knowledge of the matter except the similarity of names, which would lead him to the conclusion that Mr. Staniland who was scheduled for bribery was the registrar of the County Court. The matter was now, however, the subject of consideration.

PREVENTION OF FIRES IN THEATRES AND MUSIC HALLS (METROPOLIS)—METROPOLITAN BUILDINGS ACT, 1878, SEC. 11.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, If he can state why the appointment of persons to inspect and report upon the means of exit from theatres and other places of public amusement, in case of fire, was delayed from the 22nd July 1878, the date upon which the Act was passed, to the 13th January 1882?

Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: Sir, in answer to the hon. Member, I beg to state that in the first instance it was considered that the existing staff in the department of the Superintending Architect was sufficient for the gradual inspection of theatres and other places of public amusement; but experience has shown the pressure to be so heavy that it has been necessary to employ the additional assistance referred to in the Question, with a view to obtaining reports on structural defects, which, in the words of the Act, can be remedied at a moderate expense.

MERCANTILE MARINE—PROPOSED SHIPPING COUNCIL.

Mr. GOURLEY asked the President of the Board of Trade, If his attention has been called to a letter, which recently appeared in the "Times," from Mr. John Burns (Messrs. Cunard and Co.), of Glasgow, in which it is stated that a draft Bill, emanating from the Board of Trade, has been submitted to the consideration of the shipping interest throughout the Country, the object of which is to establish a Shipping Council to assist the Board of Trade in making new rules for the prevention of loss of life and property at sea, and in the carrying out of the rules already in existence; if it is his intention to introduce such a Bill; and, whether the constitution of the proposed Council is to be centralised, or otherwise, in its authority?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, I have seen the letter from Mr. John Burns, and it is true that the heads of a Bill, having for its object the establishment of a Shipping Council, have been submitted by my direction to the Representatives of the shipping interest for their suggestions and criticisms, and whenever the state of Public Business permits I shall be glad to introduce such a Bill. At present, however, it cannot be considered that the details of the measure are finally settled.

ARMY—BATTALION ESTABLISHMENTS.

Sir JOHN KENNAWAY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he would have any objection to lay upon the Table a statement showing the increase in the establishments of the twelve battalions now at the head of the roster, and of the six battalions in the Mediterranean, from the 1st July last to the 1st March instant?

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, If the hon. Baronet will move for such a Return I shall be happy to give it.

POST OFFICE—THE PARCELS POST.

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY asked the Postmaster General, If he has considered the necessity which will arise, should his scheme for a parcels post be carried out, for the provision of riding or driving, instead of walking, postmen, especially in rural districts where the distances are great; and, whether such a provision will form a portion of his scheme?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, in reply to the hon. Baronet, I have to state that the introduction of a parcels post will, in many instances, render it necessary to employ riding or driving postmen instead of foot postmen.

Colonel MAKINS asked, whether it would be in the power of persons sending parcels to register them in the same way that letters were registered?

Mr. FAWCETT: I would rather defer giving an answer to that Question.

YOUNG IRELAND LITERARY SOCIETY, DUBLIN—ALLEGED INTRUSION OF THE POLICE.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, on the 25th instant, a body of policemen again forced themselves into the room where a meeting of the Young Ireland Society was being held in Dublin, and insisted upon obtaining the names of the persons present; whether the Young Ireland Society is a purely literary one; whether the police have general power to use their discretion to break into any meeting they please, no matter what its object may be; and, whether he will protect this Literary Society from interference?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the police had entered a meeting of the Young Ireland Society in Dublin because they had been informed that another meeting was to be held. They did not insist upon having the names of those present. It was impossible to know the nature of those meetings without making inquiries, and the police had confined themselves to making such inquiries in a civil manner.

Mr. REDMOND: I feel bound, in consequence of the reply of the right hon. Gentleman, to give Notice that I shall advise members of the Young Ireland Society to forcibly resist in future any illegal entrances by the police.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—POLICE PROTECTION IN IRELAND.

Mr. ION HAMILTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Tilson Shaen Carter did at any time apply for police protection for himself, or for any additional force of police to be located in his neighbourhood; and, if so, whether he will state the grounds upon which such application was refused?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER replied, that he need not say how much he sympathized with the family of Mr. Carter. Mr. Carter did not apply for personal protection, but he advised the Government to have a police station placed in the locality, and that would have been done in November, 1880, had not Mr. Carter changed his mind, and said it would not be required. In November last, however, he made fresh representations to the Government on the subject, in consequence of which a police station with 10 men was formed there.

OFFICIAL APPOINTMENTS—PRIVATE SECRETARIES TO CABINET MINISTERS.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he has any objection to lay upon the Table of the House a Return showing the number and names of clerks in the Treasury, and of other gentlemen who have been private secretaries to Prime Ministers and to Chancellors of the Exchequer, who have, within the past fifteen years, been advanced to Commissionerships of Customs and of Inland Revenue, or other superior posts in Departments other than the Treasury?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I should object to lay on the Table the Return asked for by the hon. Member. I should object to the Return on account of its incompleteness and on the ground that it does not select a particular Department, but relates to the general subject of the promotion of private secretaries, which will be a fair question for the hon. Member to open if he pleases. Besides, such a Return would not notice by whom the offices had been conferred, so that supposing, for example, my Predecessor had an admirable private secretary, and that I promoted him to a high office without consultation with my right hon. Friend, the inference from the Return would be that my Predecessor made the appointment.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR gave Notice that on Monday he would ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Mr. Herbert Murray, at one time clerk in the Treasury and private secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was appointed Assistant Paymaster General and Queen's Remembrancer in Ireland, and was now Secretary of Customs at a salary of £1,400; whether Mr. Algernon West, at one time private secretary to the present Prime Minister, was appointed Commissioner of Inland Revenue and recently promoted to be chairman of that Board, at a salary of £2,000 a-year; whether Mr. Charles G. Turner, a clerk in the Treasury, was appointed Accountant and Controller General of Inland Revenue, at a salary of £1,000; whether Mr. Stevenson Arthur Blackwood, clerk in the Treasury, was appointed Secretary to the General Post Office, at a salary of £2,000; whether Mr. Rivers Wilson, clerk in the Treasury and private secretary to Mr. Lowe, Chancellor of the Exchequer, was appointed Controller of the National Debt, at a salary of £1,800; and whether Mr. C. L. Ryan, clerk in the Treasury and private secretary to the present Prime Minister, was appointed Assistant Controller and Auditor General, at a salary of £1,500?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I am prepared to answer, at a moment's notice, the part of the Question dealing with the appointments for which I am personally responsible. It illustrates what I have just stated, that gentlemen who have been private secretaries to Ministers of one political Party, frequently have their merits recognized by the other political Party. Mr. Herbert Murray was, at one time, private secretary to Lord Derby, I believe; I am not quite sure, but he was private secretary to a Minister in the Party opposite; and he was appointed by me to a secretaryship in the Customs on account of his singular capacity and the great services which he had performed. Mr. West was my private secretary, and was appointed by me to be a Commissioner of Customs, and he was promoted by Lord Beaconsfield, for his merits, to be deputy chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, and he has now again, upon a vacancy in the chairmanship, been appointed by me to be chairman, because he was the best man I could find. I will not go through the details of the other appointments; but it is within my knowledge that this is one of the series of answers which the hon. Gentleman will get if he puts his Question.

MR. O'DONNELL said, he had given Notice that he would ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is a fact that, for the past six months, during the absence of Mr. Smith, the late Secretary of Customs, on the ground of ill health, the duties of that post have been performed by Mr. F. G. Walpole, the assistant-secretary, to the satisfaction of the Board; whether it is not a fact that Mr. Walpole was recommended to the Prime Minister by Sir Charles DuCane, the Chairman of the Board of Customs, as the fittest person to succed Mr. Smith; whether it is a fact that Mr. Herbert Murray, Assistant Paymaster General and Queen's Remembrancer in Ireland, has been appointed to the post of Secretary to the Board of Customs; and, if so, upon what ground, having regard to the special recommendation made to the Prime Minister by the Chairman of the Board of Customs in favour of Mr. Walpole; and, whether at any time Mr. Murray was a clerk in the Treasury? The Prime Minister had answered this Question when replying to the hon. Member for the Queen's County; but he wished to know if the facts as regarded the valuable services of Mr. Walpole were as he (Mr. O'Donnell) stated?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, that Mr. Murray's appointment to the post of Secretary to the Board of Customs was due to his eminent qualifications for that post; but he ought to say that the appointment was a peculiar one, because important changes which were greatly desired by the mercantile community, and which lay quite outside the ordinary experience of the Customs Department, were either in progress or under consideration. That was the main reason why a person had been sought outside the Department. The Government highly appreciated the services of Mr. Walpole, who was a very valuable public officer, and they had thought it right, under the circumstances, that a Minute should be passed by the Treasury awarding him at once the maximum salary of £1,000 a-year, and a grant equal to the minimum salary of the Secretary to the Board during the time that he discharged the duties of that post in the absence of Mr. Smith, the late Secretary.

CLOTHING CONTRACTS (ARMY AND POST OFFICE).

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Postmaster General, Whether, since the rule requiring the made-up clothing to be sent over here from Ireland for inspection and approval is no longer insisted on, the Contract recently entered into has been given to an Irish firm; and, if not, whether the rejection of all tenders from Irish firms is caused by the question raised as to the hardship of requiring the clothing to be sent to London for inspection?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General has asked me to answer this Question, I presume because the War Department actually accepts these tenders in consultation with the Post Office. I must confess that I cannot understand the second half of the Question, which refers to the "hardship of requiring the clothing to be sent to London for inspection," inasmuch as the tender from the only Irish firm which desired inspection in Ireland was made on the basis of inspection in Dublin. This tender, however, was not accepted, because it was at the rate of above £700 a-year, or £2,200 in all above the tender actually accepted. I could not advise the Postmaster General to incur this extra expense merely for the sake of the work being done in Ireland.

INDIA—THE RAJPUTANA RAILWAY.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true that Messrs. Rothschild have purchased the Rajputana Railway, reputed to be seven hundred miles in length; that they have paid £4,500,000; and, whether that sum is correctly stated to represent the total cost of the line up to the close of the official year 1879-80?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, it is not true that Messrs. Rothschild have purchased the Rajputana Railway. Negotiations have, however, been opened with the promoters of a Company for completing and working a system of railways in Rajputana of about 1,400 miles in length; but no arrangement will be come to until the Government of India have been consulted on the subject. The cost of these lines up to the close of the official year, 1880-1, may be taken at £8,000,000.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—THE CREWE CATTLE MARKET.

Mr. KNOWLES asked the Vice President of the Council, with reference to the proposed cattle market and abattoirs at Crewe, Would the Privy Council refuse their sanction to cattle being sent to Crewe for sale or slaughter from any or all of the following places, viz., Canada, Ireland, Spain, France, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, or from any other places that have power to send cattle for similar purposes to Salford, Wakefield, Islington, and all other inland markets; and if there is any reason to suppose that the proposed Crewe Cattle Market and Abattoirs Company, which is expected to confer a great boon on Cheshire and the surrounding counties, will be treated by the Privy Council in any way different to the places mentioned above and all all other similar places throughout the kingdom; and, will he answer the question as fully as he can, as the previous question and answer has created a good deal of false alarm and is prejudicing the proposed Company?

Mr. MUNDELLA: Sir, the former Question by the hon. Member for West Cheshire (Mr. H. Tollemache) referred to foreign animals only. The present relates to home and foreign animals together. Animals from Ireland are not under any restrictions excepting such as apply, for the time being, to home stock. Animals from Spain, France, and Holland can only be landed at a foreign animals' wharf, and cannot be moved therefrom alive, consequently they cannot be taken to Crewe for slaughter. Animals from Canada, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway can at present be landed at certain prescribed ports, and if passed as free from disease by the inspector of the port where they are landed, cease to be deemed foreign animals, and may be moved to any market in the same manner as home stock are moved. A market and abattoir at Crewe will not be treated on different principles from those which regulate the proceedings of the Privy Council in regard to other similar markets and slaughter-houses.

INDIA—BENGAL—MORTALITY IN PRISONS.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for India, What steps he has taken, if any, to ascertain the responsible persons for the excess mortality in the Bengal Gaols during the year of reduced dietary; and, what steps, if any, he has taken to bring such persons to trial and punishment?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, I have been in communication with the Government of India as to the causes of mortality in Indian gaols, and especially in those of Bengal during the year 1879, and despatches on the subject have recently been received from that Government, the latest having arrived by last mail. The Government of India appears to have inquired carefully into the question, and in their opinion, as stated in their Resolution of the 3rd of February last—

> "There is no reason to believe that the prisoners anywhere died in excess numbers during 1879 because they were insufficiently fed."

The matter, however, is still under the consideration of the Secretary of State in Council.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—OPPOSITION TO MOTIONS.

Mr. RYLANDS asked the honourable Member for Waterford, Whether, having regard to the serious inconvenience occasioned by the delay in the appointment of the Public Accounts Committee, he will withdraw his Notice of opposition to such appointment?

MR. R. POWER, in reply, said, that he would rather be excused answering that Question until he heard the reply of the hon. and gallant Member for Bath (Sir Arthur Hayter) with reference to a Question of a similar kind which he (Mr. R. Power) had put on the Paper.

Subsequently,

MR. R. POWER asked the honourable Member for Bath, Whether, having regard to the serious inconvenience caused by him in opposing the Motions regarding "The Grand Jury System (Ireland)," "The Protection of Persons and Property (Ireland) Act Arrests," "The conduct of the Police (Ballina)," "The Meath Sub-Commission," "The Munster Winter Assizes," he will withdraw his Notices of opposition to these Motions?

MR. W. E. FORSTER (for Sir ARTHUR HAYTER) said, that two of the Motions were put down for that evening and could scarcely be discussed after the Prime Minister's Resolution had been disposed of; and others were Motions for Returns, the granting of which was under consideration. On Monday he would be able to say whether they could be moved for as unopposed Returns. But with respect to the principal Question—the Protection of Persons and Property (Ireland) Arrests Bill—he did not think it would be reasonable or convenient that it should be withdrawn, as several hon. Gentlemen desired to take part in the discussion of it.

MR. R. POWER: My answer, then, to the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), in regard to the withdrawal of my Motion, will be the same as that just given to me by the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—OMAGH GAOL.

MR. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in view of the serious defect in the sanitary arrangements of Omagh Gaol, disclosed in the Report of Dr. Cruise, he will order an inspection to be made into the condition of all gaols where prisoners under the Coercion Act are at present detained in Ireland?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that he had arranged for an inquiry to be made into the sanitary condition of all gaols in which prisoners were detained under the Coercion Act. Omagh Gaol was in a satisfactory state on the whole, but that was not the case as regards that part of the prison in which the "suspects" were confined.

STREET ACCIDENTS (METROPOLIS).

MR. GOURLEY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If it be correct that the number of fatal accidents in the streets of the Metropolis amounted last year to two hundred and fifty-two; and, if so, what measures he intends to adopt in order that street traffic may be more efficiently regulated, and this enormous loss of life lessened?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that the Home Office had done all they could with the view of lessening the number of street accidents in the Metropolis, by sending Circulars on the subject to Vestries and other local authorities, and more or less good had resulted. The accidents were less in number than was the case some years ago in proportion to the population. It was absolutely impossible entirely to prevent these accidents; and he might remark that one-fourth of the accidents that did occur happened to the drivers of vehicles themselves and persons in charge of horses, and not to passengers.

INLAND REVENUE—DUTY ON SILVER PLATE.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, with a view to the ultimate abolition of the Duty on silver plate and for the purpose of alleviating the present depression in the manufacturing trade in silver goods, he would take into consideration the expediency of permitting new silver plate to be "hall-marked" without Duty, on the defacement and reduction to the condition of bar silver of an equal weight of old hall-marked Duty-paid plate?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GLADSTONE), in reply, said, that the question of the abolition of the duty on silver plate was difficult and complicated. He could not say that he was prepared to adopt the suggestion of the hon. Member conveyed in the Question; but if the hon. Gentleman wished to have his views carefully considered, he would recommend him to send him a written statement, setting forth the recommendations he wished to make, and the reasons by which he supported them.

SOUTH WALES—ROAD ACTS—MAINTENANCE OF MAIN ROADS.

SIR JOSEPH BAILEY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in relieving the ratepayers from the charge of maintaining main roads, it is his intention to include in such measure of relief the six counties of South Wales now administered under "The South Wales Roads Act, 1844," 7th and 8th Vic. c. 91?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, that the case of the six Welsh counties referred to by the hon. Member was peculiar, and would require special attention when the whole subject was considered.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE—THE CHANNEL TUNNEL SCHEME — CROWN RIGHTS TO THE FORESHORE.

MR. HICKS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will at once take steps to have the rights of the Crown to the foreshore at Dover decided by a Court of Law; and, whether he will apply for an injunction to restrain the persons, if any, who are making, or are about to make, a tunnel under such foreshore until the rights of the Crown shall have been determined?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, by the desire of the Prime Minister, and with the permission of the hon. Member, I will answer this Question. I have been in communication with the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe and Chairman of the South-Eastern Railway Company (Sir Edward Watkin) with respect to this matter, and the hon. Baronet has very frankly offered to place at the disposal of the Government all the documents upon which he founds his claim to the foreshore. I have directed the legal advisers of the Board of Trade to confer with the solicitors of the hon. Baronet in the matter and to report upon the case. As soon as they have been able to do this the case will be submitted to the Law Officers of the Crown for their opinion. Until that opinion has been received I cannot say what course the Government will take in the matter; but, in the meantime, I may add that the hon. Baronet has been warned that the Government claim the bed of the sea below low water mark and for three miles beyond, and that they will hold themselves free to use any powers at their disposal in such a manner as Parliament may decide, or as the general interests of the country may seem to them to require.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—LOCAL TAXATION.

MR. PELL asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether any general statement of Local Taxation and Finance will be made this year in connection with the Budget, so as to bring before Parliament the entire amount of Taxation, Local and Imperial, now borne by the Country?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GLADSTONE), in reply, said, it would probably be his duty, when the time for the Financial Statement arrived, to refer to the subject of local expenditure; but he could not say that it would be convenient, or even possible, to convey to the House on that occasion any very full or particular view of the subject, which was extremely important, and would require special attention.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—THE NEW CODE.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether or not the "Child's Class Book" will be required for examination up to April 1883?

MR. MUNDELLA, in reply, said, that as soon as the New Code became law, which would be in a few days, the Department would not require the production of the Child's School Book as a condition of the payment of a grant.

ISLAND OF CYPRUS—ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he had received a telegram from the leading inhabitants of Cyprus asking him to obtain from the Colonial Office the postponement of the impending changes in regard to the election of Members to the Legislative Assembly of the Island, which were described as annihilating the rights of the Mohammedan inhabitants. They asked that the changes should be postponed till the arrival of Papers which were now on their way.

MR. COURTNEY, in reply, said, he could not give any promise as to the indefinite postponement of the question. It had been hanging fire for a long time; but any representation from the inhabitants of the Island would be carefully considered.

SOUTH AFRICA—STATE OF AFFAIRS IN BASUTOLAND.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON asked whether the Government had received any information as to the state of affairs in Basutoland?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, we have received by telegram from the Governor of the Cape the following summary of the statement of the Prime Minister in the Cape Parliament:—

> "That there shall be no abandonment under any circumstances; that there shall be no renewal of the war, nor confiscation, except as a last resource; that the disarmament proclamation shall be forthwith repealed; and that a Commission shall be appointed to assess the injury done to loyals and traders, and to pay for it in money; that Commission will also inquire into and report on the advisability of establishing local self-government, and as to propriety of giving the people some measure of representation in Parliament. With these concessions, and an efficient police, it is hoped disaffection may be subdued, and law and order gradually re-established throughout the whole of Basutoland."

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE DEBATE OF TUESDAY LAST—PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY asked the permission of the House to say a few words of personal explanation. The day before yesterday the hon. Member for Westmeath (Mr. T. D. Sullivan), in his speech, attempted to justify the practice of "Boycotting," which, he thought, was a very cruel and wicked practice, and he took exception to it, saying that it should not be encouraged, and ought to be noticed by the House. He was reported by one of the Irish journals having a seat in the Gallery as having stated it was a matter the Government should take notice of. This was said to be followed by Ministerial cheers. Such a statement, which pointed to the arrest of the hon. Member, would be of no consequence in an English journal; but in an Irish paper, during the existence of the present intimidation, it was of consequence. He now wished to give the statement a flat contradiction.

MR. RAIKES said, he rose to make a personal explanation. In the course of the debate last Monday week he had stated that the Prime Minister had, in opposing the Divorce Bill of 1857, spoken at such a length that the report of his speech filled 15 columns of *The Times.* He merely related what he had heard mentioned in conversation scores of times; but, the right hon. Gentleman having taken exception to his statement, he had looked into the newspapers, and had found that, as a matter of fact, the current notion was without foundation, and he thereupon wrote to the right hon. Gentleman unreservedly withdrawing his statement, and expressing his regret that he had made it. He should not have considered the matter sufficiently important to warrant him in obtruding it upon the House; but as he understood that the right hon. Gentleman felt somewhat aggrieved by the statement, he felt it due to him to say this now. He hoped, however, that what he said now would not tend to diminish the credit of the right hon. Gentleman for the vigorous and pertinacious opposition which he offered to the Divorce Bill, which he had always regarded as the most praiseworthy part of the right hon. Gentleman's Parliamentary career.

EAST CORNWALL ELECTION—SPEECH OF MR. COURTNEY.

MR. GLADSTONE said, he understood the next Question on the Paper was not to be put. He wished, however, to make a reference to it, for it seemed to contain an imputation on his hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies. The Question was one that had been given Notice of by the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) with regard to the speech delivered by his hon. Friend (Mr. Courtney) in Cornwall a few days ago. He did not wish to give any countenance to the idea that an hon. Member, who was also a Member of the Government, in speaking anywhere in the country was to be regarded as the organ of the Government, or was bound to ascertain that everything he was going to say was approved by the Prime Minister or by the Cabinet. No such censorship would be endured by independent and hon. Members. There was, however, a passage in his hon. Friend's speech which had attracted much attention. This was a passage in which his hon. Friend said—

> "They would never have Ireland happy until its people were given the power of legislating for themselves in purely domestic affairs."

To make the quotation a perfectly fair and complete one there should be added the following words, also reported in the *Times* :—

> "The way in which to do that was to give them that county government which it was proposed to establish in England."

Mr. CALLAN desired to ask the Prime Minister the latter part of his Question, as to Whether his attention had been directed to a speech of the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, which, according to the "Daily News," was to the effect that—

> "The prevailing discontent in Ireland had been induced by years of misrule, and, although there was a common Parliament, and although England was governed according to English ideas, and Scotland according to Scotch ideas, the same privilege had not been accorded to Ireland. Until we learned to appreciate the principle that it was not enough to rule people according to our own ideas of what was best for them we should not succeed in conciliating Ireland ;"

whether these statements express correctly the views and policy of Her Majesty's Government; and, whether they intend to give them effect during the present Session by introducing a comprehensive measure of Home Rule for Ireland, in relation to the "purely domestic affairs of that Country," or do they propose introducing a more stringent measure of Coercion?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, with regard to the passage referred to by the hon. Gentleman, I must say that I was in hopes that he rose to offer some apology to the House and to my hon. Friend for having been unwittingly the means of giving a representation of the views of my hon. Friend which was totally inaccurate. With regard to the speech which purported to have been delivered by my hon. Friend, it falls within the description which I have just given. At the same time, I believe it to be a reproduction in the main of what has been said by Mr. Fox and partly of what I have heard myself said by Earl Russell, and I am not aware that there is anything to be ashamed of in it. My hon. Friend did not go down to Cornwall as the organ of the Cabinet to express the views of the Government, but simply to express his own views. With regard to the last paragraph of the Question, the Government have no intention of doing either one or the other. With regard to providing for the fuller management of local affairs in Ireland, that is a subject which they will be most anxious to deal with when the opportunity offers, when the state of Business permits. With regard to any measure which will be required for the maintenance of law and order, of course it will be the duty of the Government to consider and propose them when the time for considering and proposing them arrives. The time for considering what is to follow the present Act has obviously not arrived. We are now in the month of March, and the Act now in force subsists until the 30th September, and the circumstances of Ireland are circumstances which might vary most materially from month to month, and almost from week to week.

Mr. CALLAN said, he wished to add something to the quotation he had made from the speech of Mr. Courtney, and the addition came into his possession through the kindness of the Lord Mayor of Dublin. It was for the House to say whether this addition made the statement untrue. The sentence that followed was—" How can they suppose that the democracy of Ireland will be satisfied until they enjoy——[*Cries of* "Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. Member offering a Question?

Mr. CALLAN said, he was explaining his Question. The quotation continued—" Until they enjoyed some sort of Government themselves;" and then the report ended and there was nothing more.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that it was quite evident that the hon. Member had quoted from a report which was extremely succinct and imperfect, instead of going to the report in *The Standard*, which was more accurate and full.

Mr. CALLAN: I gave the quotation from the report in *The Times*.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARREARS OF RENTS.

Mr. T. A. DICKSON asked the Prime Minister, If the Government would, during the Recess, take into consideration the question of arrears of rent in Ireland, and on the re-assembling of Parliament propose some scheme by which that serious embarrassment in the working of the Land Act might be removed, and tenants saved from eviction?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I can assure my hon. Friend that the question of arrears, in all its gravity and difficulty, will be carefully considered during the Recess. It would not be possible for me to pledge myself to more than that at the present moment.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (PUTTING THE QUESTION)—AMENDMENTS.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I wish to ask you a Question, Sir, as to the manner in which you propose to put the Question on the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott). I understand that you will put the Question in such a way as to exclude as few as possible of the subsequent Amendments. I have an Amendment on the Paper of some little importance which proposes to leave out the words "Mr. Speaker," in order to raise the very important question whether or not this important power should be exercised by Mr. Speaker and the Chairman of Ways and Means or by a Minister of the Crown. I wish to ask you, Whether, if the form in which the Question was put precluded my Amendment, it would be competent for me afterwards to raise the Question in another form?

MR. SPEAKER: The Question that will have to be submitted to the House on the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton is that the words "when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker" stand part of the Question. If the House think proper to resolve that those words stand part of the Question, the Amendment proposed to be moved by the noble Lord to omit the words "Mr. Speaker" will come too late, and cannot be put, because the House will have already affirmed that those words stand part of the Question. If the Amendment of the noble Lord had been on the Paper before I put the Question to the House, I should have put it so as to admit of the noble Lord's Amendment; but now his Amendment cannot be put, unless the House thinks proper to withdraw both the Motion and the Resolution now before the House.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: In those circumstances, I beg to give Notice that on the Amendment of the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) I shall propose to insert, after the words "Mr. Speaker," the words "after appeal by a Minister of the Crown, or by the Member in charge of the subject under discussion."

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (PUTTING THE QUESTION).

RESOLUTION. ADJOURNED DEBATE.

[FIFTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [20th February],

> "That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, to be the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

And which Amendment was,

> To leave out from the first word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "no Rules of Procedure will be satisfactory to this House which confer the power of closing a Debate upon a majority of Members,"—(*Mr. Marriott,*)

—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words 'when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker,' stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

MR. JOHN BRIGHT: Sir, I may say with the greatest sincerity that I am very sorry that this important and prolonged debate should not have concluded on Monday last; because, if it had been so concluded, I should have been spared the task and the duty of making the observations which I am about to offer to the House. I promise, however, on an occasion of this kind, when we are all endeavouring to be virtuous, not to say more than is necessary, and not to keep the attention of the House from other speakers who may wish to follow me. I may begin by saying that, with regard to hon. Members opposite, most of whose speeches I have heard, I am very much surprised at the hostility which they have shown from the beginning to the proposal before us. It seems to me, from the course they have taken in the matter—although, doubtless, they will not agree with me upon the point—as if they had, in their own idea, only a very remote prospect of ever taking their seats on this side of the House. I have arrived at that conclusion because they seem to have no special interest in this question—a question which does not affect the Government of the day any more than it will affect succeeding Governments. I must say that, had I been on that side of the House, and any Government with a powerful majority at its back had proposed an Amendment of the Procedure of this House of this kind, I should have been very anxious to give them all the support in my power, in the hope that it might be of advantage to my own Party if we should at any time afterwards be allowed to take our seats upon these Benches. I am surprised also at another thing, and that is the almost universal, and ingenious exaggeration as to the probable effects of this Rule which has been imported into this discussion. I should like to ask whether there is any Member of this House who does not admit that the House of Commons is in great difficulties with regard to the management of its Business? No one can deny for a moment that the House is in such difficulties—indeed, all the speeches made on the other side of the House have admitted it, and some of them to a very great extent—and I believe there is a consciousness in the minds of all men in the House, even those who do not want any amendment, that the House suffers materially under the difficulties which press upon it, and the attempts to transact Business which the country naturally expects of it. Well, if that be so, then I should say that we ought to be also agreed that some real and effective remedy for those difficulties is called for. Do not let it be supposed that it is a matter which affects merely some dozen Gentlemen sitting on these Benches. It is one that affected the late Government equally with ourselves; and the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) knows perfectly well what difficulties he and his Colleagues had to contend with when they were in Office—difficulties which are growing from year to year. I can speak with impartiality on this question, because, although I have been in this House nearly as long as any Member in it, no one will charge me with having at any time unduly prolonged a debate, or with having offered anything like obstruction to any measure which has been proposed by either a Government or by a private Member of this House. Neither can it be supposed that it much concerns me what happens with regard to the prosecution of Business under the present Government. In speaking on this subject, therefore, I am entitled to regard myself as being as impartial in this matter as any hon. Member in this House. In my opinion, there is no doubt whatever that the time has arrived when, unless the House does something to free itself from its difficulties, it will stand before the country as having greatly neglected its duties. That the House admits fully the difficulty of its position is abundantly clear from the fact that it has, from time to time, appointed Committees to examine into the cause of and the remedy for that difficulty. The hon. Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate) has sat upon some of those Committees, and has complained a score of times to the House of the dangers that he saw ahead with regard to this matter. Committees so numerous have been appointed to consider this Question that no one can tell us how many of them have sat. A Member of the Government has stated that 14 such Committees have sat; while an hon. Member opposite tells us that he believes there have been at least 20 appointed. But, whatever be the number of such Committees, at all events many of them have sat and have discussed this question, and they have had Members of this House, of authority, called before them, who have given evidence, and among those Members there have been at least three Speakers of this House, and yet, after all, they have been unable to come to any definite conclusion on the subject, which they could offer with confidence to the judgment of the House. If, therefore, all these Committees are of opinion that something required to be done in the matter, and yet found a difficulty in recommending what should be done, is it not certain that throughout the constituencies there is now a universal complaint which answers to our own judgment upon this matter? Hon. Members opposite, when they are speaking to their constituents, taunt the Liberal Government with having done nothing, and the Liberal Government, when it is not a Government, but is the Party in Opposition, taunt the right hon. Gentleman opposite and his Friends with having done nothing. I do not say that either Party does its duty as well as it might do it; but we are all conscious that no Ministry in this House, with our present Rules, with our present habits, and under recent circumstances with which we are all familiar, can do what the constituencies expect from the Administration which it has placed in Office. The main question before us, therefore, is whether what has been proposed is likely to be effectual or not in relieving us from our difficulties—I refer to the Resolution which has been brought before us by the First Minister with regard to what is called the *clôture*, and which, in fact, proposes that we shall adopt something like it. For my own part, if I were not on this Bench, I should say openly what I now say privately—that I think that the measure so proposed, if it has any failing at all, falls short in this, that it is not sufficiently comprehensive and sufficiently stringent. I think that I shall be able to convince some hon. Members of the truth of what I say before I have done. The Resolution, to my mind, is a very limited and a very moderate one. It proposes that if a debate be unduly prolonged—and I must have an honest interpretation given to that phrase—unduly prolonged and obstructed, that there shall be a mode appointed by which the House may bring to some definite conclusion the Business upon which it is engaged. What is the proposition which the Government have made? It is a very small one. It is to this effect, that when a number of Members, under 40—that is, less than a quorum of the House—continue to speak, without any moderation and limit of time, and there is a general weariness in the House, and a sense that the debate might rightly be closed, then, if there are more than 100 Members present who wish the debate closed, it shall be closed. The other proposition of the Government is equally simple. It is, that when more than 40 Members—that is, more than a quorum of the House—continue to speak under the circumstances I have mentioned, then that not 100, but 200 Members shall be required in order to close the debate. This is not a great arithmetical puzzle. I think the right hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes), but, at any rate, the right hon. Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), who, I admit without reservation, made a very able and temperate speech in opposition to the views I hold, said so. But the puzzle is no puzzle at all. When there is under a quorum of the House desirous of continuing the debate, there must be 100 desirous of closing it. If there is more than a quorum, the majority must be at least 200. Let us see what that is in practical working—100 to 40 is a two-and-a-half times majority. With 200 to 40, which is the next step, the majority is five times as large as the minority. Then we come to 200 to 100. The majority in that case is equal to double. In 200 to 150 the majority is four to three. I should like to ask the House to observe—and this is what I call an important point—that, as regards small minorities, the proposition which has been made by the Government is much less severe than the proposition of those who think a two-thirds majority would be advisable. I do not think that has been commented upon. As regards small minorities, our plan is the most moderate, the least severe. With regard to large majorities, the other plan is the more moderate. Observe what is the difference. In the two-thirds plan, which hon. Gentlemen opposite do not like—they do not seem to like anything in this matter—I am only afraid that I may convert them—but if they were to look the figures over, they would see that an obstructive minority—I will use the term—of 20 only requires 60 Members in the House in order that the debate may close under the two-thirds plan; but, according to our proposition, it requires 100 to be in the House. If 30 be the small minority, according to the two-thirds plan, 90 must be in the House; according to our plan, 100. If the small minority be 40, the two-thirds plan requires a House of 120; our plan a House of 200. In the case of 50 the two-thirds plan requires 150, and our plan 200 to be in the House. Therefore, it is obvious that with regard to small minorities, the proposition of the Government is the more moderate of the two. But when you come to large minorities the case is somewhat reversed. Hon. Gentlemen have dealt with that as if it were of great importance; to my mind it is of the least importance. The importance is to guard the moderate and small minorities. Judging from my experience of large minorities, I should say that they can always take care of themselves. And, besides, it is obvious that the Speaker of the House, in the case of a large minority, say, 199 to 201, never would undertake to say that it was the evident sense of the House that the debate should close. It is impossible for any rational man to suppose we should believe that the Speaker would say so, for he would have no accurate measure of the sense of the House, and he would certainly jeopardize his own reputation were he to undertake to divide the House when the numbers were, say, nearly equal. Therefore, I venture to say, without fear of contradiction, that the Government proposal is reasonable—so reasonable, I think, that even small minorities have no right whatsoever to object to it. And as for large minorities, whatever be the Rule you propose, you may rely upon it that a large minority will always have its influence, and always be secure from unjust treatment in a deliberative Assembly wherever they do not resort to brute force to express their views. As regards the question of 201 to 199, it should be remembered that the House is now often constituted by one vote. When an hon. Member has drawn attention to the fact that there are not 40 Members present, and the Speaker has counted up to 39, the entrance of another Member constitutes the House, so as to be able to give consideration to, and to come to a decision on, the gravest questions. On the other hand, if attention be called to the fact that 40 Members are not present, and the Member giving that information does what was often done years ago, that is, slip behind the Speaker's Chair, and thus avoid being counted, if the Speaker is unable to count more than 39, the House stands adjourned. So that one Member is competent to make the House, under certain circumstances, competent for its gravest transactions; and one Member can disperse the House and send us all to our homes. I should like to ask hon. Gentlemen opposite to allow me to make a few observations on the real or simulated alarm they exhibit in regard to this matter. ["Oh!"] If I say it is not simulated, it would seem as if I did discredit to their judgment. But if they wish, I will admit that that alarm is real. I have seen great alarm in this House on many occasions. No one can have been here 40 years without having observed occasions when there was the utmost terror at some great harm that was about to happen. I have observed that hon. Gentlemen opposite are often seized with this fit when any good or reasonable measure is proposed. Why, Sir, in the year 1846 I recollect the House discussing for 11 nights before going into Committee a question which aroused alarm. The alarm was real, not simulated. It ended in dethroning a great Minister, the greatest Minister of our time, unless we accept the First Minister of to-day. It ended also in the dismissal of all his Colleagues, not only from this Bench, but from association with their Party. And, after all that terror, we know now that, 30 years afterwards, hon. Gentlemen on the other side, who had been so excited, have enjoyed great profit and prosperity from the policy they so much condemned. Later than that, in 1866, there was exactly the same expression of fear. Some hon. Gentleman opposite threw out a Bill and destroyed the Government. They threw out the Bill because they said that the £7 franchise would swamp all the rich and respectable people in the country. Well, they came into Office, and in the very next year they passed a Bill which gave a vote to every man who was rated to the poor, however small or humble was the cottage or hovel in which he was living. And to show that they have not repented, and that they have received no harm, now, in every Recess, in speeches especially to constituencies in the North, they always remind the working men of the liberal and patriotic Act which conferred the franchise upon them. ["Question!"] That is not the question, I am aware. I mentioned it as an illustration. Another phrase used on the other side is that we are endeavouring to limit freedom of speech. But, what I understand by freedom of speech refers not so much to the quantity as to the quality. Every Member of this House who chooses may arise and say things now which two or three centuries ago would have brought him under the direct discipline of the Crown. All that has passed away. Now we may say anything we like, and some hon. Members, as we have heard on a recent occasion, have said things that I should very much regret to think that I had said. Then, in this House also we may say very severe and ill-natured things, and, it may be, very inaccurate things, which if said outside would bring us under the Law of Libel; but from the Law of Libel we are free in this House. Now, this is freedom of speech, when you may say what you think right to say; and neither the power of the Crown on the one hand, nor the power of the Law of Libel on the other, can in the least degree interfere with what you have said. But as to quantity of speech, I would ask hon. Gentlemen if they know of any deliberative assembly in the world where there is not some limit to speech? Go to your church assemblies; have they not some limit too? We know that the clergy are apt to be rather long in their speeches, and that their debates extend over many hours; but they all have some mode of bringing a debate to an end. What is the course in all the public meetings held in this country? What would become of public meeting if the right asserted by some Gentlemen here were exercised on those occasions? Is not it the commonest thing known to us all that, after a debate has gone on to such a length after the programme of speakers has been gone through, somebody proposes to speak, or continues to speak, too long, and the chairman is at liberty to, and constantly does, put it to the meeting whether Mr. So-and-So shall be heard, or whether he shall be heard any longer, and as the meeting decides the gentleman—as I have seen it, and I think I have never seen it otherwise—has yielded to the opinion of the meeting and to the decision of the chair. But for this, public meetings in this country would be absolutely of no use, and we know that in the freedom of the Press and the freedom of public meetings we find all the elements of whatever permanent freedom there exists in this nation. Then there is another—what shall I call it?—hobgoblin, or something which is very alarming, which meets hon. Gentlemen, and they say—never having seen anything like it on their side, I suppose—they say that on this side of the House the majority will be led by a powerful Minister. In this country Ministers do not become powerful except by some great qualities, and they are only powerful when a very large portion of the public puts reliance in them. And then I think it is a great blessing that a powerful Minister should exert great influence over his Party, and that his Party, being a majority elected with him by the constituencies, should influence Parliament to serve the country. But hon. Members opposite seem to me as if they did not like to look at more than one point of the question. They say that a Minister who has a majority will do this, that, and the other; and they leave out of view the question of the highest authority in this House, without whose opinion, without whose judgment, and without whose express intimation to the House the most powerful Minister who ever sat, or who ever will sit here, and the most powerful Party itself, would be absolutely helpless in this matter. That is not merely my construction. It must appear to be so to every Gentleman who hears my voice. I hope some hon. Gentleman who follows me will attend to this—driven from point to point in argument, hon. Members have at last said—Well, we know that is what you expect of the Speaker of the House; but what security have you that the Speaker will act up to your expectation? Well, I would say this—My right hon. Friend has been about 50 years a Member of the House. I have been a Member nearly 40 years. I have seen three eminent Speakers occupy that Chair—Lord Eversley, Lord Ossington, and the right hon. Gentleman the Speaker now in the Chair; but has anybody noticed any trace of any partiality on the part of those Speakers? There is a score of opportunities every Session, one might say, if a Speaker thought it worth his while to do it, he might give some petty advantage to the Party with which he is connected. Now, those three Speakers of whom I have spoken have all been connected with the Liberal Party. They have served in the Office of Speaker during the Administrations of Sir Robert Peel, Lord Russell, Lord Aberdeen, Lord Palmerston, Lord Derby, Lord Beaconsfield, and the Prime Minister who now leads the House. In the last Parliament Gentlemen opposite sat on this side of the House. They were the Conservative Party. Mr. Speaker took the Chair then, as now. He was then, and no doubt is now, connected by sympathy with the Liberal Party. But no one said in the last Parliament that as between the two Parties in the House the Speaker was not perfectly impartial. I defy any man to say that at any time during the Parliamentary life of the oldest Member of the House anything has ever been done by any Speaker which would lead to the conclusion that you are relying upon an unsafe security when you ask the Speaker to take the initiative in a matter like that before the House. Now, Sir, I will ask hon. Gentlemen—Do not you suppose that the Office of Speaker is so eminent and dignified that it necessarily almost shuts out the possibility of partiality? Is it possible that any Speaker would sacrifice his great honour and his historical position for the purpose of giving some small advantage to the Party on this side of the House? Now, then, I insist upon it, and I think the House and every dispassionate, fair-minded man will come to the same conclusion, that the danger hon. Gentlemen have spoken about, and which they are so alarmed about, is, in point of fact, only a phantom, and that the safeguards provided in this Resolution are sufficient and complete for the proper maintenance of the Business of the House. An hon. Gentleman said that we are not all agreed on this side of the House. Well, hon. Gentlemen opposite have not told us of their opinions; but, possibly, they are not all agreed. I should be very sorry if, on every matter that came before the House, it was to be expected that all men would think exactly alike. We have an Amendment by the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott). That is an Amendment that means that the House shall do nothing whatever. If any Member of the House wishes to support that Amendment, he supports a proposition that, in regard to the shortening or closing debates by any contrivance whatever in the way of any vote in the House, that is a thing which cannot be recommended. I may say here that there has been some reference made to the word "bare" and "bare majority," and I see it stated in some of the papers that the word "bare" was left out of the Amendment at the suggestion of the authorities of the House. Well, I believe I am at liberty to state, without fear of being in error, that the authorities of the House — I mean Mr. Speaker, in the first place, and the Gentlemen at the Table—have had nothing whatsoever to do with the leaving out of that word; and the Amendment stands, as I understand, exactly as it was proposed at the Table by the hon. and learned Member for Brighton. Well, that is one of the propositions. There may be other propositions. I do not condemn them; but it seems to me that if I were sitting on this side of the House and not connected with this Bench—if I thought that anything ought to be done and that something effective might be done—there being no matter of conscience involved, for this is not a matter of blood shedding or of a terribly atrocious and evil policy of any kind; it is a matter upon which we may all agree without any amount of suffering, or upon which many may disagree without quarrelling—I should say that if a Government in which I had confidence had recommended this Resolution I would accept it—and if the Party with which I usually acted in the main, and for the most part, approved of it, and would all but unanimously support it, then I should have no feeling of conscientious objection to submit my judgment to the judgment of my Leaders and my Party. [*Cheers and ironical cheers.*] If hon. Gentlemen opposite come to their unanimity by any process differing from that, I hope they will state it. There is one other point on which I shall address a few words to the House—to the Conservative Members as well as to those on this side. It may be observed that in what I have said I have made no appeal whatever to Members of this House who call themselves the Irish Party. I have made no appeal to them for reasons which need no elaborate explanation. Some of those Gentlemen who call themselves the Irish Party have avowed, over and over again, that they are practically at war with the Government and with the Imperial Parliament. They in this House, and their Press in their own country, and their confederates in the United States of America, have avowed in all forms of language, on many occasions, and by many methods, that their object is to make government by this House of Commons not difficult only, but impossible. Two hon. Members of this House—for we are all honourable men—two hon. Members of this House, one not now present, but absent under circumstances not without his own control—I say two hon. Members of this House, whilst in the United States, were present at a Convention of Irish delegates in Chicago. It was a Convention which, as far as it had power, declared war against the Crown and the Government of the United Kingdom. Subscriptions were collected at that Convention, and were handed in openly, with the view of equipping soldiers to take part in the expected and intended war; and the Gentlemen to whom I refer, as far as I gathered from the report, said nothing at the Convention. They were parties to the resolution. They were parties to the address. They spoke in the Convention. [Mr. HEALY: No!] I have read in an Irish-American paper a most elaborate, careful, and interesting report of the speeches at that Convention. Towards the end one of the leading speakers said he thought it was better, for reasons, that their friends from Ireland should not take further part in their deliberations; but there was a speech in that report of an hon. Member of the House. ["No!"] I do not know whether the hon. Member who says "No" would say that it was made at a part of the proceedings which was not in the Convention, as here we should distinguish between the House and the Committee—but in that report of the speeches there was a speech of the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy), and there was a speech of the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor); and there was a speech, three columns long, of an Irish priest who went over with them, and there was not a voice raised by Members of this House—Members who have taken the Oath of Allegiance at this Table—there was not a voice raised by those Members, so far as the report which I read goes, which in the slightest degree expressed a difference from, or a condemnation of, the language to which I have been referring; and, no doubt, Sir, those Gentlemen on that side of the Atlantic and in that Convention were themselves what may be called the Mason and Slidell of this new secession. I say, therefore, that it is not worth my while to appeal to those Gentlemen. They are at liberty to hold their opinions, they are at liberty to conspire, and they are at liberty to rebel; but, at any rate, they are not at liberty to make it impossible for this Imperial Parliament to transact the Business which it has to do. I think that if there be within the walls of this House a Party, however small, avowing objects such as these, and pursuing a course such as this, it behoves all Members of the House of a different kind to consider the position in which they are. I appeal to hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House, to the Conservative Party—I differ from them, as they know, very much in many things, but I admit that if they are mistaken they are in intention patriotic, and that they would wish the honour of Parliament to be sustained, and the interests of the country to be guarded—I may, therefore, fairly appeal to them, and I may appeal to hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House—English Members, Welsh Members, Scotch Members, loyal Irish Members, I may appeal to them, and ask them whether this House of Commons, with its centuries of renown and its centuries of service, is to be made prostrate, powerless, and useless, at the bidding and by the action of a handful of men, who tell you that they despise you, and who by their conduct would degrade you? Do not let them suppose that they are greater friends of Ireland than I am. Why, Sir, I acknowledged the wrongs of Ireland, and urged that they should be redressed, when some of those Gentlemen opposite were in their long clothes. I am not less the friend of Ireland because I condemn those who, in my opinion, have been of late her worst enemies. But, leaving Ireland out of the question, and confining my view to this House of Commons, may I not say that we are 600 men, select men, chosen from all parts of the Three Kingdoms, and for what? For the high and noble purpose of legislating for a great and powerful Empire; and I ask you whether you are willing now to assist Her Majesty's Government in altering, to some small extent, the Rules and practice of this House, in order that the House of Commons, in spite of the mischief of the few, may find itself hereafter able to fulfil the great duties which the people of this great nation have committed to its charge?

COLONEL STANLEY: I remember, Sir, that a few years ago a distinguished American Minister said to one who was then the Representative for Foreign Affairs in this country, and who had a difficult answer to make to a deputation at a critical time, that he was anxious to know how a European diplomatist would answer, and, so to speak, "dance among the eggs." Now, it was with a curiosity akin to that of this American Minister that we watched to-night how the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster would acquit himself in speaking on behalf of a Liberal Government in a debate the object of which—in the opinion of Members on this side of the House, and of a great many Members on the other side also—must tend, in a great degree, to the limitation of the right of free speech. The right hon. Gentleman has ridiculed our alarm, and he has spoken, in terms which I need not characterize, of the Members of the Irish Party who sit below the Gangway on this side of the House; but he has given us absolutely no reason why we should not entertain the feelings of alarm which he ridiculed. Throughout this debate there has prevailed, up to this evening, a tone of studied moderation, from which I shall endeavour not to depart. But I cannot but comment upon the very marked differences of opinion which have been made manifest in the course of this debate among the supporters of the Government, and even in its very ranks. The Prime Minister, in the speech with which he introduced these Resolutions, showed that he was obviously anxious to hold on to old Rules as long as possible, and that it was with a feeling of pain that he found himself constrained to depart from the old lines followed by the House of Commons. The right hon. Gentleman also said that he trusted the House would continue to appreciate, nay, to worship, liberty of speech. The President of the Local Government Board follows in the same strain, saying that no Member of the Government has ever suggested that they should stop a debate which is neither repetition nor Obstruction. But the President of the Local Government Board, the hon. Member for Bedford, and now the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, have spoken of the alarm which is felt on these Benches; and the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. John Bright) says that that alarm is simulated. Not one, however, of these Gentlemen has adduced any proof of our being mistaken. The right hon. Gentleman talks of the "phantom" which has caused our alarm. He should remember that it is feared also by above 100 Members of the Liberal Party. ["No, no!"] Well, such was the statement of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson), and, up to this time, it has not been contradicted. Right hon. and hon. Gentlemen tell us that there is no intention of using this Rule for the prevention of free speech; but we must look not to their intentions, but to future possibilities. How can we be confident that on all occasions the intentions which the Government have expressed will be those which will be realized? Of that we have before now had some experience; and we are perfectly entitled to look not only to what is intended by the Resolution—a Resolution which, it appears, is to become a Standing Order of the House—but also to what its terms might hereafter, under various circumstances, be held to imply. If we looked only to the speech of the Prime Minister we might, perhaps, be to some extent re-assured; but the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India and the Home Secretary have spoken in a very different tone from that of the Prime Minister. What did the noble Marquess say? Did he say that it was only unrestricted loquacity or needless repetition which was to be guarded against? No; he went a great deal further; and much of the difficulty which we now have to face has been caused by the expressions which the noble Lord thought fit to use. He said—

> "The statement that the privilege of speech is not a personal right attaching to the position of a Member of Parliament may be an assertion that will startle some hon. Members; but I think a very little consideration will show it to be a true assertion, and I should like very much

to see the contrary of that assertion formulated and defended. If it is true that the privilege of speech is a personal privilege, it belongs, I presume, equally to every Member of the House."—[3 *Hansard*, clxvii. 1327.]

Now, I hold that the privilege is a personal right, notwithstanding the noble Lord's statement, for we are chosen to speak in Parliament as well as to vote; and it is the duty of every Member, on fitting occasions, to represent his constituents by word of mouth, subject only to his sense of responsibility to the House. But I will call a witness into court who speaks with greater force than I can. The duties of a Member of Parliament have been defined in the following expressive and weighty words:—

> "It is often said that we are not delegates; but if we are not delegates we are not rulers. We are sent here to represent the general views of our constituents. We have morally no power to cut off the influence of those constituents—to make fundamental changes in the Constitution, and to vary, alter, and overthrow the practice of 600 years."

From this it will appear that the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster did not always hold the views now put forward by the Government. As to the personal privilege of speech, to which the noble Lord referred, he will find a sufficient answer in words spoken in 1867. The noble Lord—I am not going to quote his words, but the meaning is clear—used a curious expression. He said there were other places where free speech could be exercised outside this House; and another hon. Member has gone further, and said if we wanted to express our views we might go outside to do it, for Parliament was no place for that. I venture to say, in the first place, that that is an entire and complete alteration of the meaning of Parliament. In the second place, if the public mind is to be influenced with regard to measures before this House, not by discussions taking place in the House, but discussions outside, you will import a doctrine rather dangerous and somewhat difficult to define. It is obvious that while the discussion is going on out-of-doors the measures on which the discussion is taking place may be passing into law under this Rule. The Home Secretary was more cautious, but the same argument ran throughout his speech. He spoke of the immense work which lies before Parliament. He began by saying there was the Address, on which he gave a significant hint that the discussion was one which might have been cut short under these Rules. He said, in the month of March, they had the Army and Navy Estimates, and he pointed out the difficulty which arose of Motions being put down between the Government and necessary Supply. Evidently, the argument of the right hon. and learned Gentleman goes a great deal further than Motions on going into Supply. It would apply to all Motions which stand in the way of the Business of the Government, and it would lead to an entire revolution. Then, the right hon. and learned Gentleman says, the month of March is gone and we come to April, and he points out that in April the Government might be in difficulties with regard to their Mutiny Bill. Now, all this is by no means new. These are not things which have occurred to this Government of all Governments. On the contrary, I may point out that it was the duty of the late Government to pass one measure which will greatly facilitate the progress of the Business of any Government. We are naturally led to fear from all this that what is intended to be used against Obstruction will too often be turned against that which is legitimate opposition. I do not wish to misquote the President of the Board of Trade; but I have clearly in my mind the recollection of a speech in which he spoke of Opposition, and used the word as being a very convertible term with Obstruction. It is because we know these facts and views are in the minds of those, at all events, who hold the newer Liberal ideas, and that ultimately this Rule will be entirely diverted from its course, that we take the strong position which we have assumed. As a matter of fact, the Government have been a little ungrateful to the House for the manner in which Business has been expedited this year. Have they been obstructed? Their main Votes have been passed on the first night they were discussed, no doubt at a late and inconvenient hour. I have a clear recollection that on many previous occasions these Votes have occupied sometimes two or three nights. It is true that last year Urgency was asked, and asked by the Government. They were alarmed about their Business. The House thought that it should not be granted, and the Government did perfectly well without it. Having no other course, the Government took the House into their confidence, and the House responded, as it always will when treated in that manner. References have been made to the last Parliament as if the late Government had no Obstruction to contend with. I am not going back on that which may be a matter of controversy. The Prime Minister spoke of the Obstruction which took place in 1879 and in 1877. I tried then to believe that the Obstruction was honest. I was prepared to admit that then, and I admit it now; therefore, although I refrain from saying how much assistance we received from the House, even after the main question of corporal punishment was disposed of, we carried on the necessary Business without the *clôture*, and passed some considerable measures. No answer has been given to the question—How would the *clôture* help the Government this Session? Would it have helped them on the Address? Would it have helped them on the Estimates? I do not think that that is a contention which will be made. The *clôture* could only have been applied against, to use the language of the Home Secretary, Motions which stood in the way of the Estimates, and those Motions could be dealt with by other Amendments on the Paper. I should like to call attention to what may happen in Committee, and in doing so I assume I have a right to argue as to the intentions of the Government from the actual words of the Resolutions which have been submitted. Now, my right hon. Friend the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) pointed out that the *clôture* can be applied in this way. At the present time, on going into Supply, the Question is moved, "That the Speaker leave the Chair." If an Amendment is moved, the *clôture* can be applied. Then to the Motion, "That I now leave the Chair," the *clôture* can again be applied. That has been clearly shown. It appears from the New Rule—

> "That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, to be the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith."

Now, how is this going to be applied in Committee? If the *clôture* is passed upon a particular Amendment, all other Amendments may be, although pertinent to the subject, shut out. [Mr. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!] The right hon. Gentleman cheers ironically. I should like him to deal with this point, as it may materially facilitate progress. The effect of the Resolution, unless it can be explained in some other sense, may be to cut out Amendments in Supply. I will not be rash enough to suppose that the right hon. Gentleman intends it to work in this way; but it is perfectly competent for anyone to say that this is the position, unless restrictive words are used, in which Parliament may find itself. Suppose the original Question was that £100,000 should be voted for such-and-such a purpose. An Amendment might be moved with which the House disagreed. I venture to contend that, in the terms of the Resolution—I do not say it is the intention of the Government—it would be perfectly competent to the Chairman—I am speaking, of course, impersonally, and without reference to the right hon. Gentleman who is now Chairman—to propose that the Resolution was carried, the Amendment negatived, and the *clôture* carried upon it. It is said that the *clôture* is not to be applied to such cases; and, as I understand, the argument in favour of the Resolution is not so much that it is intended to stop Obstruction as to expedite Business. But that can be done by the Resolutions which follow, which are framed with the object of expediting the Business of Parliament. That can be done in two ways—either by stopping questions from being brought forward or by shortening the proceedings. But the question is not whether the Resolution is intended to be used in a particular way, but whether, under the terms of the Resolution, it can be so used. I should have been disposed to argue—if my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard) had not already done so—that the word "may" implies that it is the duty of the Chairman to put the Question, and means the same as "must." The President of the Local Government Board said "No;" but that was a bare assertion, and the right hon. Gentleman advanced no argument, and showed no reason in favour of his opinion. But the right hon. Gentleman goes further, and to-night the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster said that it is to be at the discretion of the Chairman or Speaker whether the Question is to be put. That is a delicate matter, and I can only add one more to the testimonies which have been paid to the present occupant of the Chair. But we have to look on this not as a Sessional, but as a Standing Order, made for all time. See the enormous difficulties and responsibilities in which you are involving the Chair! Suppose the Speaker or Chairman ignored or misinterpreted the feelings of the House. My right hon. Friend the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) noticed this; other Members have noticed it also. In practice, some Rule would be devised which would be followed by each successive Speaker or Chairman, and the discretion of the Speaker would be abandoned. I find, Sir, that the question was raised in a discussion which took place in February, 1880. The difficulty then dwelt upon was as to the ascertainment of the "feeling of the House," when many Members were not present in the House, but in the Lobbies and precincts of the House. My right hon. Friend the then Chancellor of the Exchequer clearly showed the difficulties which might arise, and the great inconvenience under which the Speaker or Chairman might labour in having his discretion confirmed or disapproved by the House. It has been said quite truly that the Speaker or Chairman would be an independent and impartial person. No one has expressed a doubt on that subject. But—speaking of him, not in his official, but in his personal capacity—is it certain that he would be entirely independent of the Government? Then, in the case of Members not actually in the House, but in the Lobbies and precincts, to whom could the Chairman look save to those useful persons to whom we look for the declarations of the numbers in Divisions? I fear, if we accept this Resolution, that we shall place the Chairman or the Speaker in an invidious and unpleasant position. I know that the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers), in his temperate and able speech the other night, the President of the Board of Trade, and others, say that we on this side of the House are detracting from the Speaker's authority. No, Sir; I venture to say that it is far from our intention. We wish to save the Speaker from that which, in our minds, is an invidious position. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster asked us whether we could suppose that the Speaker or the Chairman would be actuated by the prospect of some Party advantage? We do not suppose anything of the kind. But the Resolution would place the impartiality of the Speaker or Chairman not in any real danger, but in danger of suspicion; and it is for that reason that it is our bounden duty to guard him from such dangers. With regard to the *clôture*, the Home Secretary the other night quoted the opinion of Lord Eversley, who expressed a fear that we should be obliged some day to come to the *clôture*. Lord Eversley, when examined on the subject, on the 6th of March, 1854, said that he believed that some day or other the House would be obliged to adopt a method of bringing debates to a summary end; but he added words which I do not say destroy the effect of the Home Secretary's quotation, but materially modify them. Lord Eversley, after expressing that opinion, adds—"I should postpone the adoption of that summary process till the latest possible period." My right hon. Friend near me, the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, has been quoted as an authority in favour of the *clôture*. This statement has, however, been already explained in the public Press. What my right hon. Friend really said was that it was thought by some to be possible that we might have to come to the *clôture*, but that he himself was entirely opposed to it. "That," my right hon. Friend said, "is a method which, I venture to think, this House will pause very long before they adopt. It is wholly at variance with the traditions of the British House of Commons." Now, let us see what is said by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn). Speaking no later than two years ago with regard to the *clôture*, he said he trusted there was no sort of a possibility of its being adopted, and that any such proposal would meet with the most determined opposition. Again, another Member of the House expressed his opinion on a former occasion that the Government had done wisely in seeking to punish individual Members who were guilty of Obstruction, instead of altering the Rules of the House. That was said by no less an authority than the present Postmaster General. Then there is one who, on financial questions, has always proved himself to be a lively and a careful investigator, although his pertinacious good humour, and his thirst for knowledge respecting the Estimates, have, no doubt, been a source of very mixed feeling. What did the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) say? He said that he altogether repudiated the idea of the *clôture.* The hon. Member for Walsall (Sir Charles Forster) also spoke in the same sense. All Committees and authorities have considered it as absolutely the last alternative which should be brought before the House. They all say—"Let us put it off as long as we can." We have, I think, a right to ask why no Minister, up to the present time, has told us what reason there is for carrying this Resolution before the other Resolutions? If other means failed, doubtless the House might approach its consideration; but the burden of proof lies upon those who insist upon placing it first. I should have thought it a task well worthy of a Prime Minister, whose vast abilities and matchless eloquence even a political opponent may express admiration for, to bring back the House to a remembrance of its old traditions, to vindicate the rights of Parliament against those who wish to bring those rights into contempt, and to maintain on its behalf that freedom of which on other questions the right hon. Gentleman has been the foremost advocate. But we have here a measure which the most incompetent Minister could carry if he only had a compact majority behind him. I do not want to go into the question of a mere majority, except to a very slight degree. The Home Secretary said it was the only question before the House; but I understood you, Sir, to say it was otherwise, and I think that has been confirmed this evening by the manner in which you explained the Question to be put. And the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster has said this evening that he understands it is not a question at all of a mere or of a bare majority. I could point out many instances where hon. Members opposite have expressed themselves against the principle of a bare majority. I will, however, only mention the hon. Member for Walsall and the hon. Member for Swansea, who have spoken against giving the power of *clôture* to a bare majority. I will not argue this, for the argument seems to go very much against the adoption of the *clôture* at all. I have not argued, therefore, against a bare majority. But what I wish respectfully to point out is, whether the Government would not advance Business more by leading than driving? If any Government endeavours to drive instead of leading, infallibly they will oblige the House to look, not at the spirit in which these Resolutions have been proposed, but at the actual letter of them. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread) said he did not believe much in advancing Business by the policy proposed; and the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) showed clearly how, if oppressive measures were adopted in one respect, difficulties would arise in other matters in regard to which they could not be interfered with. Surely, trusting to this, one power, forced, on the whole, upon an unwilling House, is very little better than the course adopted by the wise men of Gotham, who built a hedge round the cuckoo under the impression that that would keep the bird from flying away. If the *clôture* is not to be used, it appears to me that the Business of the House will not be advanced. We cannot be led away by the assertion that this is to be hung up as a weapon *in terrorem*, not to be used, but to frighten evildoers and to keep ill-luck from the Government, very much like a horseshoe nailed on a stable door. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade says we dislike the *clôture* because it is a French word. I do not dislike it because it is a French word, but because it is an institution not known to England, and which has never been employed in an English Parliament. That is an insular view if you please; but, as the *clôture* is imported from abroad, so I believe it will be used here as it is used abroad. I believe that it will do more than anything else to do away with the spirit of fair play and mutual conciliation with which hitherto the Business of the House has been conducted. Before I sit down, I wish to disclaim that connection between ourselves and the Irish Members of which the Home Secretary spoke the other night. I do not know that we need look very far after the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster to-night to see, perhaps, why hon. Members from Ireland may not altogether like to find themselves in the same Lobby as the Government. To form a combination for the purpose of getting the Government into a difficulty is very far from our intention. Look at the situation in which the House is placed at this moment! The Amendment is by an honest and earnest Liberal. [MR. JOHN BRIGHT: Very!] The hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) has made as strong a speech against the Resolution as any Member of the House. The hon. Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter) has also spoken against it; and other hon. Members, in a greater or less degree, have expressed their disapproval of the measure of the Government. We have taken our present course, not, as many hon. Members affect to suppose, for the purpose of embarrassing the Government, but to preserve our rights while we can. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India speaks of this vote as a Vote of Want of Confidence. His position reminds me of the lines—

> "Rather than fool it so,
> Let the high office and the honour go
> To one that would do thus. I am half through;
> The one part suffer'd, the other will I do."

We believe that less objectionable measures than the present would have done, and we do not believe that this measure will succeed, as the Government expects. No one has as yet answered the question put by my hon. and learned Friend (Sir Hardinge Giffard)—would any hon. Member on that side of the House have supported this measure if it had been proposed by us when we were in Office? Reference has been made to the fact that the *clôture* has already been used in this House, though it has only been used on the occasion of measures of gravity being before the House. For instance, as has been pointed out, the *clôture* was virtually adopted in the Candahar debate, and it will prevail with regard to the decision which will be taken on this vote to-night. If the Government would take the House into their confidence—would lead, not drive, when it becomes absolutely impossible to carry on the Business of the country, we should have free room for the exercise of those rights of discussion which never attained such a height of freedom as they have attained within the walls of this House. These are the privileges for which, by a strange irony of fate, we on this side of the House find ourselves contending against a Liberal Government. I have only to thank the House for the patience with which they have heard me.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY said, that while all Members were bound to consider the question with a due regard to the traditions of the House, Irish Members would be pardoned if they paid particular attention to the effect of restrictions of debate on the Irish representation. Independent Irish Members on both sides of the House could never form more than a small minority of the entire Assembly. Both the great Parties had this common ground, that they were equally determined that individual liberty of speech should be curtailed, and that, by direct or indirect means, debates should be shortened if they passed certain limits. The debates had shown how each Party proposed to effect this. The Liberal Party proposed the *clôture*. This measure would be felt by the Liberals when they were in a minority, and by the Tories when they, in turn, were in a minority. The *clôture* was not directed specially against Irish Representatives. So powerful an instrument could not have been necessary to silence an Irish minority. If that had been the special object of the Government, they could, without endangering their position, have easily passed a sufficient measure. The Conservatives would never have said a word about liberties and traditions, but passed it with the enthusiasm they displayed in support of coercion, as long as it could substantially affect only the Irish minority in the House. The Conservative Party, on the other hand, in their speeches, demanded measures by which individuals on various grounds could be silenced, and by which small minorities could be fettered in debate. There was only one small minority of importance in the House—namely, the Irish representation; and what the Conservative Party wished was an arbitrary system of *clôture* against that minority and its Members. The case, then, stood thus. Both great Parties agreed that restriction must come. Everyone knew it would come. As a practical man bound to chose, he unhesitatingly preferred a measure aimed at minorities consisting of the great Parties, to a system aimed at the Irish representation alone, and capable of use against only an Irish minority. With every respect for the opinion of some other Irish Members, he recoiled from the dishonour of leaving on the Journals of the House a system of restrictions aimed exclusively at Irish Members. A measure available against English minorities would be viewed with dislike and used sparingly, for fear of precedent, against any body of Members. If his hon. Friends succeeded in their main object of ousting the present Government, and in obtaining a Tory Administration, the first thing the Conservatives would do would be, in one form or another, to pass an Irish *clôture*, dishonouring to the Irish representation, and far more stringent in effect than the present proposal. It was alleged that without *clôture* a renewal of coercion would be impossible. This statement, contained in an extraordinary document lately issued by the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) and others, meant that it was impossible for a majority of 6 to 1 to pass a Bill against a small minority. He trusted that coercion, introduced under the unwarrantable circumstances which marked the introduction of the present Coercion Act, would always be firmly opposed. But impossible was a strong word. Though there was a good deal of credulity in Ireland, as in other countries, he did not believe that the simplest and most illiterate Irish peasant could be gulled into the belief that without the *clôture* a renewal of coercion would be impossible. Everyone knew a large majority could compel a small minority to let any measure pass. Nay, more; experience had taught them that, after a certain amount of resistance, Mr. Speaker was ready to stop debate, and the House was ready to approve his conduct, and thereby create a precedent. Then there was not the smallest truth in the assertion that without *clôture* a renewal of coercion was impossible. What rendered a renewal of coercion possible was told the people of Ireland a few days ago by the leading Home Rule journal, in these words—

> "If coercion be perpetuated, it is at the door of the Moonlighters the extreme measure must fairly be laid."

He was opposed to any measure specially directed against Irish Members. He should support the *clôture* because it would render it practicable to pass just laws for the United Kingdom in a reasonable time. He would support it especially in the interests of Ireland, because it would break down the obstruction to radical reforms in Ireland, which begot disappointment and disloyalty by resisting and delaying every great measure proposed for that country. The *clôture* would induce men to enjoy freedom of speech without abusing it, and thus, instead of destroying, it would maintain the ancient traditions and liberties of the House of Commons.

Mr. NEWDEGATE: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the House will excuse the eldest ex-Whipper-in in the House for expressing an opinion on this subject. I rejoice to see the Prime Minister and the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster in their places, because the years of my service in the House are about the same as those of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, though they have not reached the number of those for which the Prime Minister can take credit. As a quondam Party organizer I am senior to yourself, Mr. Speaker, though I have had the honour and the pleasure of acting with you when you were the organizer of the Whig Party. While we had the organization of the two great Parties in this House, though during most trying times, the confusion, Mr. Speaker, which has been witnessed of late years did not prevail. The hon. and learned Member for Limerick (Mr. O'Shaughnessy), who has just spoken, was examined before the Committee on Public Business which sat in 1878 — the last Committee on Public Business. I produced, as a Member of that Committee, figures which the Committee accepted, and which proved that the Obstruction from which the House had then been suffering was originated and was carried on by small minorities chiefly composed of Irish Members. It is a singular fact that the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington), who was a Member of that Committee, though he accepted all the details of these figures, induced the Committee to reject the totals which gave a summary of the results. That summary, Sir, is the foundation of the alarm which has been expressed by the hon. and learned Member for Limerick, because it showed that of the small obstructive minorities previous to 1878, the larger number consisted of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) and other Irish Members, one of whom is imprisoned with him as a "suspect." A large number of these minorities did not include more than, or indeed so many as, 11 Members each. After the Committee of 1878 had reported, I ventured to submit to the House a proposal to the effect that the House should deal with the offence of Obstruction on the principle of the Common Law, so that when it was represented to this House that a Member had been guilty of persistent and rebellious Obstruction, such as that of which the hon. Member for the City of Cork undoubtedly had been guilty, the House should deal with the offence of that individual Member, and with the offences of others in like manner. My proposal stands now on the Notice Paper as an Amendment to the 9th Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. I trust that this *clôture* will not be adopted. I can adduce against it the Report of the only Committee who distinctly considered the proposal for the adoption of the *clôture* in this House. When I name the Members of that Committee, I think their character will give force to the objections to the *clôture*. This Committee on Public Business sat before the several Committees on which I have served. The Committee was appointed in 1848 because there had been a certain tendency towards confusion in this House in consequence of the separation of the majority of the Conservative Party from the late Sir Robert Peel on the question of commercial policy in 1846—the commercial policy to which the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster referred when he said that it caused unfounded alarm among the Conservative Party now in Opposition. I venture to ask that right hon. Gentleman, who is one of the Members for Birmingham, whether, in the present condition of agriculture in Warwickshire, there is no cause for alarm? At this moment the Mayor of Birmingham is urging that encouragement should be given to farmers in the form of prizes and premiums in dairy produce. The Mayor is a brother of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, and intimates by his action that he, at all events, thinks that corn-growing in Warwickshire is not in a prosperous condition. But I was speaking of the Committee on Public Business of 1848, and I will now name the Members who composed it. These were Lord John Russell, Sir Robert Peel, Sir George Grey, Sir James Graham, Mr. Hume, Mr. Disraeli, the Lord Advocate, Mr. Goulbourn, Sir Robert Harry Inglis, Mr. Bernal, Sir William Heathcote, Mr. Cobden, Mr. Morgan John O'Connell, Mr. Brotherton, Mr. Henley, Mr. George Alexander, and Mr. J. Evelyn Denison, the late Speaker of this House; and to this Committee was afterwards added Mr. Greene, who was for many years afterwards the Chairman of the Committees of the House. This Committee examined, among other persons, M. Guizot, who was then in England, having been Prime Minister in France under the expelled King Louis Philippe. M. Guizot and others, among whom was a distinguished American, gave evidence with respect to the action of the *clôture* in the French Assembly and the House of Assembly of the United States, upon which evidence the Committee of 1848 made the following observations:—

> "Your Committee, in weighing the value of this evidence, had to take into account how materially the constitution and the mode of transacting Business in the House of Commons differed from those of the two Legislative Assemblies referred to. In France the *clôture* has been found available without any restriction on the length of speeches. In the United States a limitation of the length of speeches has been found necessary, in addition to the power of closing the debate. In France important Motions are considered in the Bureaux before they are discussed in the House. The House meets in the morning, and the attendance is continuous."

We have at present an example that the attendance in this House can scarcely be called continuous. This Committee add—

> "The *clôture*, in the form in which it is used in France, could not be applied to our debates without the risk of unjust surprises, and without other inconveniences."

They go on to say in their Report—

> "Your Committee, however, ventures to express an opinion that the satisfactory conduct and progress of the Business of the House must mainly depend upon Her Majesty's Government, holding, as they do, the chief control over its management. They (the Committee)

believe that by the careful preparation of measures, their early introduction, the judicious distribution of Business between the two Houses, and the order and method with which measures are conducted, the Government can contribute in an essential degree to the easy and convenient conduct of Business. They trust the efforts of the Government would be seconded by those of independent Members, and that a general determination would prevail to carry on the Public Business with regularity and dispatch."

But is there at present a judicious distribution of Business between the two Houses? We cannot fail to remember that the present Government have lately induced this House to vote the condemnation of the House of Lords, because that House has acted upon its undoubted right in appointing a Committee of its own on the Irish Land Act; nor can we forget that the complaints of the House of Lords are continuous, because no fair share of Business is allotted to them. I do not think we can come to any other conclusion than that the present difficulties of this House are attributable, and very largely attributable, to the conduct of Her Majesty's Ministers. I have cited the opinion of men who, in their day, were first-rate authorities, an opinion in which the late Sir Robert Peel, Lord John Russell, and Sir George Grey concurred with Mr. Cobden. In the opinion of that distinguished Committee, the measure now proposed by Her Majesty's Government is singularly ill-adapted to this House—is fraught with danger and inconvenience. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster has made a minimizing speech, to induce us to believe that this is a measure which will be very seldom resorted to. But the eldest organizer in the House ventures to tell him that, if not frequently resorted to, it will be comparatively useless in forwarding the Business of the House. What is it, let me ask, that this House has suffered from? From constant interruptions, owing to the abuse of their Privileges, by small knots of Members. From the fact that small minorities—chiefly an Irish minority—in the endeavour to force extreme and ulterior measures upon the House, has from day to day persisted in obstructing the Business of the House. I venture then to say that the evidence is strong that unless the *clôture* is frequently applied it cannot meet the evil and inconvenience from which this House has been suffering for the last four or five years, as anyone may see who will take the trouble of examining the Proceedings of the House and *Hansard's Debates.* No man values more than I do the individual rights of independent Members. It has been my fate to be an independent Member for many years, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster ought to have some sympathy with me, for when I was Whipper-in to the Conservative or Protectionist Party, I was tried by a sort of court martial, with Lord Lyndhurst in the chair as President, and the late Lord Beaconsfield as my accuser, because I refused to "Whip" the House against Lord John Russell's Reform Bill of 1852. I expressed the opinion that when that noble Lord felt the necessity for proposing such a change that change was inevitable, and that the sooner it was made the better and more moderate it was likely to be. I have ventured to urge on the House that it must take cognizance of the conduct of individual Members and of small minorities, because, since the last Reform Act, the character of the House has greatly changed, and Obstruction has increased, in great measure owing, as I believe, to the rebellion in Ireland, for I can call it by no other name. There is your difficulty. You have no need to coerce large numbers; your difficulties have been created by small numbers; and upon the principle of the Common Law you should never punish large bodies when you can single out the principal offenders, and by making examples of them deter others who might be inclined to imitate their bad example. My belief is that if the Notice which stands in my name had been adopted in 1879, it is very probable that the hon. Member for the City of Cork and the other hon. Member who is in prison as a "suspect" would now be in their places in this House. But the House failed to check these hon. Members; the House placed no restriction upon their obstructive action, no restriction upon their disloyal attempts to incapacitate the House. Hence the present difficulty. I own that I have been disappointed in the conduct of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India. Evidence has been afforded in this House that the noble Marquess has urged upon his constituents the adoption of the *clôture* as a means of forcing on measures which he deems to be advantageous. The noble Marquess has been an advocate of the *clôture* from 1878, and before that. In 1880 I made the proposal which stands now in my name as a Notice upon the Order Book, and there was a great disposition on the part of the Conservative Members to adopt it. But what said the noble Marquess? Why, that he was astonished that any such proposal should ever be entertained. He said—

> "It is the Government who are charged with guiding the course of Business, and of directing and controlling it in the House. It is the Government who are principally responsible for the conduct of that Business."—[3 *Hansard*, ccl. 1465.]

There I agree with the noble Marquess. He then proceeded to say, with respect to the proposal of the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, which in principle was the same as mine, though much feebler—

> "But in the Resolution now before us, the House will observe that when the Speaker has named a Member, the matter is left to be decided by the majority of the House. Now, it appears to me that it is questionable whether there is any advantage whatever to be obtained from the proposed action of the House itself."—[*Ibid.* 1471-2.]

The noble Marquess therefore proposed that your authority, Mr. Speaker, should be supreme without reference to the House—a position which no Speaker has ever occupied in this House. The noble Marquess further asked—

> "Where, then, is the necessity for bringing in the action of the House at all?"—[*Ibid.* 1472.]

Why, even Her Majesty's Ministers do not propose this at present. The noble Marquess continued—

> "I cannot but think that something of dignity is taken away from the character of the proceeding by requesting a vote of the majority of the House, and not leaving it nominally, as well as practically, in the hands of the Speaker himself."—[*Ibid.*]

The noble Marquess thus proposed that you, Sir, should constantly exercise the totally exceptional authority by which, on an occasion of a great emergency, you terminated a debate; while you, Sir, have emphatically declared that you felt that what you did on that occasion was an operation which ought never to be repeated. What further said the noble Marquess? What reason did the noble Marquess assign? He said—

> "Because the Speaker or the Chairman of Ways and Means was the only person who could possibly, from the necessity of the case, be cognizant of all that had taken place; and if it is the intention of the Government to strengthen their hands, I think that it could be more effectually done by placing the necessary power in their hands, and not by"—let the House mark this expression—"not by delegating it to the majority of the House."—[*Ibid.* 1473.]

I could not understand the noble Marquess in the Committee of 1878; but when he thus spoke in 1880, I understood him perfectly. Then the noble Marquess went on to say—

> "I quite agree with the Chancellor of the Exchequer"—the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon—"that you cannot at all defend the adoption of the *clôture* in this House; but when considering this question the House will do well to remember that this is a proceeding to which in time you will be forced to come, and that it is a proceeding which would undoubtedly be efficient for the purpose for which it would be intended."—[*Ibid.* 1476-7.]

Then, further on, he added—

> "We ought to bear in mind that we have in reserve a simpler and more effectual means of proceeding"—that is, the *clôture*.—[*Ibid.*]

These, unfortunately, now seem to be the opinions entertained by the Government. They propose to place this House and its Business under an extraneous authority, for the authority of the Speaker, if it be sole and distinct from the action of the House, is extraneous to the House. I hope, Sir, that the House will excuse my having quoted so largely; but I should state that speech of the noble Marquess from which I have quoted was delivered in this House on the 26th of February, 1880, and that on the following day it was answered by the right hon. Gentleman now at the head of the Government. On the 27th of February, in the adjourned debate, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "Reference has been made to the practice abroad of what is termed the *clôture;* but let us observe and bear in mind that, whatever the *clôture* may be as a means of saving the time of a deliberative Assembly, it is, I think—and so, I presume, Her Majesty's Government (the Government of Lord Beaconsfield) have thought—inapplicable to the present discussion, because, as a penal measure, it would surely be altogether inappropriate. The *clôture* is not the stoppage of a particular Member who is supposed to have offended; it is the stoppage of the debate; and, therefore, to bring in the *clôture* for the purposes which this Resolution contemplates would be simply to enact that the House would punish itself, and the great interests with which it is charged, in consequence of the offence of a particular Member."—[3 *Hansard*, ccl. 1593.]

I cannot state the objections to the *clôture* in stronger or more eloquent terms than these, and I cannot conceive what the circumstances are, or what the pressure is, which has induced the Prime Minister to turn straight round on his deliberate opinion so clearly expressed only two years ago. I am afraid that we have an agency in the Government which is of a very arbitrary character—that we have a Caucus in the Government itself. I believe, Sir, that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, who is known in the town of Birmingham for a rather arbitrary disposition, though his great talents are acknowledged, has been the introducer not only of the Caucus, but of this proposal of the *clôture*. We know that right hon. Gentleman in Birmingham, and I will give the House a proof of what we think of him. At the last Election, what were the numbers polled for the three hon. Members for Birmingham? For the senior Member (Mr. Muntz) there were polled 22,969 votes; and for the President of the Board of Trade 19,544 votes, or 3,425 less than for the senior Member; whilst for the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster there were polled 22,079 votes, or 2,535 more than for his right hon. Colleague the President of the Board of Trade. That, I think, is strong inferential proof of opinion in Birmingham. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade is very democratic, but, at the same time, very arbitrary—two characteristics which, though apparently inconsistent with each other, are often combined, as is well known to everyone who, like myself, has visited the United States; and it is my belief that this *cloture*, which in the year 1848 was condemned by the distinguished Committee to which I have referred—the only Committee who ever considered the question fully—is, as that Committee declared, inapplicable to this House and will be dangerous if adopted. These, then, are the grounds of my opposition to the Resolution now before us. I consider that at present a direct attack is being made upon Parliamentary government. This House has in this Session been induced to attack the House of Lords for exercising its undoubted Privileges and performing its assigned duty; and now there is proposed to this House a measure that is not calculated to meet the difficulties which were proved before the Committee of 1878, but that is calculated to enable a majority arbitrarily to silence a minority. Again I say that if this measure—the *clôture*—be not used frequently it will be practically useless; while, if it be used frequently, it will change to the verge of destruction, if not actually destroy, the noble character which this House has borne for centuries as the greatest example of Representative Institutions among the nations of the world. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster has told us that we are alarmists. If I am an alarmist I am not satisfied, as he knows, with merely expressing my alarm; and I am confident if you pass this measure, which I believe to be inconsistent with the character of the House of Commons, you may expect that those who have been the quiet Members of the House and quiet members of society will make their voices heard when they find that you no longer respect the characteristics of this House, which they believe to afford, at least, some of the surest foundations of their freedom.

Sir ROWLAND BLENNERHASSETT said, it was not his original intention to take any part in the debate; but he wished, with the permission of the House, to say a few words in reply to some statements made by opponents of the Prime Minister's Resolution. But, first of all, a word with respect to the phraseology of the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott), which reminded him of the old joke in *Whately's Logic*—"No food is better than potatoes," which was capable of two distinct meanings. One meaning was that they had better go without food than eat potatoes, and the other that no species of food could excel potatoes. The Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton said—

> "No Rules of Procedure will be satisfactory to this House which confer the power of closing a Debate upon a majority of Members."

Now the hon. and learned Member wished them to understand that the *clôture* ought not to be enforced by a simple majority; but the form of his Amendment would justify an inference that no majority, however large, should have power to close debate. If, then, they voted for this Amendment as it stood, and still contended that they were in favour of some kind of *clôture,* then, logically, they must be in favour of the *clôture* with a vengeance, for as they said that the *clôture* ought to be established, and that the majority ought to have no power to enforce it, then it was obvious that the power to close a debate must be vested in the hands of some minority, a *reductio ad absurdum* which, moreover, many of the arguments against the proposal of the Government tended to establish. It seemed to him that the Amendmeut was in substance identical with a claim for that *liberum veto* by which it was formerly in the power of one individual in the Polish Assembly to arrest even the most necessary legislation. They had seen that the result of that right in the Polish Assembly had been the ultimate ruin of the country. Many of those hostile to the proposals of the Government were so because they dreaded the possibility of an abuse and a finally acquired power in the direction of rash legislation. For his part, he admitted the desirability of the utmost deliberation when great political questions were before the House, the very difficulty which might seem to stop the way being, in fact, the most important element in securing full justice to every shade of opinion. There was all the difference in the world between slow legislation and no legislation. Look at the numerous important qnestions which were pressing for solution—agriculture, the relations between capital and labour, Bankruptcy Laws, and a whole host of others which had long loudly cried for the interference of the Legislature. Some day the patience of the country would become exhausted, and a sudden and imperative demand would be made upon Parliament to pass a number of measures dealing with subjects of extreme delicacy and requiring the most serious and calm deliberation. Some means were, therefore, absolutely necessary to enable the House to get through the Business before it. But it was argued that the result of establishing the *clôture* would be that unpopular men would not be heard, and unpopular Parties and sections practically deprived of deliberative voice. He really thought that on this point they must appeal to experience. How had the *clôture* worked elsewhere? In Germany it was not even suggested that there had been any attempt to abuse *clôture* by shutting the mouths of unpopular men. [Mr. O'Donnell: On the Socialist laws.] He was present during the debate, and there was no attempt to shut their mouths. In France he was not aware that it had been exercised in any matter of first-rate importance. They had heard something of the opinions of M. Guizot; but he must say that the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) had been somewhat unfair in his reference to that politician. The testimony of M. Guizot really amounted to this—that during his long life he did not remember one instance of the abuse of the *clôture.* If they were of opinion that a change was necessary in their Forms of Procedure, they should make a change adequate to the occasion. Nothing could be more dangerous to their credit than to take feeble and ineffectual steps to amend their Rules. From the very infancy of political discussion some restraint had been put upon loquacity. The stroke of the clock warned the most eloquent Professor that he must bring his lecture to a close. In a Church Congress the inexorable bell of the President forced the most loquacious orator to resume his seat. The House was not asked to do anything so despotic as that. As the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) pointed out, it was only asked to revive in a mild form some of the ancient Rules of Parliament; and he ventured to think that no impartial person could object on the ground of its real interference with the liberty of discussion. As to the far-reaching impression which this division would create, he might observe that all over Europe some of the keenest intellects had for some time been engaged in criticizing Parliamentary institutions. The result of this examination was anything but favourable, and the enemies of Parliamentary government had found ample material in the proceedings of that House to point to it with many a telling sarcasm. In days not far distant the friends of liberty were able to boast that the British House of Commons showed the possibility of reconciling perfect freedom of speech with obedience to the law; but recent proceedings in the House had been used to illustrate the practical failure of Parliamentary institutions. If, then, they were able by increased efforts to redeem their former honour and restore themselves in the good opinion of the nation once more, they should be doing a service, not only to their own country, but to all elective Assemblies, which, with one or two exceptions, were everywhere in the civilized world children of the famous and ancient Parliament of England.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he felt bound to complain of the unprovoked attack that had been made upon many Members on his side of the House by the speech of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster that evening, though a remarkable one, would not rank amongst his highest and happiest efforts—not from any deficiency on his part, but from the difficulty in which he found himself in successfully defending a course like that proposed in the 1st Resolution. The right hon. Gentleman had twitted the Conservative Party with not supporting the Resolution, because they did not seem to expect to again sit on the Government side of the House; but they were happy to be able to disclaim, in spirit and word, the desire for Office. They preferred to adhere to the great principles of the Constitution, to the liberty of Parliament and of the English people, rather than to court any possible advantage which might accrue to them, or any Party whatever, by a change of places in the House. As to the hon. and learned Member for Limerick (Mr. O'Shaughnessy), he forgot, when he taunted the Tory Party with a desire to overwhelm small minorities, that the Rules to which he took exception were to be found among the Government proposals. He contended this 1st Rule would not put down Obstruction. It would not put an end to Obstruction as it had been understood in previous Sessions; and the greatest Parliamentary authorities of the past had considered, and had left it as their deliberate judgment, that such a measure would not put down Obstruction. The Tory Party were most anxious to put down Obstruction; but this proposal would put an end to discussion and debate on great and important questions when it was convenient for a Minister, or the Government of the day, to do it. It would not put an end to, but would refine Obstruction. It would drive men into becoming Obstructives who had never been Obstructives before. The late Government had experience of Obstruction far greater and more prolonged than any which the present Government had to contend with. The remarkable feature about this scheme was that among those who were the greatest advocates of the *clôture* were men on the Front Bench opposite, who were Obstructives in the last Parliament. It was said the Tory Party taunted the Government with failure to carry their measures, owing to Obstruction. He was not prepared to answer for every Member of the Tory Party; but he could not recollect a single instance where the Government was taunted with failure of legislation owing to Obstruction. He admitted, however, that there had been charges against the Government that, owing to their mistakes and blunders in Ireland, they had wasted the time of the House over coercive measures for that country. As to the experience of the *clôture* abroad, in France, where the form of *clôture* most resembled the present proposal, large majorities were systematically and tyrannously kept down by its operation, and every Party in that country had in turn protested against the hardships under which they suffered by reason of its constant application. Only recently, on an important occasion, it was applied after one speech had been made by the Opposition. He was of opinion that the *clôture* would be used for Party purposes in critical times. Had it existed it would have been put into operation during the recent debates on the proposed Vote of Censure on the House of Lords, in order to prevent the exposure of the conduct of the Government in connection with the Land Act. The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster said that the freedom of the Press and the right of public meetings were the great securities for the liberties of the people. But how long did the right hon. Gentleman suppose that these rights would exist after the destruction of the freedom of the Representatives of the people? It was a significant fact that in most of the countries in which the *clôture* existed there was neither freedom of the Press nor freedom of speech out-of-doors. The right hon. Gentleman had alluded to the fairness and sincerity of the occupants of the Chair. For his part, he looked forward with dread to a possible time when the Government of the day would secure the election of a Speaker who would put the *clôture* into operation whenever the Government should wish it. He regarded the expression of regret by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster that the measure was not more severe as an indication of the increasing tendency on the part of the Radicals to introduce measures which were in the direction of despotism pure and simple. The Resolution, if not an arithmetical puzzle, was full of inequalities, and under its operation he predicted that the rights of minorities would be invaded. Was it not notorious that the opinions of a majority of the House were opposed to this Resolution? It was perfectly notorious that if it were not for the exterior pressure, for the pressure exercised by what was known as the Caucus, from the fear of Dissolution, that over 100 hon. Members on the Liberal Benches would join the Opposition. ["No, no!"] If this measure had been proposed from the Conservative Benches, he did not believe that 10 of them would have voted for it. In the speech which the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Hartington) had made in support of the Government Resolution he had been attacked personally, the noble Marquess having, by implication, charged him with Obstruction. He now challenged the noble Marquess to bring forward one single act of his which bore, directly or indirectly, the character of Obstruction. ["Oh!"] He did not know from whom the word proceeded—

MR. SPEAKER asked the hon. Member to address himself to the Chair.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that he challenged that hon. Member to produce any single instance in which he had, either directly or indirectly, done anything to obstruct the Business of the House. He had never moved the adjournment of a debate, and he had never spoken repeatedly on any occasion. Once or twice he had endeavoured to bring before the House questions of Imperial interest, inadequately, he admitted; but he was a Member of the House, and claimed a Member's rights. He had as yet proposed no special Motion during this Session. For the noble Marquess to allege, in support of the *clôture*, his references to the advance of the Russians in Central Asia was unusual and discourteous. It was true that his attendance in the House had, perhaps, been more regular than that of the noble Lord, and it was also true that he had not yet had an opportunity of becoming a Minister of the Crown, and of showing himself, in that position, unable to give the House news which was less than six months old. Neither had he lent a great name and position to furthering the ignoble projects of the politicians of Birmingham. What was the cause of this extraordinary Resolution being brought before the House? It was, in the first place, because the Government were discredited throughout the country, and they relied upon this *clôture* proposal as affording them a cry with which to go to the country in the event of their being forced into a General Election. They were discredited in the country because of their conspicuous administrative failure, of their failure to maintain law and order at home, and to maintain the position of this great country abroad, and of their failure to carry out their legislative promises to the country. It was because he considered that it would be powerless to prevent Obstruction, that it would be fatal to freedom of debate—the most ancient and cherished privilege of Members of that House, by which alone the rights of the English people could be maintained—and that it would be destructive to the liberties and the privileges of the people themselves, that he should record his vote against this most pernicious measure.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY said, he thought the House would not consider it unreasonable that hon. Members from Ireland, sitting on the Government side of the House, should desire to take part in this debate; and still less unreasonable would they consider it if they were aware of the unconstitutional pressure put upon them with the view of causing them to desert their duty, and prove unworthy of the trust that had been reposed in them. He did not deny that this was a difficult and complicated subject; and in considering any difficult and complicated subject the proper course was to endeavour to arrive at the principle which underlay it. What, then, was the principle which underlay this proposal? It was this—that the time of the House of Commons belonged to the people. It was the property of the people of England, Ireland, and Scotland,

and, in some measure, of the people of the Colonies, and of the Dependencies of the Crown. It was not the property of the House of Commons in any other sense than that the House of Commons was the trustee for all Her Majesty's subjects. For what purpose was that time given to them? It was for the purpose of alleviating the burdens of the people and making good and reforming bad laws. If, therefore, they did not make good use of this time they were doing wrong to those who sent them there. Now, he thought everyone would admit that the Procedure of that House might be improved. He should not, therefore, enter upon that question. The question he desired to deal with was much more serious. He desired to ask, were they deliberately wasting the time of the House? If they did waste that time they were worse than fraudulent trustees who wasted property or money committed to their care. Property or money could be restored; but time lost to the legislation of the country was gone for ever.

He deliberately said, then, that there was a number of individuals calling themselves a Party whose object in that House was to waste the time of Parliament, to make legislation impossible, and to cast a slur upon all their ancient institutions. That was a serious accusation to make, and he would not have made it were he not in a position to prove every word he said; and if the House would give him its attention for a few minutes he would endeavour to do so. To do this he asked the House to go back some years. In 1868 the present Head of the Government moved his Resolution with reference to the Disestablishment of the Irish Church. The Tory Ministry was defeated, and a General Election followed. It turned almost entirely upon questions relating to Ireland. It was an expression of the determination of the English people to put an end to the feud between England and Ireland, and, by redressing the grievances of the Irish people, to make both countries one harmonious nation. In 1869 the Protestant Church of Ireland was disestablished and disendowed. In 1870 they had the Land Bill. In 1871 and 1872 they had the Ballot Bill, an Act of far more importance to Ireland than to any other part of Her Majesty's Dominions. 1873 brought the Irish University Bill, which failed to get the acquiescence of Parliament. But what was passing in Ireland all this time? They had had the Fenian insurrection, which, if not entirely put down, was left unable to rear its formidable head; and the events of that time had greatly depressed the spirits of the people. With the view of remedying this state of things, in 1870 a few gentlemen met together in Dublin. They were, in a great measure, Conservatives—they were not those who usually took part in politics. They desired to see if it were not possible to raise the tone of the Irish people, and to obtain for them the measures they thought just. The Home Government Association was, therefore, formed. The General Election took place, and Mr. Butt was returned to Parliament as the Leader of the Party known as the Party of moderation and conciliation. In 1873 there took place a National Conference in Ireland, and it inaugurated a policy which was devised by Mr. Butt. That policy was based upon the belief that Parliament was desirous to do justice to the Irish people, but that it did not know what measures were requisite. Mr. Butt, who was above all a Constitutionalist, explained to his followers that the Irish Members ought to prepare all those Bills which they would wish the Cabinet to carry into law. Accordingly they did so. He himself belonged to that Party. They produced University Bills and Bills to amend the Parliamentary and municipal franchise. They pressed a series of measures upon the House; but one sentiment actuating them all was this—that it was their duty to conciliate English opinion, and to make the English people do Ireland justice by making them feel that justice was with the Irish demands. In 1875, however, Mr. Parnell was elected for Meath. For about one Session afterwards things went on tolerably quietly; then those who were in the House at the time would recollect that the system of Obstruction sprang up. That system of Obstruction was carried on with the avowed object of bringing Parliament into contempt, and preventing that Representative Institution, the House of Commons, from legislating. The House would not forget the first opportunity that presented itself of absolute and wearisome Obstruction. It was when the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) introduced a small cart-load of Blue Books, and, for four consecutive hours, read extracts from these books in a voice inaudible and inarticulate, compelling the Speaker to remain in the Chair listening. That conduct gave great umbrage to Mr. Butt, to whose Party the hon. Member for Cavan then professed to belong; and when this Obstruction went a little further, Mr. Butt, on March 29th, 1879, addressed to the hon. Member for Cavan a letter, from which he was anxious to read an extract—

"The impression, rightly or wrongly, is that you and Mr. Parnell are actuated by a desire to obstruct the progress of Business, either from the wish to embarrass the Government, or, as is more generally thought, from the motive of putting the House to all the inconvenience in your power. No harder task was ever imposed on man, than that of trying to win respect and influence for the Irish Party in the House of Commons—a policy which I myself devised and placed before the country."

He added that he had not time to write a similar letter to the hon. Member for Meath (Mr. Parnell), and asked the hon. Member for Cavan to show him this one.

Obstruction grew from day to day. Now, the great difference between Obstruction which was legitimate and the Obstruction which was resorted to by certain of the Irish Party was easily seen. Occasional Obstruction to great measures was a permissible thing in the House; but Obstruction on every occasion upon measures great and small, carried on for the purpose of Obstruction and delay, was unconstitutional, and rebellious against that House. That was the doctrine of Mr. Butt, and it was a true doctrine, Accordingly, on the 21st of April, Mr. Butt wrote to the hon. Member for Meath—

"Alienation of our English friends is not the only or the worst result that will follow from an unnecessary delay in the progress of Public Business. There is no Party so interested in the expedition and discharge of the Business of the House as the Irish Party. Believe me, that every hour during which we prevent the discussion of an English measure will be set down to the account of Ireland, and set down, in all probability, fourfold. The policy of Obstruction must alienate our truest and best English friends. It will expose us to the taunt of being unable to administer even the forms of our representative government, and end in discrediting and damaging every movement we make. But, if I urge these grounds of prudence, I am not insensible to that which is higher than all prudence—the duty of maintaining before the civilized world the dignity of the Irish nation and the Irish cause. That will only be done while we respect ourselves and our duties to the Assembly of which we are Members, an Assembly to degrade which is to strike a blow at representative institutions all over the world, a blow which will recoil with terrible severity on the very claims we make for our own country, but which, whatever may be its effects, would be unworthy of ourselves and of our cause."

He (Mr. Mitchell Henry) thought the House would regard these published letters as worth reading at this time. But, of course, there was a Party in Ireland captivated with this new policy of Obstruction, and Mr. Butt had to deal with it. He accordingly wrote a letter to the Rev. Joseph Murphy, who was strongly inclined to support the new policy, in which he said—

"If once this policy of Obstruction be entered upon it will be impossible to carry anything in Parliament by discussion or debate. It is the abandonment of Constitutional and the adoption of unconstitutional action in its stead."

Now, perhaps hon. Members recognized some connection between the unconstitutional action in that House and the unconstitutional "no rent" policy pursued out-of-doors. He saw a close connection. Mr. Butt went on—

"To what will it lead? No one will say that a perpetual obstruction of all Business is to be the perpetual condition of the British Parliament—Parliament must put down Obstruction, or Obstruction will put down Parliament. There is no rule that Parliament would not adopt, no Statute which it would not pass, rather than yield to the dictation of a few men who attempted to use the Forms of the House to destroy it."

He concluded with this noble passage—

"I have learned to feel some pride in a seat in Parliament, and to set some value upon political influence and power; but, were these put before me, I would forfeit them for ever rather than betray my duty to my country—rather than resort to an unconstitutional course of conduct. I know it can have finally only this result—to bring to the cause of Ireland nothing but disaster and disgrace."

Shortly after this, in 1878, Mr. Butt resigned the Leadership of the Party, and in 1879 he died a broken-hearted man. All that he had now said explained the reason of the difference which existed between Irish Members sitting on the Government Benches and Irishmen sitting on the Benches opposite. He would pursue this subject no further, except to say that, previous to the General Election of 1880, he published letters to his constituents and spoke frequently against the policy of Obstruction. Twice he met the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) on political platforms, and twice, to the best of his ability, opposed his policy. No one, therefore, could now say that he was guilty of unfaithfulness to the trust of his constituents. He had been sent there, in fact, as an opponent of Obstruction, and as a supporter of Mr. Butt's policy of conciliation. As such, he had always spoken in that House, and as such he would continue to speak so long as he held his seat. He had shown, on the other hand, that the policy of hon. Gentlemen from Ireland sitting opposite was a new policy, which was not endorsed by the people of Ireland.

He now desired to say a few words with regard to the *clôture*. He had been always in favour of a reasonable and proper measure of *clôture*. Four years ago, in the Irish journals, he prophesied to hon. Members when they were entering upon this policy what it would lead to. Hon. Members opposite, whom he wished he could call his Friends, were ready to join the Conservative Party in opposing this measure. Did hon. Members from Ireland think the object of the Conservative Party was to protect them? Nothing of the kind. The Conservatives would be quite ready to support any measure for putting down hon. Members opposite. In fact, the Conservatives did not want any more than a simple majority in order to apply their favourite measure of putting down hon. Members one after another by the action of a penal Rule. It was absurd, therefore, for hon. Gentlemen opposite to expect to gain anything from a coalition with that Party. A great deal also had been said about an arithmetical puzzle; but the two ends of the scale of this *clôture* were devised for two different purposes. Would anyone say that a division in that House of upwards of 400 Members was not an adequate representation of the opinion of the House? What was debate for? It was useful only to inform the mind of the House; and if, when they came to divide, a representation of 400 Members or upwards was not enough to decide any question whatever by a simple majority, he should like to know how Business was to be carried on? A jury addressed by counsel, after hearing witnesses, constantly told the Judge that they had heard enough and wished to come to a decision; but hon. Members were not content to allow the House of Commons, when they were actually saturated with speeches, and unable to attend to or take in any more, to come to a decision. They objected to Mr. Speaker knowing the mind of the House from what he saw and from what was communicated to him, stating that he believed the House desired to divide and that the *clôture* should be put in operation. Hon. Members said it was a great hardship that a majority of 1 should settle whether they had heard enough; but they were quite content that the same majority of 1 should immediately after, in the same House, constituted in the same manner, settle all such questions as peace and war, or the fate of a Ministry. Then, with regard to the other end of the scale, what was the object of it? The object of it was to protect the minority. One hundred Members must be in the House, and the *clôture* could not be proposed unless 100 Members voted for it. Well, suppose, in that instance, they were to have a two-thirds or a three-fourths majority, what would be the effect? It would simply diminish the sense of responsibility which must rest with the occupant of the Chair, who would always remember that he had the protection of the minority in his trust. He believed that the duty of the Members of that House was exactly the same, whether they were from England, Scotland, or Ireland. They were Members not only for Ireland, but for an Imperial Empire. Probably they might eventually legislate for Irish subjects out of that House, but they must legislate for Imperial subjects in that House; and if they proposed, by action of theirs, to exercise an organized system of Obstruction towards the House of Commons, they were unfaithful to their trust. As Members of an Imperial Parliament, the Members, wherever they came from, had one common duty, and that was to preserve to the people of this country the priceless inheritance of a free Parliament—of a Parliament for which generations of men had laboured and fought and died—of a Parliament free to act as well as to speak, and which would not allow itself to be mocked with that counterfeit of freedom, the licence of a small minority. To preserve this precious inheritance Parliament had suffered much, and had still much to suffer; and they, its Members, must suffer with it. They must take part in labours which for the time seemed fruitless, and endure tediousness that impaired their physical strength and disturbed their minds; but over all these things Parliament would triumph, and they should triumph with it—

> " So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
> And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
> And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
> Flames in the forehead of the morning sky."

MR. SEXTON said, he should not trouble the House with any remarks upon the poetical peroration of the hon. Member for Galway. The question with which they had to deal was one merely of a practical character, and he believed they could effectually deal with it in prose. What was called the unapproachable gravity of the occasion was now before them. It was doubted in some quarters a few days ago; but incidents which had lately come to light proved that in the mind of the Government, as well as in their minds, the occasion was one of unapproachable gravity. He had been accused of causing offence and uttering insult, because he had intimated his belief that the tactical arrangements of the Government rendered it convenient for them to imprison the votes of three Members of that House. But was he not in a large measure justified, when he found that the Government had suddenly broken off a delicate and confidential mission to bring one vote from the Tiber to the Thames? It was as unpleasant to him as to any Member of that House to cause offence or give insult to anyone; but when public duty required him to express his convictions, he cared not what the result might be, and though the conclusion he drew might be offensive, mature consideration convinced him that it was the true conclusion. An attempt had been made to make it appear that the people of Ireland felt little interest in the question then before the House. He called the attention of the House to the fact that it was too familiar to them that every avenue for the free expression of Constitutional opinion had been closed in Ireland, that the leaders of the people, the clergy of the people, and some of the bravest and best of the women of Ireland were pining in gaol. Such a moment was not the moment when it could be expected that the people of Ireland would dare not merely the civil, but the military power of this great Empire in the expression of their public feeling. What a story the Irish journals told them to-day of attempts made by the electors of Ireland—by those electors whose rights were sacred as those of electors in this country—of attempts made by them to meet together and instruct and suggest to their Representatives what course they ought to take, and in these attempts terrorized and prevented by those outsiders in Ireland who represented the territorial interest, and by those military and those police whose pay they in the House were expected to vote with silence and with tame assent. It was impossible at such a moment for the electors of Ireland to give expression to their feelings. They could, however, do so indirectly by making a recently liberated " suspect " Chairman of a Board of Guardians in place of a Lord who had held the position for 20 years. Those were the protests which the people made against the Algerian, and worse than Algerian, hold on the country which was maintained by this country. He was proud to say that the Irish journals left no doubt of the opinions of the Irish people upon this question. In despite of their military and police, meetings had been held, and wherever they had been held one voice had gone forth, and that voice had said that any attempt to silence or to restrict the Irish Representatives in that House should meet with the condemnation of the Irish people, and that any man who was accessory to the success of that attempt should meet with their hatred and their contempt. That evening had snowed telegraphic messages from the Lobby of the House of Commons. He and his hon. Friends about him had received telegrams beyond number, informing them of letters, of messages, and of memorials addressed to Irish Members who sat on the Government side of the House, praying them to have no hand in this ignoble and base attempt to silence the Representatives of their people. A Petition had reached him which the Forms of the House would not allow him to present, which was signed in a few hours by 1,400 electors of the City of Dublin, praying those Irish Members who sat on Government Benches on that occasion to vote for the Irish people. He passed from this part of the subject by saying that in spite of the extraordinary difficulties, in spite of the most complicated and most universal terrorism prevailing over the face of Ireland, the Irish people had left no doubt of the feelings with which they regarded these attempts of the present Government. The interposition in that debate of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, coupled, as it had been, with the equally significant silence of his right hon. Colleague the President of the Board of Trade, was an episode too singular to escape attention. It was not often even in that House of late that they had been favoured with the right hon. Gentleman's eloquence. It was certainly strange that one whose tongue for 40 years had moved as freely, as actively, and with as little moral constraint, derived from consideration for the feelings of others as that of any man in the House of Commons or in England—that he should appear that night as the advocate of a measure which proposed to deprive his fellow-Members of even the right to brief and moderate speech. He repeated that the right hon. Gentleman had never been distinguished in his public speeches for either brevity or moderation. And it was he who now proposed to deprive his fellow-Members of the right to even brief and moderate speech. For, if the *clôture* were ever in operation, as he had no doubt it would be, when once the majority had declared their will, although some men might have spoken with neither brevity nor moderation, every man afterwards would be shut out from doing so, however brief or moderate might be the remarks he proposed to address to the House. He could, to some extent, understand the attitude assumed by the right hon. Gentleman. Men hated to be confronted with their cast-off principles. It was from the mouth of the right hon. Gentleman that proceeded the terse and pregnant maxim that "force is no remedy." Force had been proved to be no remedy. And he and his friends, who knew well the evil to which that maxim had reference—who knew that it would prove to be the grave of a reputation, the moral ruin of a great Party and its disastrous failure —they knew, then, that force would be no remedy. But the right hon. Gentleman apprehended that Irish Members in that House would come from time to time to accumulate proofs in that House of the truth of his own principles, would endeavour to prove to him and to the House that force was no remedy. The ease and dignity of the Treasury Bench had had such an effect upon that man of a fiery tongue who wielded the fierce passions of a democracy that he did not wish any longer to be confronted with his own principles raised in protestation against him. The right hon. Gentleman did not wish to hear those things; he wished to buy oblivion—to live alone like the lotus-eaters described by the Laureate, and to forget his past. After the speech which they had heard that night—a speech full of sad recollections of moral retrogression as well as of intellectual decay; after that speech he would have a cruel heart who could wish the right hon. Gentleman a heavier punishment than he would endure in those still hours of reflection and retrospection which occurred in the life of every man, and when he would remember that he had been the mouthpiece of a coercive Ministry after the greatness and magnificence of his past career. The right hon. Gentleman, before he ever saw him, before he thought that anybody would see him in the cruel position which he occupied that night, employed in one of his addresses, with great force and dignity, an illustration from the Scriptures. The right hon. Gentleman on that occasion, referring to some offers of office and dignity which had been made to him, reminded his audience of the story of the Shunamite woman. He said that when a person asked the Shunamite woman, who had done some public service worthy of reward—"Shall I speak for thee to the King, or to the Captain of the Host?" the Shunamite woman replied—"No; I will dwell among my own people." Since then the right hon. Gentleman had reconsidered the subject. His view of the Shunamite woman had changed since that earlier day, and the position in which they found him to-night was that the Shunamite woman had come under the influence of the Captain of the Host. He did not know whether it was the right hon. Gentleman who once compared the Ministers of this country to a row of extinct volcanoes. [*Cries of* "No!"] The remark, he was now told, was made by a deceased statesman, and it might be most fitly applied to the men now occupying the Treasury Bench. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster was the most complete extinct volcano at present existing in the world. Formerly his eruptions were full of violence and splendour; but what remained now of the democratic volcano of England? Nothing more than the empty void and the cold crust that once was living fire. The observations of the right hon. Gentleman, indirect and remote from the subject, could not be dignified with the name of argument. With what propriety and reason did the right hon. Gentleman compare the practice of public meetings with the Procedure of this supreme deliberative Assembly? Public meetings were not deliberative assemblies, and did not affect, except in rare cases, public opinion beyond their own vicinity. Moreover, they were generally held by persons of one particular opinion for the purpose of registering a decree. Moreover, when a speaker became unpleasant at a public meeting, the way to silence him was by clamour. The right hon. Gentleman ventured somewhat rashly into the arithmetic of this question; but he might much better have left the "stern and unbending lines of arithmetic" to the care of the Prime Minister himself, who was known to be a master in that department. His rashness in dealing with the arithmetical aspect of the case appeared in the remarkable omissions which occurred. In his argument he dealt pretty exhaustively with the case of minorities, and he endeavoured to show that small minorities would have the intellectual delight of being overborne by majorities much larger than themselves; but for a right hon. Gentleman of so frank and so unreserved a career, it was singular, to say the least of it, that he paused at the point where minorities become large, and he shrunk from giving his opinion of the moral or material worth of a majority of, say, 201 overpowering a minority of 200. He came now to consider the attitude of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to Members from Ireland. He had noticed that it was ever politicians of fastidious lives who hurled extreme charges against other men. He might search the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman, and look, for instance, at that famous passage about the British Lion, in which the right hon. Gentleman expressed a wish that the beast or the brute were dead. If he were to look at that and at other passages of fierce, he would not say of coarse, invective with which the right hon. Gentleman had often assailed his fellow-subjects of the Crown, and, perhaps, virtually even the Crown itself, he should find as many passages as seriously open to rebuke, and even to denunciation, as any which could be found in speeches spoken by Members on that side of the House. What was the characteristic argument by which the right hon. Gentleman endeavoured to politically defile the Irish Party? Was it for any language spoken by them in that House, or for any article in their political policy, or for any manifesto, document, or speech issued by any meeting of the Party, or any Member of the Party, in the Dominions of the Queen? The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the Oath of Allegiance. It was a dramatic touch on which the right hon. Gentleman, a great master of dramatic touches, relied to awaken the passions of those around him. But they never swore allegiance to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, or to the Government of which he was a Member. They swore allegiance to the Sovereign of this country. [*Ironical cheers from the Ministerial side.*] That cheer was ungenerous, if not unmeaning, considering the quarter from which it came. They had pursued objects and sought for purposes compatible and consistent with the Oath of Allegiance; and they defied the Chancellor of the Duchy and the Prime Minister to find in the action of their Party, as a whole, or in the action of individuals, any declarations or acts incompatible or inconsistent with that Oath. The right hon. Gentleman's rhetorical reference to the Oath of Allegiance was not a thing of very pregnant meaning. He (Mr. Sexton) had his own understanding, as every man had, of the Oath of Allegiance. He did not concur with the views of Paley, their great English writer, who, after six elaborate essays, by which he endeavoured to prove the meaning and the force of the Oath of Allegiance, left it in a much foggier condition than he found it. The meaning of the Oath of Allegiance was not open to considerable doubt; and he maintained that for any purposes which they had avowed, as for any objects which they had sought, the scope for free action, the scope for free expression, and the scope for public effort left to them by the Oath of Allegiance was quite sufficient for them for all their purposes. What was the argument by which the right hon. Gentleman desired, at this critical moment, to cast discredit on the Party to which he (Mr. Sexton) had the honour to belong? Two hon. Gentlemen—the Member for the borough of Wexford (Mr. Healy) and the Member for the borough of Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor)—happened to be in America on a political mission—a mission of life and death to their people, who were being evicted and subjected to the worst influences of despair, and who were thrown into a condition of actual starvation, at a time when the landlords of Ireland, with the tacit encouragement of the Government, were allowed to persevere in acts of tyranny and cruelty. The right hon. Gentleman and the House knew full well that the mass of the Irishmen who had gone from Ireland to the various countries of the world had taken with them a burning and a bitter hatred of the Government of England. [Mr. ARCHDALE: As many Protestants went as Roman Catholics.] He (Mr. Sexton) feared the hon. Member's arithmetic was not accurate; but, at all events, he seemed to be unaware of the fact that the Protestants evicted from Ulster in the last century were some of the sturdiest and stoutest soldiers who fought on the American side in the War of Independence, which wrested the brightest jewel from the British Crown. The men who met at Chicago were the men, or the sons of men, who had been turned out of their humble homes in Ireland by virtue of tyrannical Land Laws, which no one had condemned with more eloquence than the right hon. Gentleman himself. They saw their roof-trees torn down by the crowbar, they saw the fires put out upon their fathers' hearths, they had to rend the dearest ties of men's affections, they left the shores of Ireland with eyes blinded by tears, and they went to a foreign land with bitter hatred in their hearts to that tyrannical system which caused their expatriation; and he challenged any Member of the House to deny that it was the dearest hope of that great mass of Irishmen, wherever they were situated in this wide world, to free the people of Ireland from at least the existing system of British rule—that system which corroded the national life of Ireland, and which took out of the hands of the people of Ireland their own national resources. The hon. Members for Wexford and Galway found themselves in America, and what were they to do? Were they, in order to gratify the new found fastidiousness of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, which they, not being prophets, could not have anticipated—were they to keep away from this assembly of their countrymen—were they to isolate themselves from their own kith and, kin and, in the midst of the great mass of patriotic and high-minded Irishmen on the American Continent, to proclaim themselves not Irishmen, but Englishmen? They attended the Convention as spectators. They did not speak. The Government had endeavoured to mix up the matter of the Convention with other matters. They attended the Convention; and because they did not make themselves the mouthpieces of the Birmingham school, or some other school of English politics; because they were true to the traditions of Irish history and true to the political gospel of the Irish race, the right hon. Gentleman arraigned them in that House as traitors to the Crown. They had a perfect right to attend as spectators. If he (Mr. Sexton) had been in America he should have considered it his first duty to have been at that gathering. [*Cries of* "Oh!" *from the Ministerial Benches and Irish cheers.*] Not because he should regard himself bound by the proceedings of that Convention, not because he should consider the Irish people at home bound by any extreme action which in other countries and under other circumstances might be taken by the Irish race; but because he should deem it his first duty, as one concerned in fighting the cause of the Irish people, to attend that great representative gathering of Irishmen in America, to learn from them directly, with his own ears, the feelings of the Irish race in America. No politician interested in the future of Irish affairs should be without that important information; and, therefore, he held that his hon. Friends attending that meeting were availing themselves of an educational agency of the greatest value. More significance than that he refused to give to the incident, and he could not help saying that the use made of it by the right hon. Gentleman was unworthy of him, and unworthy of any Minister; and least of all should it have proceeded from a Minister who, in his speeches and in his life, had certainly gone to the utmost possible limits allowed to an English agitator. The question before the House was—["Hear, hear!"]—if he had departed from the question it was because the right hon. Gentleman had persisted in taking him from Westminster to America—the question before the House concerned, primarily and chiefly, the two great English Parties. ["No, no!"] He spoke with the most unequivocal frankness. He did not think it greatly concerned the Irish Party, which had in the House up to that time, whatever might be thought by others, touched only the fringe of Parliamentary activity. The proceedings of the Legislature were so complicated, and in its capacity for business it so far transcended the power of any other Legislative Assembly, that, no matter what Rules might be devised—*clôture* or no *clôture*—it would be impossible for it, looking at the vast ambit of its Business, and considering the infinite variety of the Business it had to manage, to prevent any Member of it, possessing the spirit of a man, from making their activity permeate—permanently permeate—every department of the Legislature. He was not an Englishman, neither was he a Representative of an English constituency; but the House would allow him for the moment to take the part of an English spectator, and tell them, with as much impartiality as they would give him credit for, what he thought the effect of the *clôture* would be upon the future of that Assembly. As an Irishman he felt that the miseries, the misfortunes, the discontent, and disaffection of his country had sprung from the spirit which had governed the House in past times, and the laws which had been the emanation of that spirit. If he had been an Englishman born and bred, whether a representative Englishman or not, he should take a pride in the records of its acts, and in the influence which it had brought to bear upon the history of the world and the course of the human race. He would admit that that Assembly had been, to a large extent, the upholder of class, and that its enactments had borne the brand of class legislation. But he was bound to say that the Parliament of England had struck its roots deep into the hearts and history of the English people. It was an ancient and a proud Parliament; and although it might not have responded very speedily or successfully to the demands of the English people, yet he would say, as an Irishman, endeavouring for a moment to eradicate his own prepossessions, that the House had slowly, though surely, responded to the general needs and wishes. It was an ancient and a proud Parliament; and, therefore, if he had been an Englishman, he should take pride in it. It had the capacity both to rule the affections of the English people and to take the leading place in the Assemblies of the world. What was the secret of that power? First, it was the position—the unexampled position—held by the Speaker of the House of Commons. He was not under an obligation to please any Party, or to have regard to any Party. He was elected by one Party, and often kept in Office by the other Party, which showed the thorough belief of both sides of the House in the impartiality that characterized the high Office of the greatest Commoner in England. This House, conscious of its strength, had always, with the common sense that Englishmen claimed, postponed the hour of victory of the majority till the minority had been fully heard. The minority of the House were actuated by such loyalty to their Party that, having once been allowed to argue their case, they went quietly into the Lobby and accepted their defeat in a loyal and law-abiding spirit. These were the secrets of the power of that House; but, if the Government had their will, would this power continue? Would Parliament continue to inspire the respect and affection of the people of England? Would it be any longer called the Parliament of free speech? The Government sought to establish a system by which a majority, without regard to the minority, would be enabled to say they would hear no further debate. The majority and the Party in power were convertible terms; and in future, he apprehended, there would be in the mind of the occupant of the Chair an inevitable bias in favour of the Party sitting on his right. The occupant of the Chair would be anxiously, and even nervously, desirous of acquitting himself of the responsibility which this Rule would place upon him. His mind, when a debate had proceeded to any length, would be in constant search of what was called the "evident sense" of the House. It was possible that he might mistake a momentary clamour for that evident sense, and that his opinion might not be sustained by the vote of the House; but what, in the event of such an occurrence, if his decision was discredited by the vote of the House itself, would become of the high impartiality of the Speaker? He believed that the Office of Speaker would never survive such a shock. And what of the majority of the House? He had said that hitherto that majority had always been willing to postpone the moment of victory till the minority had liberated their minds; what would be the consequence of such a Rule as this? Surely the majority, at the first moment of irritation or weariness produced by a long debate, would naturally begin to turn to the relief afforded by the operation of the Rule, and would clamour for the application of the *clôture.* The minority, on the other hand, who might be willing enough to shorten a debate, if fair play were allowed them, would be tempted and challenged to exert and assert their right to continue the debate. Thus, every one of the three great influences that Parliament held in respect would disappear. All would go—confidence in the impartiality of the Speaker, the forbearance of the majority, and the satisfaction of the minority. That was the view that he had been obliged to take of the matter; and now, returning to his natural attitude as an Irishman in revolt against the attempt to silence the Irish Party, he was able to say what he himself felt in regard to the prospect. He had always observed that it boded ill for Ireland when both the great Parties in the House were agreed. That condition of things in the past, which had secured and continued a tolerably good feeling between the two English Parties, had been unfavourable to the development of the rights and liberties of Ireland. He expected that there would be no such good feeling in future. The *clôture,* whether frequently or rarely used, would be an irritant poison in the blood of the House. Friendliness between the two English Parties would disappear under its influence; and, therefore, he looked forward to the future not only with tranquillity, but also with the hope that the perpetual conflict which the *clôture* would generate between Liberals and Conservatives would drive home to their minds the pregnant political truth that, till they satisfied the aspirations of Ireland, Parliamentary government on the basis of the tranquillity of the past would be impossible. He had now to take the will for the deed, the intention for the execution, and to ask the House what was the cause and the provocation for this measure? As far as Ireland was concerned, it was, in the first place, an act of revenge; and, in the second place, a mobilization of forces for renewed hostilities. If they entertained any doubt as to that, the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had made it all perfectly clear. It was an act of revenge, because it was plainly suggested by the opposition of the Irish Members to that Statute which placed the liberties of the Irish people at the feet of an official of the Queen. The measure could not have been due to the experience of the last Parliament, because if there had been any dilatory debate in that Parliament, the inventors and chief practitioners of the art were Gentlemen now on the Treasury Bench; and, moreover, in the last year of that Parliament, the Prime Minister himself had appeared in a public magazine as the most ingenious and elaborate apologist of Obstruction. It could not, therefore, have been the experience of the last Parliament that had led to this measure. Nor could the Resolution be due to the experience of the first Session of the present Parliament, with which the Government had professed themselves well satisfied, nor to what had occurred in the present Session, because the Government had made up their mind on the subject before that Session had begun. No; the cause of the measure was to be found in the experience of last Session, but not in the incidents of the passage of the Land Bill through the House, for the right hon. Gentleman had expressed his sense of the assistance given him by the Irish Members, who had saved the Government on two crucial divisions. The right hon. Gentleman could not deny that, next to himself, the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) had the most perfect knowledge of the Bill. It followed, then, that the resistance of the Irish Party to the Coercion Bill was the real cause of this gagging Resolution. If the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman in *The Nineteenth Century* could possibly apply to any condition of things as the justification of any Party, his words and sentiments might stand on record as the justification of the Irish Members for their obstinate resistance to a measure which they knew to be undeserved. And what terms could be extreme in denouncing the Coercion Bill? It was an Act ostensibly passed against crime, but really used to put down political agitation. It was an Act which, according to the Treasury Bench, was directed against the disorderly classes in Ireland; but it was used against the leaders of the people, against the clergy, and against ladies of a highly respectable position and of unstained life. The Irish people upheld the Irish Party in their opposition to the Resolution; and he challenged the right hon. Gentleman to turn to his own article in *The Nineteenth Century*, and by his own words and sentiments the Irish Party would be justified. This Resolution was, as he had said, not only an act of revenge, but it was a mobilization of forces directed against Ireland. The last speech of the Chief Secretary for Ireland was a warning of what the Irish people had to expect, though the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, indeed, understood the melodramatic business better. The speech in which the right hon. Gentleman, with intonations of ungovernable passion in his voice, and fierce light in his eye, pledged the Government to further and more drastic measures of coercion, was a warning to the House, and to every Member, no matter on which side he might sit, who derived his mandate from the Irish people, of the moral significance of the vote he would give to-night. Let there be no mistake. If he voted for the Resolution he would vote for further coercion. A year of folly had not been enough for the Government—a year of disaster and disgrace had not been enough, and half a year in which to reconsider their course and their steps had not been enough. They did not seem disposed to take the salutary advice tendered by the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Courtney) to make an effort to bring the law in Ireland into harmony with the convictions and associations of the people. That was done in every civilized country; but the determination of the Government, so far as they could discover it from their dark hints and blacker looks, was to persevere in their course of despotism, and to force the people, by their Algerine enactments, into collision with the law. He did not believe they would succeed in that object. As the gag imposed upon Ireland had proved ineffective, so he believed the additional gag that would be imposed upon the House of Commons would not help them out of their difficulty. For himself, so filled was he by the burning passion which agitated the Irish mind on this question that no human consideration would make him hesitate in the vote he would give. Some time ago *The Times* said to Irishmen—" We do not pass what laws you ask, but we listen to what you have to say; and, unreasonable and passionate Celts that you are, what more can you desire?" He thought that a very inconclusive argument, for to listen to a man was a small satisfaction if you did not give him what he wanted. But the Government had advanced on *The Times*, which was willing to listen. The Government would neither grant nor listen. Irishmen were not only to have their demands refused, but their speeches silenced. So deep was the feeling of Irishmen on this question, that if he were an Irish Member who had incurred, by his past conduct, the hatred of the Irish people, he would endeavour, by his vote to-night, cast in favour of freedom of speech, to obtain immunity for any fault he had committed, and he believed that by so doing he might atone for errors in the past; because a vote given at a critical moment, in the face of the social and political influences which the Government could bring to bear, would show his sympathy and solidarity with the Irish people. As for himself, his constituents had sent him no message. He believed they had confidence in him, and he hoped he would never do anything which would lead them to withdraw that confidence. But if he were to vote with the Government to-night, he should regard this night as one from which to date his political outlawry in Ireland.

The vote of this night would be for years to come the starting-point of political criticism and denunciation in Ireland, for the Irishman who, by his vote now, should violate the trust placed in him by the people, would seal his own political extinction. For his own part, he would prefer that his name should go down to posterity with the Masseys, the Corydons, and the Armstrongs, than that it should be said that, as an Irish Member, he followed the Government into the Lobby—a Government which had filled the gaols with the leaders of the Irish people, and with their priests and women, and who struck thereby the deadliest blow at the rights and honour of Ireland.

Mr. CHAPLIN: It did not need the stirring and eloquent address of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright), which we heard in the early part of the evening, to convince me that the Prime Minister was more than justified in asking the House to consider the existing Rules which govern the Business of the House of Commons. We, who sit on this side of the House, are in entire accord with the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster in this—that we acknowledge the propriety, and, I may say, the absolute necessity, of some change being made, unless the House of Commons is to sink beyond the power of recall in the mind and estimation of the country. I can only say this much in addition—that however much we may differ as to the mode in which this change is to be effected, however much we may be opposed to the particular proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, yet, not the less is the House of Commons indebted to him for seriously endeavouring to grapple with what is acknowledged, on all sides, to be a great, a growing, and an intolerable evil. Having said this much, I hope my motives will not be misconstrued if I say this also to the House—that while I am prepared, as far as I am concerned, to agree to almost any alteration of our Rules which can be shown to be requisite in order to restore the character and useful purposes of this Assembly, yet I am diametrically opposed to the 1st Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman. And I am opposed to it not only on its merits, and because it contains what I regard as the mischievous and dangerous principles of a general *clôture*, but because I consider that it is not the right mode of procedure; and, because, if carried tomorrow, it would not be an efficacious mode of dealing with the mischief we have to encounter. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster has given us a description of these evils to-night; but before I proceed to examine them, I desire to say a few words in answer to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, and then, with the permission of the House, I should like to point out one or two objections to the *clôture* which have not been raised, I think, up to the present time. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster commenced his observations by informing us that he could not conceive what was the cause of our attitude on this side of the House; and he followed that up by the frank admission that if he had been in Opposition he should have treated the question from a purely Party point of view. The right hon. Gentleman also told us that we ought to agree that some real and effective remedy is called for. Now, we do agree with that; but our point is this, that the remedy is not a real one, and that if carried it would not be effective. The right hon. Gentleman said—"Is this Resolution effective or not? That is the question you have to consider." Then he added—"It is a simple and moderate remedy; but it is not severe enough." I quite admit that it is simple. Whether it is moderate and wanting in severity is another question altogether; and that it is not likely to be effective, I hope to be able to show the House before I bring my observations to a close. The right hon. Gentleman ridiculed the idea that under any circumstances the Speaker could introduce the *clôture* when there was so narrow a majority as 1 in 200. If that is the case, what objection can there be to giving the majority of two-thirds, which is asked for by some hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House. In the second place, I would venture to point out to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster that there are frequently a considerable number of hon. Gentlemen in the Lobby and the Smoking Rooms, and in other parts of the House, and that it would, consequently, be impossible for the Speaker to arrive at an accurate estimate of the evident sense of the House. There are two objections to the *clôture*, which seem to have escaped the attention of the right hon Gentleman, to which I wish to draw the attention of the House for a moment. The first of them is this—that if the *clôture* is to be habitually used in our debates—and if it is not to be so used I really do not see what is the object of passing it—then it is obvious that in future, in any considerable debate, only a limited number of hon. Gentlemen will be able to exercise what is at present their undoubted right of liberty to speak; that, in fact, whenever the intending speakers are more numerous than usual, only a certain number of them can be heard, and a certain number of them must be inevitably excluded. If that be so, then arises at once the very important question, how are these speakers in future to be selected? At the present moment that selection is left, by the universal consent and concurrence of the House, entirely to Mr. Speaker; because every hon. Member knows quite well that, however often he may be disappointed in his endeavour to catch the Speaker's eye, sooner or later his time will come, and that before the close of the debate he will have an opportunity of addressing the House, if he continues to think that what he desires to say warrants him in continuing his endeavours to address the House. But under the *clôture* all that will be changed. The time will come when the *clôture* will be demanded, and then it will be absolutely too late; and, whatever the impartiality of the Speaker may be, he will be unable, when the evident sense of the House is clear, and the *clôture* has been asserted, to call on any further speaker to address the House. It will practically come to this—that the first, the chief, and the greatest of all our privileges at the present time—namely, the right to speak—will be exercised in future, not as a matter we have a right to claim, but solely at the mercy or discretion or the vision of the Chair, or whatever you may be pleased to call it. Really, that is a responsibility so great, a power so novel, and so tremendous in its character, that, although I do not doubt that many of us, even in a case like this, would be disposed to make an exception, Sir, in your favour, as long as you are the occupant of that Chair, I do not believe that the House of Commons would ever be willing permanently to place in the hands of some unknown individual who may be your successor, however lofty his position, and however distinguished his ability and character; and then it comes to this—if I rightly interpret the sentiment of the House—that we should have to come to some arrangement by which everyone who desires to take part in a debate would have to ballot for precedence precisely as we ballot now with regard to precedence for Motions and Bills. Would such a course be likely to improve the character of our debates; or would it not be likely to lead to some curious and unexpected debates? For instance, the possible exclusion, if they were unlucky in the ballot, of the Leaders on either side of the House, who desired to take part in a debate; and it would lead to circumstances of a ridiculous or of a highly inconvenient character, and, as far as I can judge, in all probability, both. But, assuming that Mr. Speaker should never think it right to initiate the *clôture* before the Leaders of the House have spoken, and if you did not have this ballot, then I foresee that another inconvenience, quite possible, and, I believe, highly probable, would happen. And it is this. Whenever the *clôture* was imminent, and there were still many hon. Members who desired to speak, if the Leaders of the House rose to wind up the debate, in company with several other hon. Members who rose at the same time, and the Leader of the House was selected by the Speaker, then the *clôture*, almost immediately afterwards, would be naturally expected; and what would probably happen then would be this—that some Friend of an hon. Member who had risen, but who had not been called upon to address the House, would, strictly in accordance with the existing Rules of the House, immediately make a Motion to this effect—that the hon. Member who had risen, and had not been called upon, should be "now heard," or "do now speak." That would be a Motion strictly in accordance with our existing Rules; and the House will observe that, in a case like that, it would be made from no want of courtesy towards the Leader of the House, and from no disrespect to the Chair, but as the sole chance of obtaining for a Member the opportunity of speaking. It is evident that a matter of that kind would lead to wrangling, debate, and division. It would be repeated again and again; and I am convinced that in this way there would be absolutely a loss of more time than would be gained if your Resolution was carried as it is now. If the House will give me their patience for a very few moments—passing over many of the objections which have been urged to the *clôture*—I wish to examine the precise nature of the evils with which we have to deal at the present time. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster has described them at some length to-night; and he attributed them, perhaps with some justice, mainly to the Irish Members. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Minister gave a somewhat different description of those evils on the opening night of the debate. And here, again, we are considerably indebted to the right hon. Gentleman, who has placed these evils clearly and distinctly before the House. I have carefully read the speech of the right hon. Gentleman again since I heard the statement which he made; and this is the description he gives of the evils. He said—

> "There are two great evils which form the salient feature of the picture before us. One of them is the great increase in the labours of the House; the other is the diminution in power on the part of this Assembly to perform them."

Now, Sir, I can say nothing in regard to the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman for delegating a certain portion of the labours of the House, because they are not now before us. But, with regard to the second great evil—the main evil we have to deal with—namely, the diminution in the power of the House to perform its labours, the right hon. Gentleman made this statement, which I beg the House to observe—

> "By that diminution of power I mean this—namely, the diminution of power on the part of this Assembly over its own Members individually."

Therefore, the loss of power of its Members individually is the main evil, according to the right hon. Gentleman, with which we have to deal, and which we have to consider at the present time. With that description I entirely agree with the right hon. Gentleman. Formerly the House had the exercise of power over its individual Members, not by any Rules or regulations, as the right hon. Gentleman pointed out on the occasion to which I refer, but by virtue of that deference almost invariably paid by the Members of the House whenever the will of the House is clearly and unmistakably expressed. Now, that power in great degree is gone. And why? Because—and I will again quote the authority of the right hon. Gentleman—the deference which was paid 20, or 30, or 40 years ago is no longer paid universally by individuals to the House. I can supplement that statement by experience of my own—experience, I am happy to say, which does not extend over more than half of 30 years, but which is sufficient to enable me to corroborate his view of the deference formerly paid. So far I go entirely with the Prime Minister in his description of the evil. I am ready to agree, and I believe both sides of the House are ready to agree, to almost any alteration in order to restore to this Assembly the power over its individual Members which it has lost, which can be shown to be requisite and adequate for the purpose. But I must point out to the right hon. Gentleman that this power over individual Members is one thing, and the power of the majority to suppress a whole minority collectively is another thing altogether. And when I come to the remedies which the right hon. Gentleman proposes, then I am afraid that he and I must part company altogether. Let me now turn to a speech made by another hon. Member, a supporter of the Government, whom I do not now see in his place. I allude to the hon. Member for Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey Vivian). The hon. Member, with a blunt and frank admission, which left nothing to be desired, said—"Formerly we always had a *clôture*, and a very effective one it was. In those halcyon days," he said—

> "Our debates were conducted in a good old-fashioned and gentlemanlike style, by mutual understanding. The Whips on either side arranged the day of division by an agreement between themselves; and if any hon. Member ventured to address the House after we thought we had had enough, why we simply howled him down."

Whatever may be said of the old-fashioned practice of howling down, nobody can deny that there is a great deal of truth in what is said. Formerly hon. Members did yield to the manifest disposition of the House; and when that disposition was evinced, either by the howling of the hon. Member for Glamorganshire or in any other way, it was a *clôture*, and a *clôture* of a very effective kind. Let me ask the House this question—What kind of *clôture* was it that was found so effective at that time? That is a question which I desire to submit to the candid and impartial consideration of independent Members. Certainly it was not a general *clôture*, such as that demanded by the right hon. Gentleman. Nobody can deny that if a Minister or an ex-Minister, or a Member of great authority, thought it necessary to rise in his place, even after the Leader of the House had wound up the debate, to point out, perhaps, something of great importance which had escaped the observation of the House, the howling *clôture* would never have been applied to him. No one would have dreamt of it. On the contrary, he would have been listened to with all the respect his position demanded and deserved. Therefore, I say that it certainly was not a general *clôture* like that we are asked to sanction now, but a kind of *clôture* which was applied and limited strictly to individuals, and to individuals only, who, neither very wise nor very judicious, in all probability had failed to appreciate the general sense and disposition of the House. What is the only inference we can draw? Why, that the Prime Minister and his supporters, instead of proceeding with the 1st Resolution, ought to agree to an Amendment which was placed on the Paper almost immediately after the scheme of the Government was announced, and which, in place of a general *clôture*, substituted an individual *clôture*. Well, Sir, that is my answer to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; and when he asks us whether we are not willing to make some small alteration in our Rules in order to maintain the character of this Assembly, I say that is what a great majority of Members on this side of the House would like to do. Now, Sir, what can be the objections to this proposition? The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department threw no light on the matter. He was followed by the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread); but he left the matter in very much the same condition as it was left by the right hon. and learned Gentleman. I do not wish to go into what these hon. and right hon. Gentlemen said, because I do not wish to detain the House a moment longer than I can help; but it seems to me that a proposal of this kind would really cover almost everything that we want; it would, at all events, exactly meet the evil which the right hon. Gentleman has so accurately described, and it was no small recommendation of it that it would enable us to dispense with all the other alterations in the Rules which were proposed by the Government. I am afraid that, in this respect, I shall be in a minority even on this side of the House, as far as I can judge from the speeches of right hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Front Opposition Bench; but none the less do I adhere to my own firm conviction that our existing Rules ought not to be lightly tampered with or altered. Depend upon it, they have been adopted in former days for good and weighty reasons, they have grown up from the wisdom and experience of ages, they are the guardians of our privileges, and the safeguards of our liberties and rights; and I, for one, should be most unwilling, as regards the major part of them, to see anything like a sweeping alteration in them, and especially because a system of individual *clôture*, such as I would like to see adopted, would render any material change in the existing Rules unnecessary. Take the case of Motions for Adjournment at Question time. The power of moving the Adjournment is a privilege which I value highly, as one which, under certain circumstances, may be of great use to the Opposition. At the same time, I frankly admit the privilege has been much and grossly abused very often of late; but see what would be the effect of individual *clôture* in a case like this. Now, the remonstrances of Mr. Speaker are often made in vain; but, then, if the admonition of Mr. Speaker be disregarded, I assume he would probably rise almost immediately and caution the hon. Member offending, and if that were not sufficient, it would be in the power of the House to instantaneously silence the hon. Member by a Motion that he be no longer heard. Well, Sir, I shall be told, I suppose, that that would involve a great waste of time in the divisions taken for the purpose of silencing such hon. Members. I do not believe it for a moment, and for this reason—that with this latent power in reserve divisions would become unnecessary. You may be certain that except in some cases of great importance, which might warrant a Motion for Adjournment, hon. Members would yield at once to Mr. Speaker; and if, in addition, the House should think fit to order that for the first offence the hon. Member should be silenced for the night, and for the second offence for a week or month and so on, I am certain that the House would very soon discover that it had found a new and simple, but a most efficient weapon, a weapon which would enable the House to instantaneously compel, by the exercise of its authority, that which formerly was invariably yielded by hon. Gentlemen in this Assembly—namely, submission to the dictates of good feeling and good taste. I am well aware, Sir, that I really have no right or claim to intrude upon the House at an hour such as this. It is not because I have not risen before, and if hon. Gentlemen will do me the favour to listen to what I have to say I promise them I shall not detain them more than a very few moments more. I was about to observe that all we desire at the present time, and what above all we ought, as far as possible, to endeavour to accomplish, is to restore, as far as may be, the tone and the temper which formerly prevailed in this Assembly. That is what we ought to aim at now, and that is exactly what your 1st Resolution never is likely to accomplish. Your 1st Resolution is a contrivance for punishing the many for the offences of the few; it is a contrivance, not for the suppression of offending individuals only, but for the suppression of an unoffending Party; and, consequently, it is also a contrivance to irritate a whole minority. Well, Sir, I ask the House, is that the way, do you think, to bring about a restoration of a spirit of conciliation and of general deference, such as we all desire to see? I must apologize to the House for having taken up so much of its time. I really would not have done so; but it does seem to me that this question is as essentially one for independent Members as it is for the Leaders of the House. This is not the first time I have offered my opinions to the House on the subject. More than once I have endeavoured to submit them to the House, with the fate which usually attends upon the efforts of private Members. During the last Parliament, and at a time when the proceedings in this House had already become the scandal and the amazement of the world, but when, I am bound to say, the subject did not possess the same paramount interest to the Prime Minister which it possesses at the present time, I submitted these views to the House. I am convinced that it is in this direction that we must look for the ultimate solution of all our troubles and our difficulties at the present time; and it is because I am convinced that, so far from having the effect which you anticipate, your Resolution will have a precisely opposite effect, and will lead to mischiefs in the future, worse even than the disease—mischiefs of every character and of every kind—I, for one, must give an uncompromising opposition to the Resolution which is now proposed. Well, Sir, I am not much disturbed, I must confess, by the rumours of a crisis which are hovering in the air. I do not believe a word about it, and I do not believe the Government will resign, even if the vote taken to-night is adverse to them. [" No!"] An hon. Member says " No!" I will tell him why. Because, if they did, they would occupy a most ludicrous position; and when the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India comes down to this House with a speech of menace and resignation in his pocket, he ought to remember that he serves under a Chief who has expressly declared, on the opening night of this debate, that this Resolution which is now before us is not the most important Resolution of the series he proposes. For a Government to talk of resignation on an Amendment which, on the showing of the Prime Mimister, is more or less a subsidiary Resolution, is the most ludicrous thing I ever heard. The noble Lord ought to show more courage on the eve of a general engagement. If the case of the Government is a good one, what reason is there to be alarmed; if it is a bad one, I venture to say that the sooner they recede from their position the better. I think the noble Lord should be very careful for many reasons, for his action may be calculated to give colour to some absurd stories which have been going the round of the Lobbies, and which I have seen in the newspapers, as to the curious postscripts which the noble Lord is sometimes supposed to add to some of his correspondence. I do not believe it for one moment; but, whatever may be the fate which is in store for Her Majesty's Government, of this at least I am assured, that if the right hon. Gentleman persists in forcing upon the House of Commons a policy and a principle which is repugnant to the instincts of the great majority of the Liberal Party, and of Gentlemen of all opinions in the House, no long time will elapse before he will discover that he has again accomplished the political destruction of his Party and his Friends, that he has done this for the third and last time in a great career, the most brilliant, I admit, but the most strange and the most disastrous, in the political annals of our history and our time.

Mr. DILLWYN said, that as one who had long been a Member of the House, and who had a reverence for its traditions, he wished to rescue it from falling into the position of a debating society. The right hon. and gallant Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) had stated that a great number of Members on the Liberal side of the House thoroughly disliked the *clôture*, and, therefore, objected to this Resolution. That might be so; but, sitting among them as he (Mr. Dillwyn) did, he had certainly not heard them express their dislike, and, indeed, he failed to remember a time when there had been so general a concurrence of opinion. Even the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Lancashire must admit that, seeing that he had enumerated and accounted for the few hon. Members on the Liberal side of the House who would vote against the Government. He should not have ventured to obtrude himself in the debate if his name had not been mentioned as one of those who was formerly opposed to this measure. No doubt, he had always been anxious to maintain the rights of minorities in the House of Commons, and he had opposed the *clôture*, as it was called. But this was not the *clôture* pure and simple at all. If it were the *clôture* pure and simple he should oppose it now. *Clôture* pure and simple would enable the Government, at the end of the Session, to do as they pleased. Obstruction was often necessary at the end of the Session, when the House was thin, and the Government, with their own 40 or 50 Members, could command a majority and rule the country. That was what he objected to. He objected, at the end of the Session, to "small Houses" doing exactly what they liked, at the will of the Government. But he had never objected to a qualified *clôture*, which was all the present Resolution amounted to. All he desired was that care should be taken before a debate was closed that it had been thoroughly exhausted, and that it was only in a sufficiently full House that the *clôture* was declared. That was what Her Majesty's Government now proposed, and, instead of there having been any change in his opinions, he had himself, last year, proposed a measure almost identical with that which they were now discussing. Although he approved of the proposal made by the Government, he certainly preferred his own; but this was not a time for splitting straws in a great Constitutional crisis like this. His proposal was, that any Member, having obtained the consent of the Speaker, should be at liberty to move that the debate be closed; and he further proposed that the debate should be closed, not by a fanciful majority, but in the good old English way—namely, by the majority. He had made provision, however, that the majority should consist of not less than 150 Members. He said this in order to establish his own consistency, and to show that, in supporting the Resolution moved by Her Majesty's Government, he was still advocating and voting for a course of Procedure in that House which he had always been in favour of. No doubt the altered circumstances of the present times called for an altered method of dealing with them. The circumstances of the present were very different from the circumstances of the past. The right hon. Gentleman in the Chair, and others who had been in the House for a long series of years, knew that there had been a great change in their mode of Procedure; and he would mention one or two facts to illustrate the change. When the House met at the time Lord Eversley occupied the Chair—now so worthily filled by the right hon. Gentleman its present occupant—he always considered it necessary to count the House before taking the

Chair; and there was frequently a difficulty in getting 40 Members present to constitute a House. The attendance was generally slack, and there were very few Members present except on great occasions. Consequently, it often happened that there was "no House." There was no difficulty then in getting seats; whereas now-a-days Mr. Speaker always took the Chair without counting the House, and there was no difficulty whatever in insuring the making of a House. All the seats were occupied, and many hon. Members who wanted them had great difficulty in finding them. That was one change. In the next place, how were the proceedings of the House conducted now? In olden times the debates were generally concluded within a reasonable time, because hon. Members who wished to speak refrained from repeating arguments upon points which had already been exhausted, knowing that it was useless to say that which had already been said before. The consequence was that the debates were brought to a close within a reasonable time. Now-a-days hon. Members, for reasons best known to themselves, never seemed to be tired of speaking. They never seemed to think that a debate could be exhausted as long as they were able to make another speech. Time after time it occurred that debates which ought to have finished in one night were carried over two or three nights, with nothing whatever that was new being added to the information of the House. This abuse—if he might so term it—this inordinate flow of talk, which had now become the habit of the House, was what necessitated this new Rule more than anything else. He entirely agreed with the opinion already expressed, that there was no injury any hon. Member could inflict on the public greater than that of wasting the time of the House. The Resolution was proposed in order to apply a remedy to that special abuse. Then, again, the Obstruction was formerly a special Obstruction, and was rarely resorted to, except on special occasions, to prevent particular Bills from passing—such, for instance, as the Bill for the admission of the Jews into Parliament. Obstruction was never the rule of the House. What was the case now? Obstruction, instead of being reserved for special occasions, was the rule. It was quite true that there had not been much Obstruction lately. The same thing happened last year. At one time there was a lull; but it was felt that it was a calm that could not last. The present circumstances were the same; and there could be very little doubt that the calm and quiet times they had been enjoying lately would not last long. He thought the necessity for an alteration in the Procedure of the House arose from the increased representation of the people in the House of Commons. Formerly the people of the country were not adequately represented; the privileged classes were in a great majority, and the working classes were in a great minority. The result was that the Privileges of the House were used as a bulwark to protect the rights of the people, and any infraction of the privileges, rights, and power of the minority was always viewed with great jealousy. Here, again, there had been a marked change. Instead of the masses of the people being in a minority in the representation of the House, they had now a much more efficient representation than they ever had before, and were in a large majority. He quite agreed that they were not even yet represented as largely as they ought to be; and he concurred in the views of the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold), who advocated the extension of household suffrage to the counties. Nevertheless, the representation of the people in the working classes was much greater now than it had ever been before; and, what was more, they had an additional protection for the free exercise of the franchise in the ballot. Should the Conservative Party say, "That is all very well, but how about our protection; ought not we to be protected now we are in the minority?" his reply was that that was an argument which ought not to be used. The privileges of the monied and landed classes needed no protection, because it seemed to him that those classes were always able to take care of themselves. But even if they were afraid of losing their protection in the House of Commons, they ought to support the Resolution, because the monied and landed interest had another Chamber ever ready, even to endanger the Government, or the peace and welfare of the country, in order to guard their own Privileges whenever they saw them in any way attacked. He should not have said this much if his opinions had not been personally referred to in the course of the debate. The Question before the House was, whether there was any real cause now for a change of their Rules? He thought there was a great demand for a change on the part of the people themselves, in order to restore to the House the character which it used to possess of being able to transact the Business of the country. It was also felt that it was absolutely necessary to push forward the Business of the country, which was of an urgent character, and had already got greatly in arrear. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) told them, on the 20th of February, that the Government had at that moment in contemplation various measures of the highest importance, and in which the country was deeply interested; and the noble Marquess further stated that it would be impossible to deal with them unless some alteration were made in the present mode of Procedure. He did not think the noble Marquess ever uttered truer words. He was sure there was an urgent desire for an alteration on the part of the country; and it was the duty of the House to pass such Rules as would enable the Government to forward such legislation as the circumstances of the times imperatively demanded. [An hon. MEMBER: *Clôture.*] He did not often trouble the House, and he had very few more words to say. It was freely admitted by hon. Members who had spoken against the proposition of the Government that some reform in the mode of Procedure was required. It was generally acknowledged that the mode in which the Business of the country had been obstructed was a disgrace and a discredit to the House of Commons. But hon. Members opposite wished to wait a little longer. He thought the House had waited long enough. It was on the 20th of February, about five weeks ago, that this very debate was commenced; and on that occasion, although he did not hear the words himself, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) was reported to have said—

> "But I cannot sit down without making one appeal to the House generally. We are, as a House, on our trial. Nothing that can be done in the way of restriction or regulation will meet this evil properly. There is only one way in which to meet it, and that is by our own resolution to perform our duties in a sensible, in a workmanlike, and at the same time in a reasonable and gentlemanly manner."—[3 *Hansard*, cclxvi. 1159.]

This was the third year of the present Parliament; and had their work been done in a sensible, a reasonable, or a workmanlike manner? He confessed that he was not of that opinion, and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman if he himself thought so? The right hon. Gentleman spoke these words on the 20th of February, five weeks ago, and the House was still engaged upon the very same debate. No doubt, part of the delay had been occasioned by proceedings in "another place," which necessitated the opinion of the House of Commons being taken whether the other House should be allowed to override the feeling and judgment of the country. Personally, he confessed that Her Majesty's Government were justified in refusing to accept the Motion of the House of Lords, and in appealing to the House of Commons for an expression of opinion upon it. At all events, there they were, on the 30th of March, still discussing a question which was introduced to the notice of the House on the 20th of February. Most hon. Members appreciated the conduct of the Government in their honest efforts to protect life and property in Ireland. ["Oh, oh!"] He had no wish to appeal to hon. Members below the Gangway; but he would appeal to the Liberal Members, and he was satisfied that there were very few Representatives of the people who would not support the Government when they were endeavouring to do their best to restore law and order in Ireland. These were some of the grounds which induced him to vote for the Resolutions of the Government. He would not prescribe which Resolution should come first. He left that to the Government, and it was only fair and reasonable that they should lay down their own course. But he did appeal to all Liberal Members to give their support to the Ministry in their honest endeavours to rescue the House and its proceedings from the contempt and ridicule which, he was sorry to see, were slowly but surely gathering around them.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, I am sure that all those who have sat in this House for a good many years with the hon. Gentleman the Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), and who have marked his independent and, hitherto, consistent course as a defender of the rights of the House against successive and opposing Ministries, must have listened with mingled feelings—partly of amusement, partly of regret; I may say, also, partly of apprehension—to the speech which he has just delivered. It struck me that the hon. Member spoke almost as if he were under the sense of some embarrassment, and some little difficulty, in reconciling his present position with his past action; and that it was owing to this feeling that he hit out a little wildly. I am not surprised that the hon. Gentleman should have felt some difficulty in his way, because here is the position from which he started two years ago. His words then were very few, but they were very clear. This is what he said on the 26th February, 1880, with regard to the *clôture*—

> "He trusted that there was no sort of possibility of its being adopted, and that any such proposal would meet with the most determined opposition."—[3 *Hansard*, ccl. 1488.]

I can quite understand that he has had two years to turn round in; and let us hope that he has done it to his own satisfaction. It must be admitted that, although his change has been tolerably rapid, he has not been quite so quick in his movements as some others we see on the Benches opposite. Reference has been made to various instances. It is not necessary to repeat all the utterances that have been made on this subject; but there is one Member of the Government whom I am sorry not to see in his place at this moment—the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education (Mr. Mundella)—who appears to have made a sharper turn on this question than anybody else. I hold in my hand an extract from a speech which the right hon. Gentleman made at Sheffield on the 2nd of February in the present year, just four days before the Session opened, and this is what the right hon. Gentleman then said—

> "As to the *clôture*, it would never be proposed by the Government, because they were as anxious as the Conservatives were to preserve the rights of minorities."

Well, Sir, this is a striking illustration of the wisdom of the advice given in an American book, and once referred to by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright)—"Don't prophesy unless you know." Unfortunately, the right hon. Gentleman did not know at the time he made that speech that at that very moment Her Majesty's Government had already decided upon introducing the *clôture*. "But," says the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), "I never knew an occasion on which greater unanimity prevailed among the Members of our Party than prevails among us now." I do believe that upon the main point there is a good deal of unanimity among hon. Members opposite. That is to say, that there certainly are a great number of hon. Gentlemen opposite, whom we expected to see take a different course, who are unanimous in the opinion that they must vote for the Government on this occasion. There is no mystery about the matter, because we have been told by one of themselves how it happens that they have arrived at that unanimous opinion. The hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) told us the whole secret. The hon. Member said—"I hate the *clôture* as much as any of you do," and he gave uncommonly good reasons for doing so; but he added, "Although I hate the *clôture*, if I do not vote for it, the Government perhaps may go out." It is evident, therefore, that if the hon. Member hates the *clôture*, he loves the Government more. It is not for me to blame hon. Members opposite whose consciences dictate that course to them. I am glad to see that the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Committee of the Council on Education has returned to his place, and, as I would not say anything with reference to him in his absence that I would not say in his presence, I will state that I have just referred to a speech delivered by him at Sheffield on the 2nd of February last, in which he said—

> "As to the *clôture*, it would never be proposed by the Government, because they were as anxious as the Conservatives were to preserve the rights of minorities."

MR. MUNDELLA: I beg to assure the right hon. Gentleman that what I said was, that the Government would never propose the *clôture* without proper safeguards.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I quoted the words precisely as they are given in the report of the right hon. Gentleman's speech in *The Standard.* I do not doubt for a moment that the words he has just stated were used by him on the occasion referred to, and I am glad to have had the opportunity of eliciting from him the fact that he made this qualification. But I must say, with regard both to that qualification and the distinction which the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) drew between the *clôture* pure and simple and the *clôture* as proposed with certain safeguards, that I do not attach very much importance to those differences. It is, however, of importance that we should understand what is the particular form of *clôture* we are about to vote upon, because there seems to have been some little confusion with regard to the language of the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott). As I understand, the hon. and learned Member moves that no alteration of our Rules of Procedure will be satisfactory which involves the voting of the *clôture* by a majority. By that I understand him to mean that he does not intend to name any particular majority that he would require to have, and that he simply asks the House to pronounce against the *clôture* being voted by a bare majority. That, I infer, is the distinction which he draws; and in that respect his Amendment differs from the Amendments, of which Notice has been given, by the hon. Member for Caithness (Sir Tollemache Sinclair) and the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), both of which name the proportionate majorities which they require for the purpose of the *clôture* being voted. Well, Sir, as I have pointed out, the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton leaves the proportion of the majority an open question; it merely affirms that the voting of the *clôture* by a bare majority would not be satisfactory. ["No!"] An hon. Member says "No!" but that, at all events, is the meaning which the hon. and learned Member himself attaches to his Amendment. Such is the meaning also which, I believe, the House attaches to it, and which, I understand, is attached to it by the country. For my own part, I am bound to say that I have a strong objection to the *clôture* in any form. But I understand there are many hon. Members who take a different view of the matter, and who, while they are of opinion that the *clôture* is desirable, will join in the protest of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton against the *clôture* with a bare majority. There is another point upon which I should like to say a few words, because it has reference to a subject partly of a personal character. My right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), I think, and some other Gentlemen, have made observations in the course of the debate as to the Government not having, as they say, made any "formal communication" to the Leaders of the Opposition in regard to these Rules. I think it is only right to state that, shortly before the opening of the Session, the Prime Minister did communicate to me a draft of the Rules which he was about to propose, and he gave me the opportunity of consulting with my Friends. He did not exactly come to me and say, "I wish to consult with you as to what we shall do," but he gave me the opportunity of making observations with regard to these Rules; and if I could have seen my way, by any communication with him, to facilitate the proceedings of the Government, I should have been most happy to have made that communication. But, as I explained to him, whilst I agreed substantially with almost the whole of the other Rules which the Government proposed, and upon which I thought we might have come to an agreement in the ordinary manner across the Table of the House, there was one Rule—namely, the first of the series—on which, I said, there would be a sharp divergence of opinion. I thought it right to give the right hon. Gentleman that explanation, and felt that in so doing I was meeting the communication of the Government in a spirit which I hoped they would see no reason to complain of. Now, I am quite of opinion with the right hon. Gentleman in the statement which he made at the beginning of this debate—that the question of some amendment of the Rules of Procedure was one which had forced itself on the attention of the House, and had been, for a considerable time, a matter of more or less anxious consideration. But he said, in the first place, that this was a matter not so much for the Government as for the House itself to consider; it was not a Party Question, but one in which the House was interested and had to decide. But, he added, experience proved to us that there was no use in multiplying Committees; because Committee after Committee sat, examined witnesses, and made Reports, while, really, little or nothing came from them. "In fact," said the right hon. Gentleman very properly, "you want a propelling power, besides Committees; and the Government are about to prepare it." I think the Government were quite right in offering to supply that propelling power. But I say, also, that while they rightly submit to the House those provisions which they think ought to be adopted, the House ought to be allowed freely to discuss and decide upon them. When I speak of freely discussing the Government proposals, I do not mean merely that we should be at liberty to discuss, to amend, or to oppose every proposal which the Government brings forward, because that is a kind of liberty which the right hon. Gentleman could not deny us—I have no objection, of course, to make to the Government using all their powers of argument, their influence and advice, for the purpose of inducing the majority to accept their views and to set aside ours—but I say it is not free discussion when there is imported into it considerations which have nothing to do with the merits of the question; that is to say, when you are told you are not to vote according to your view of its merits, but under the threat that unless a certain measure is passed something is to happen. The Government may be so rash and so ill-advised as to say—"In consequence of our being unable to have our way, we will throw up altogether the conduct of affairs, and thereby throw the country into a state of confusion." This, I say, is altogether contrary to free discussion; and the conduct of the Government in the present instance furnishes a very bad omen for the Rules we are asked to pass, if they are enforced by such arguments and accepted by Gentlemen under such a pressure as I have described. But let me turn for a moment to the argument which the right hon. Gentleman produced in support of his own Rules. We have had, of course, other arguments from the Colleagues of the right hon. Gentleman, and some things have been said by them which have thrown light upon parts of the Government proposals; but I prefer to go as far as possible on the case of the Prime Minister. He told us that what the Government were about to propose were Rules for the purpose of meeting the normal condition and exigencies of the House in order to deal with cases of wilful Obstruction and Urgency. With regard to wilful Obstruction, he said that must be dealt with specially, and he referred to the Standing Orders that we passed three years ago, and which he proposed to strengthen; while, with regard to cases of Urgency, he did not propose to deal with them by means of these Resolutions, because, as he said, they must be dealt with as they arose. I should say we are perfectly ready to accept any reasonable amendment of the Rules of the House for the purpose of meeting cases of wilful Obstruction, and to concur in passing a Rule analogous to them for dealing with cases of Urgency. "But," says the right hon. Gentleman, "that is not the point I want to impress upon the House; I want to impress upon the House that for years past the Business of the House has been increasing, and the power of the House to get through its Business has been decreasing; I want to call attention to that, and to propose some remedy for the evil." Well, Sir, we want, as far as possible, to give the right hon. Gentleman assistance and cooperation in attaining that result. But the right hon. Gentleman says that the first and most important of all the proposals he has to make is that we should relieve the House of part of its Business by a process of devolution; and he emphasizes that by saying that no restrictive measures, even if we were prepared to give the Government all they asked for in that respect, would meet the case. This is a most interesting and important statement. It is one which, whatever our feelings may be, deserves careful inquiry and discussion, and is a subject of the highest interest. Unfortunately, the Prime Minister does not think it a matter which he can bring forward in the first instance, and so he puts it aside and takes up the most disputable and the most difficult of all the proposals he makes—namely, that with regard to the *clôture*. Now, in proposing the *clôture*, the right hon. Gentleman made this observation. He said that in times past the House had by degrees, as it found its Business extend, set aside, one after the other, the privileges of private Members in order to make better way for Public Business. The privileges of private Members have been dealt with, undoubtedly, in a summary manner. When I read the speech of the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India, it occurred to me that there was a considerable resemblance between the way in which he treated some private Members, and the way in which the constable treats the civilian when he says—"Now mind, if you kill me, it is murder; if I kill you, it is nothing." The noble Lord said, in effect, to the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton)—"If you obstruct me, it is *clôture;* if I obstruct you, it is nothing." But that is not the tone of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, who said that private Members had been called upon to submit to an invasion of their privileges. He gave us some instances—such as the Rule relating to discussion on the Orders of the Day; the Rule of Progress in Committee; and another, which I believe he mentioned. Now, all these are alterations which are entirely in harmony with the other Rules which he is now going to propose, or which, at least, I hope he is going to propose, for facilitating the conduct of Business and diminishing the number of occasions on which there might be discussions and expenditure of time; but they have nothing to do with the question of *clôture,* which goes far indeed beyond any of the Rules or precedents to which the right hon. Gentleman referred. Will the House consider for a moment what are the principal forms of Obstruction? You have one form of Obstruction in Members speaking against time; another, in Members speaking too often; then you have the frequency of repeated Motions for Adjournment; and the multiplying of frivolous Questions. These are the great heads under which you place the various forms of Obstruction. I am not now speaking of wilful Obstruction, which must be dealt with as a separate offence. There is the 2nd Rule, which deals with Motions for Adjournment before Public Business is reached; the 3rd Rule, which limits debate on Motions for Adjournment; the 5th Rule, which gives Mr. Speaker or the Chairman of Committees power to call attention to tedious repetition, and to direct a Member to discontinue his speech; and the Rule, that if Mr. Speaker considers any Motion for Adjournment is made for the purpose of delay, he may forthwith put the Question from the Chair. These Rules, I say, will largely diminish the opportunities for Obstruction; and when you take them in connection with the other provisions, such as for putting an end to discussions on the postponement of the Preambles of Bills, and on the Question of Mr. Speaker leaving the Chair, hon. Members will see that we have the means of greatly facilitating the progress of Business in the House. Now, Sir, we are prepared to accept the principle and spirit of almost the whole of these Rules; and I must say that the addition proposed to be made to the "Half-past Twelve" Rule is one which I consider of the highest importance, and I hope that when we reach that regulation, some further provision will be made so as to exempt from the operation of the Rule questions of appointment of Standing Committees. These are practical matters which, if you will deal with them in a practical spirit, and according to the practice and precedents of our Predecessors, you will be able to adjust without heat or animosity, and, as I believe, with a full knowledge of what the effect of the alterations you make will be. But I venture to say with regard to this Resolution of the *clôture,* that no man can say what will be its effect. It causes great animosity, great excitement, and, I will undertake to say, a good deal of dissatisfaction even amongst that unanimous Party which sits opposite. ["No!"] Hon. Members say "No!" Well, I am very sorry if it does not. Matters have gone farther than I was prepared for, if the consciences of hon. Members opposite have become so seared. But I will leave them to settle that point among themselves, and will only add that, however satisfied they may be, I am filled with greater apprehension when I see them entering with such a light heart on what appears to be so serious a matter. I say you are raising a false issue altogether, when you merely reply to our objections to the *clôture* by saying—"You must not deny that the present state of the Business of the House is unsatisfactory."

We do not meet you with that. We say we are prepared to accept the greater part—the practical part—of your proposals; but we object to one of them, the working of which we do not understand, but which we feel will be productive of a great deal of evil. I believe that Rule will have a bad effect upon the conduct of debates in this House; that it will tell for evil on the position of the Speaker; and I should think it will also tell badly, to some extent, on the character and conduct of Members of the House itself, because we shall be left in the unnatural position of not being allowed to discuss the various subjects presented to our consideration with that freedom to which we have hitherto been accustomed. We are told that the *clôture* will never be abused, and that we are always arguing on its abuse. But, Sir, the Forms of the House are abused; and it must be remembered that the *clôture* may be abused likewise, because you will be exercising this power under the eye of the public, under the pressure of the constituencies, and especially of the caucuses. You are extremely likely to find that the pressure of the caucuses and the comments which will be made on your proceedings by the Press, if those proceedings are disagreeable to the majority out-of-doors, will be of a character which will unfavourably influence your debates. But you will, perhaps, say—" That does not signify, because the opinion out-of-doors is the opinion of this House. Why are we the majority if we do not represent public opinion out-of-doors?" That is all very well if you are to look upon this as giving over the Government of the country bound hand-and-foot to the majority; but what we have always said was, that it was the high privilege of this House to stand up against the majority of the moment, or the power, whatever it may be, of the day, and demand that the opinion of the minority, however unpalatable for the moment, should have at least a fair and full hearing. We are told—" What has that to do now with the House of Commons? Things are very much altered. If you want to discuss go out-of-doors and discuss—discuss in the Press or on the platform." Are we really to take that as the advice of the Liberal Party? I think if that is to be the case, and if this House is to be turned into a mere Court of Registration to register the decisions of the tribunals of the Press and the platform, you will, depend upon it, find a great falling off in the number of Gentlemen who will think it worth their while to come and take part in the Business and proceedings of the House. Another alternative has been offered us by the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), who is good enough to point to the House of Lords and say—" If you Gentlemen who are Conservatives find yourselves in a minority, and if you find you cannot argue your cases fairly and fully before this House, you have got another remedy, because you can go to the House of Lords." I should like to know if anyone is prepared to advise us to go to the House of Lords and say—" We have come to the House of Lords; the House of Commons refuses to give us freedom of speech, will you give it to us?" That is what the hon. Member for Swansea suggests; and what I say is, that I want to keep the power of free discussion in our own House. I do not want to go to the House of Lords; I do not want to go to the Press or to the platform—I want to have freedom of debate secured to us here; and I undertake to say that when you part with that, you part with what is the most precious jewel you have. But, then, it is said—" Oh! yes; you are arguing entirely on extravagant and extreme cases." Well, I do not know what "extravagant and extreme cases" are, when I see these sudden conversions taking place. It may be all very well this year, or next year; but two years seems to be a long time in the memories of some Representatives.

MR. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: The right hon. Gentleman cheers me. He says, rather pointedly, " Hear, hear!" but two years ago I was as strong against the *clôture* as I am now.

MR. GLADSTONE: And other subjects?

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Oh; as to "other subjects," I do not know that it weakens my present argument, if it could be said that there had been a change. When we were in command of a majority in this House, we did not use the influence we had to bring about the *clôture*. On the contrary, under every temptation that way, we always protested against it; and so distinctly protested against it, that when a newspaper which supports the Government thought it desirable to call me in as a witness on their side, it was good enough to cut off just half the sentence I spoke. That does not alter what I was about to say. I am told—"You are taking extreme cases; and, after all, there is no danger, because this matter is not to be in the hands of the House, or in the hands of the Ministry of the day, but in those of the Speaker." I think it is a very serious thing indeed, a very serious question whether you ought to put the Speaker into this position. If this is to be a power which is to be frequently used, I venture to say the position of the Speaker will become intolerable, because, upon almost every occasion, he will be made the subject of comment and of attack—if not in the House, at any rate out of the House. He will be made the subject of comment and attack both when he exercises the *clôture* and when he does not. He may be as impartial as an Archangel; but he will always be charged with partiality by those who feel disappointment at the course he has adopted. I venture to say, moreover, that this is not an imaginary danger. I heard the Chancellor of the Duchy speak just now of the Speakers he remembered in the course of his Parliamentary career. No doubt, the Speakers whom he recollects, and whom he mentioned to us, and who are always held in great honour, have been men upon whose impartiality we could thoroughly rely, and in whom we were justified in placing implicit confidence. I remember the circumstances under which they were elected. They were elected under circumstances which would remove them from great temptation to anything in the nature of impartiality. The right hon. Gentleman will remember the circumstances under which Sir Charles Manners Sutton was set aside, and Mr. Abercrombie was chosen, at the commencement of a Parliament in which, I think, the Prime Minister himself held a seat in the Ministry. What were the grounds on which Sir Charles Manners Sutton was objected to? He was objected to because he had taken some improper part in the action of the new Ministry; and when that charge was disproved and abandoned—and here is the point to which I wish to draw attention—the ground on which Mr. Abercrombie was particularly recommended was this, that in the Reformed Parliament it was very desirable, for the well-working of the Reform Act, that there should be a Speaker in sympathy with that measure which had just been passed. That is drawing matters very fine indeed, but it is an indication of the sort of danger that may occur in the present case. It may be found necessary, when a new Speaker is elected, to appoint one who is in sympathy with the New Rules that have been passed, so that they will not be mere dead letters, but will be worked in accordance with the spirit of the Party who might then be in a position to nominate the Speaker of the day. I am told that the Speaker might be in a difficulty, in judging by the mere Business of the House, or by the mere cries from one Party or another, as to what is the evident sense of the House. But let me ask what is to be done in this case —which I have not yet heard mentioned—Suppose, after a debate has gone through one evening, a question arises as to an adjournment, and supposing the Ministry of the day think it undesirable that the debate should be adjourned, and divide against it, and have a majority against it? As matters now stand, if the minority are tolerably strong, and they think they have a good case, they will divide over and over again. The Speaker, after two or three divisions, will have had a clear indication that the body of the House, or the majority of the House, do not desire to have an adjournment, and, therefore, desire to close the debate. What is the Speaker to do in such a case? He almost necessarily, I think, would have to put the Question, and then you would have the *clôture* adopted, on the very first evening, perhaps, of the debate, when the Opposition has not had time to master the facts brought forward, or to array their forces. That is what may happen when the Speaker is in the Chair. But what I think much more serious and much more difficult is the case of the Chairman of Committees. I cannot help observing that all through this debate the Government, and those who have spoken for this proposal, have, almost studiously, omitted to mention the case of the Chairman of Committees; and yet I will undertake to say that nine-tenths of the cases of Obstruction have taken place in

Committee. In the Chairman of Committees you have an Officer of the House who is always a Gentleman of ability and standing in the House, a Gentleman in whom we always have had confidence, and who—as far as we have had experience of a large number of Gentlemen who have been Chairmen of Committees —we have always found to be fair and impartial in the discharge of his duties. Still, the weight and authority of the Chairman of Committees are by no means those of the Speaker, and the questions which will come before him are innumerable. How are you to deal with those questions of Obstruction which will take place in Committee? How are you going to deal with repeated Amendments on clause after clause which you will not be able to put a stop to by exercising the *clôture* once or twice? You will have to repeat the *clôture* at every turn; and when you have done that you will find, in a large proportion of cases, that Members will indignantly resent it, and endeavour to defeat your object by making new proposals such as they have it perfectly in their power to make in Committee. It does seem to me that the position of Chairman of Committees would be a most painful one. He would very soon find himself in the position of having remarks made about him, and the House might be put into relations with him which would greatly enfeeble his authority. I must apologize to the House for having detained them so long at this hour of the night; but the question is one of the very highest importance. We are taking a step of which it is impossible to calculate the consequences. It does seem to me, in spite of the manner in which this Resolution has been pressed upon us, and the urgency with which we are told we must adopt certain measures to deal with the Obstructive Party, that these are measures which we might easily adopt to get rid of a momentary difficulty, but which would leave greater difficulties behind them. It is the old fable of the horse and the stag. The horse allows the man to mount him, and never gets rid of him—"*Non equitem dorso, frænum non depulit ore.*" But I have attempted to argue; and there are occasions, of which I am afraid this is one, when argument is of little or no use—it is now no question of argument, except of argument with the master of many legions, all of whom are sworn to obedience. I can but raise my voice; I can but urge the House to consider; I can but press upon them my strong conviction that, in taking the step we are now asked to take, we are taking one that endangers the position of this famous House and the liberties of which we have been so proud. I will not venture to detain the House by reading more than one line or so; but I hope I may be allowed to read just one quotation from a book written by a famous Foreigner who studied the condition of England some years ago—I mean M. de Montalembert. These are his words, speaking of the difference between the English and the Foreign system—

> "England is not like these Continental gardens and parks with straight avenues and well-trimmed trees, where you look forward and backward, right and left, and see on all sides neat lanes watered by vigilant gardeners; it is a vast forest, with roads both straight and crooked, abominable sloughs, charming lakes, centenary oaks and scented briars, where all is spontaneous and vigorous, abounding in every part with life and vigour."

Sir, I object both to the French word and the French institution.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am glad to see, Sir, that the right hon. Baronet, though he objects both to the French word and the French institution, does not object at all to a quotation from a French writer; and I myself was struck with the peculiar appropriateness of one of the most marked phrases of that quotation, over which it appeared to me that the right hon. Baronet travelled rather lightly. He said that England had, amongst other figures he described, an "abomiable slough." Our contention, put in a homely phrase, is this—that the House of Commons has got into one of these abominable sloughs; and that the question is, How is it to get out of it? Now, Sir, at this hour of the night, I shall endeavour to select, as carefully as I can, the points on which I may have to touch; but, after a debate so lengthened, and on a question so important, there are several points on which I must touch clearly and distinctly. I am very glad my right hon. Friend (Mr. Mundella) came into the House at a very opportune moment—not, indeed, in time to save 200 or 300 Gentlemen sitting opposite from enormous vocal exertions, but in time to show that the right hon. Baronet had quoted from an incorrect and untrue version of his speech. ["No, no!"] Not incorrect and untrue? Then I will give hon. Members the advantage of further light on the subject. The right hon. Gentleman was reported to have said some brief words to the effect that he would not have the *clôture* absolutely; but what he did say was, "that he would never have it without qualifications—that we should never propose it without qualifications." Those were his actual words, and the difference is important, because I, myself, am ready to adopt and make my own the declaration of my right hon. Friend, and say I should not have proposed, and should be most averse to proposing, and in the present circumstances—or in any circumstances I can anticipate—should refuse to propose, the closing power without qualifications. Now, what are the qualifications we have introduced? The first point on which I must join issue with the right hon. Baronet is the point upon which he has touched—namely, the question upon which we are going to vote. He says the question upon which we are going to vote is only whether the closing power may be brought into operation by a bare majority; and he says that that is the construction which my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott) puts on his Motion. I must say I did not hear it; but, whether it is so or not, I apprehend it is totally impossible for him to construe his Motion. He must accept the authoritative interpretation which may be put upon the Motion by those who are qualified to interpret it for the House, and whose interpretation cannot be disputed. I venture to assert with considerable confidence the direct reverse of what has been said by the right hon. Gentleman. I say that the question we are to decide to-night is not the question whether the *clôture*, by a bare majority, as it is called, is or is not to be had. The question is—Whether we are to introduce into our system, in any form, a limitation of the quantity of debate? And in order that I may give hon. Gentlemen every advantage, I will state in a still more definite form that which I have to state, and which I state with the utmost confidence. I hope my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Brighton, if he be in his place, will do me the favour to listen to what I say. It is this, if the Amendment become the Main Question, and, after having become the Main Question, be recorded it as it stands—and the words we are debating are the present words of the Amendment—if the Amendment as it stands be recorded as the deliberate and final decision of the House, then it will not be competent to anyone to move the introduction of any closing power by a majority in any shape whatever. That is the question; and let it be distinctly understood what we say is that matters in this House have reached a state which is not adequately appreciated by right hon. Gentlemen opposite. I hope they will do me the justice to admit that in introducing this subject to the House I did not introduce it in the spirit of controversy and Party, and I shall endeavour strictly to adhere to that position as well as I am able; and all that I charge against them now is this, that I do not think they have looked as closely at this matter as we have. ["Oh, oh!"] Surely that is an innocent thing to say. We are more bound to look closely at the matter than they are, and that is the extent of my charge against them. If they had looked at it as closely as we have, I do not believe they would have indulged in the exaggerated predictions which have formed the staple and substance of nearly all the speeches we have heard from them. What we contend is, that there are certain technical amendments which you can make in your Rules which will do good. There are great schemes of a division of labour, and devolution of power, which may, perhaps, be patiently elaborated, carefully tried, and gradually developed, and which will be of immense importance, but of which it is impossible at this moment to assume the acceptance or success upon any large scale. But, in addition to all that, although it be true that you may deal with offences of Obstruction penally, that is not enough. We have reached a point when you must look at the quantity as well as the quality of debate, and see whether the time has not arrived when, in moderation and with carefully-devised guarantees, some limits ought not to be administered. That is the contention upon which we are to decide to-night—we on this side being pledged to the affirmative, and those who oppose us—the hon. and learned Member for Brighton and any others with him—being pledged to the negative. The right hon. Gentleman says this question ought to be freely discussed, and that it cannot be freely discussed unless the Government are prepared to accept any results of the discussion at which the House may arrive. Now, Sir, I put it with some confidence to the right hon. Gentleman, with the experience he has of the working of political authorities in this House, that he is here in contradiction with himself. He was good enough to quote what I had said in a description in which I endeavoured to convey to the House, that the House itself, through its Committees—its natural and legitimate instrument—had totally failed in dealing with this question, and why? Not because the Committees were incompetent to discuss it; not because the arguments were not brought here and there with great ingenuity and pains; but because there was a want of a guiding authority and a propelling power; and unless the House could supply that power itself, no choice remained to it but either to continue in its present embarrassments, or call in that kind of authority and influence which belongs of necessity to the Government of the day, having the confidence of the House. The right hon. Gentleman commended me for that. But what is the meaning of the authority and influence of the Government of the day, if, after all, it comes only to this, that we are to submit our arguments, but we are wrong if we attach our existence even to the most vital portions of this plan? I am not one of those who have any exaggerated anticipations of the working of this scheme. I have not described it as being invested with magic powers; and I will by-and-bye state how far I think it is, in its intention and possible power, from producing some of the results ascribed to it. Still, we have undertaken the responsibility—and it is a great responsibility—of proposing to the House the introduction of a measure which is in principle novel; and in making that proposal under the circumstances under which we make it, and considering the necessities of the case, I say it is our duty, as was said by my noble Friend the Secretary of State for India, to support that proposition by every legitimate means we can bring to bear. As to threats, I know not what the right hon. Gentleman means; and, judging from the vagueness of his language, I do not think he knows himself. If the right hon. Gentleman means what was stated by my noble Friend, I say it is not fair to call that a threat. The Government have a right to be the judges of their own honour and integrity in a case of this gravity, where the House of Commons is in danger of being reduced to impotence and to a disgraceful state of things; and when the Government undertakes the task of endeavouring to retrieve it from that mischief, I say it is impossible to conceive an assumption of graver responsibility; and no Government which do not, as to their main outlines and principles, know their own mind on such a subject as that, is fit to hold for a day the reins of power. At the same time, I am very far from admitting that on that account there is any need for our discussing this question in a spirit of Party, or for our framing our measures with a view to Party aid; and here I will refer briefly to what was stated by the hon. and learned Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard) in his able speech. The hon. and learned Member put a question, I think not unfairly, and I will endeavour to meet him in terms as explicit as his challenge to me. He said—"One of two things; either this is a measure for the common good of all, or it is a measure for putting forward Party measures." Just let us see how that stands. In one sense I admit that these plans for the reform of Procedure are favourable to legislation such as may be agreeable to the majority of the House. Do you consider that to stamp them with the character of Party measures? I say no; and I confidently say, in answer to the hon. and learned Gentleman, that this is a plan devised for the common good of all. But if you are to improve your Procedure, and relieve the House of Commons from its present deplorable condition, you cannot possibly do otherwise than increase the power of the majority to perform its work. Although, happily, it is always the case in this country that there is much which is dissociated from the interests of Party, yet, unquestionably, the majority has opinions of its own which it is sent here to propagate; and I do not hesitate to admit that in that sense a reform of Procedure is favourable to legislation in the spirit of the majority. But would that be a reason why the

Procedure should not be reformed? It is a very different question indeed, as I think, which the hon. and learned Gentleman had to review. I do not think, when he stigmatized this as a Party measure in one of the alternatives, he at all intended that. I think he meant—Is it a device for restraining liberty of speech on the part of the minority of the House of Commons? That is a question you have a right to put, but which I do not hesitate to answer wholly in the negative. There is not a word said by the hon. and learned Gentleman in his speech with regard to the privilege of speech, and its priceless value as an absolutely essential condition of our political life, which I do not accept and am not ready to echo. But I go further, and assure the right hon. Baronet and others who have spoken that it fills us with astonishment to understand by what process hon. Members opposite have filled their minds with the dire apprehensions and horror they entertain. It has been said that there will be tyrannical Speakers—tools of the Government—who will use this *clotûre*, one after the other, to put down liberty of speech. Is that so? The right hon. Gentleman knows something of Speakers, and he has not accepted the idea of a tyrannical Speaker. He knows perfectly well that there never can be a tyrannical Speaker in this House. ["Oh!"] I am glad to observe, and I think it right to record, that that expression of dissent came from a very peculiar quarter.

MR. HEALY rose to Order, and said, the remark did not come from the Irish Members, but from the Conservative Benches.

MR. NEWDEGATE: I beg to say it was I who made the exclamation.

MR. GLADSTONE: I sincerely apologize to the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) for the assumption I made; but I am bound to say, not as an apology or an extenuation, but in self-defence, that the local association, symbolizing, perhaps, political accord, has become so great that it is impossible in every case to know from whom an exclamation comes. With regard to the hon. Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate), I must say that I think, from his long experience, he ought to have known more of the position of the Speaker than to suppose it possible that such a case could arise. But I will give my view of the position of the Speaker. The Speaker does not govern this House by the exercise of power. He governs it by influence, and his influence depends upon his winning the confidence of the House. Without the confidence of the House, he cannot continue Speaker for a month; and the confidence of the minority is as essential to that as the confidence of the majority. It is on that account that I am surprised when I hear the references that are made to the possibility of the exercising an oppressive power, not by the present Speaker, but by the abstract Speaker who looms in the distance. Even the matters to which the right hon. Baronet referred, so far as they go, support me in what I say. The circumstances were very peculiar circumstances under which Mr. Abercrombie (afterwards Lord Dunfermline) was elected to the Chair of this House. There was more political colour in that election than there was in subsequent elections to the Chair. It was only fair to those who at that time constituted the Liberal Party to say that they felt—as I have always been assured they felt—that the act required special justification, and the justification they gave was alleged political intrigue on the part of Sir Charles Manners Sutton, while Speaker, in conjunction with the Ministry of Sir Robert Peel, but anterior to the operations which brought about a change of Ministry. But what was the consequence? The consequence was this—and it is well worth recording—that Lord Dunfermline, though, I believe, a man of the strictest honour, and, undoubtedly, of very great ability, and to whom we owe some of the greatest Parliamentary services ever rendered by a Speaker, yet allowed his Speakership to be coloured by something like political partizanship, and it terminated after four years' duration. Does not that support the doctrine I lay down—that every Speaker, who desires to be firm in his position, must possess the confidence of the entire House, and if he were inclined to abuse his power he would find it impracticable to do so? The fact is this—You have painted pictures of a tyrannizing majority; but if there were a tyrannizing majority in this House, does not everyone know that the minority of the House, constituting the regular Opposition, has in its hands the means of resistance not justifiable under ordinary circumstances, but justifiable against a tyrannizing majority, which are amply sufficient for its defence? Have you not seen what can be done by a body of some 20 Irish Representatives; and do you suppose it is not in the power of 200, or sometimes 300, Gentlemen, by using the Forms of the House against a tyrannizing majority, to secure themselves against oppression? As far as I am able to form a judgment, it is impossible to conceive apprehensions more entirely dreamy and groundless than those which have possessed the minds of hon. Gentlemen opposite. They seem to think there is some transformation about to pass over the spirit of English life. They seem to suppose that henceforward all majorities are to be actuated by this abominable spirit; are at once to renounce the traditions of Englishmen, in which they have grown and passed their political existence. I will, if you like, allow that monstrous paradox. I will grant that improbability, reaching to incredulity, to be a realized fact. I say, if it were a realized fact, you would still have in your own hands the amplest powers of self-defence, and no person could work the House of Commons upon any principles that would ever allow of the doing of systematic injustice to those who constitute the Opposition in this House. Sir, the right hon. Gentleman seemed annoyed because someone had referred to the House of Lords, and pointed out that the Gentlemen opposite are the very last persons who need conceive these exaggerated alarms. What is their case? Their case is that they are to be a minority of the House, who are to be absolutely oppressed. Is it no satisfaction to know that they have the House of Lords at their back? If they think that the House of Lords would have no power for their defence in the extraordinary case that they have supposed, all that I can say is, that they must then believe something else more outrageous still—namely, not only that the Speaker, not only that the majority are engaged in this nefarious enterprize, not only that the House of Lords is impotent, but that the whole nation is perverted and corrupted, for, unless that were so, sound public opinion would support the House of Lords in defending, at least as far as legislative measures were concerned, the rights of an oppressed minority. Well, Sir, I must say it is always a sign of an instructive character when I observe Gentlemen entirely contradict themselves in the course of their own speeches; and within the space, I think, of two minutes I have heard a Gentleman who is a very temperate and much respected Member of Parliament — the Member for Mid Kent (Sir William Hart Dyke)—after having propounded boldly and confidently that this closing power would be ineffective, and would fail for the purposes he ascribed to it—and, I must say, it would entirely fail for any such purposes—immediately went on to say—"We are now asked to make so vast a change that is nothing more or less than a revolution." First of all, the right hon. Gentleman said the power asked for would wholly fail to produce any serious results, and in the next breath he characterized the change as revolutionary. Another contradictor of himself was the hon Gentleman the Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy), on whose speech I wish to make a few comments. He, too, coolly announced that the proposal to introduce a closing power was made with the view to renew the Coercion Bill of last Session. I think I can convey information to the hon. Gentleman. He thinks that it is closure which renders coercion possible in this House. I tell him that it is crime which renders coercion possible. This power was, he says, introduced for the purpose of coercion, and on that account he is going to oppose it; and then he proceeded to say that, after all, it would totally fail when it was met by a determined and, what he called, a malignant Obstruction; so that at the same time that he ascribed to us its purpose, and on account of which purpose he intended to vote against the measure, he said—"The scheme is absurd, and never can attain the end for which it is devised." I am exceedingly indebted to the hon. Member for ascribing to us this most absurd proposition, this proposition which I denounce in stronger terms even than he has used, if it be considered as a means of passing coercion upon the House; and here, Sir, I will venture to refer to a misconstruction of the actual words of the Resolution. According to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Leicestershire (Major General Burnaby), when a discussion on a clause in Committee had begun, and there is a long series of Amendments on the clause, the first happening, perhaps, to be frivolous, the others, possibly, may be very valuable, and if the closing power is applied to the first Amendment it affects the whole of the Amendments, and there is no more debate upon the clause. That, he seriously says, is the effect of the 1st Resolution. He hopes that we shall be able to satisfy him that it is not the effect of the Resolution. Why, Sir, the Resolution is so plain that it cannot be made plainer. What is to happen in the case of the exercise of the closing power? This, and this only, is to happen—the question under discussion shall be put forthwith. What is the question under discussion? It admits of no doubt whatever. It is the question which the Speaker or, in Committee, the Chairman will next put from the Chair. It has no possible application to any other debate or any other question whatever, and has not the smallest effect, therefore, upon the moving of subsequent Amendments. With regard to what the right hon. Gentleman has said concerning the position of the Speaker, I will not say that from one point of view it is not worthy of notice. We must deal in cases of this kind by endeavouring to make that selection of propositions which is, on the whole, the best. I admit it is a new responsibility added to the Chair; but I feel perfectly certain that if the responsibility is found too heavy, the consequence will be the power will be rarely, and perhaps insufficiently, used. From the first I ventured to state, and I re-state most confidently, the power never will be used except in comparatively rare and in very clear cases. And if it overloads the Speaker, or overloads the Chairman of Committees, the consequence of that will be that, in order to maintain the essential conditions of their Office, which absolutely require the confidence of the House in general, they will be obliged to pass by many opportunities and occasions when the reasons of the case would justify the exercise of the power. Even now it is notorious that many things that might be justly taken exception to on the ground of Order are, of necessity, passed by, because it is impossible for anyone in a position like that of the Speaker of Committees to interfere incessantly with the proceedings of the House. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Longford makes an assertion that by means of the closure it is intended to bring in coercion. When the hon. Member takes upon himself to speak of the motives and intentions which are in the minds of Members of the Government, I think I am entitled to meet his assertion with a strong and positive denial. He has no right to make it. He knows nothing of our intentions; he cannot read the interior of our minds; and it is not fair nor just to impute to us an intention which he himself denounces as not only guilty, but absurd, in defiance of our declarations. I can tell the hon. Gentleman, if he is to be the interpreter of our conduct, I will be the interpreter of his. I make no complaint of his junction with hon. Gentlemen opposite; it is a perfectly natural course in his position. He and the "no rent" Party—for that is the best name for them—are but a small fraction of the Irish nation; and, though they are a small fraction, they are a fraction determined to go all lengths. They have one great object in view, and they pursue it with fidelity, constancy, and courage, and that is to enervate the power of this House and to reduce it to impotence. They have another object, subordinate, perhaps, but not unimportant. It is to eject the present Government from power. I make no complaint of them whatever for that. It is part of the policy they pursue. Their policy of "no rent" I look upon as mad and guilty; but they choose their own starting point, and, having chosen it, I cannot wonder I cannot complain that they take steps the best fitted to advance it. They know what is going on in Ireland. They know the views which the present Government entertain as to the means by which the "no rent" Party can be coped with. They know that the Gentlemen who sit opposite do not concur in our views—and most naturally—and with perfect consistency they desire to get rid of the present Government and the supporters of the Land Act, because that Land Act is an Act which they fear. They believe and apprehend that it will win—and it has in some degree won—the people of Ireland away from the Land League. Let me remind the House that the proposition which is now made to the House, though new in form, is not new in substance. I have described it as a proposition intended to limit, with proper guarantees, the quantity of debate even apart from the offence of positive and wilful Obstruction. That is not the first time it has been done. There are two modes of limiting the quantity of debate. One is to stop the length of particular debates. The other is to abolish the opportunities. We have been busy ever since the Reform Act in limiting the quantity of debate by abolishing the opportunities of debate; and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), in an able speech delivered the other night in a spirit of candour and comparative moderation, actually recommended that we should diminish the opportunities now afforded for debate. I ask whether that in principle is not the same thing? It may not be, perhaps, from your point of view; because I admit that if you are determined to say that this closing power is a power to be exercised against the minority of the House, it is not, from your point of view, the same thing. We utterly disbelieve it; for us, it is quite natural to say that the power of free speech, on which you insist for the House at large, is diminished by diminishing the opportunities. If we had proposed that the power of raising a debate on the Question that the Speaker leave the Chair should be taken away, that would be to an extent, at all events, an invasion of the right of free discussion. We are told sometimes that there are many hon. Members on this side of the House who do not like these proposals. I am not surprised that it should be said, because I admit that to me nothing can be more repugnant than the introduction of any limiting proposals whatever. But when I have to choose between two evils, I prefer to take the smaller of the two, and hope to get rid of the greater; and therefore I class myself amongst those who, in that sense, do not like any of these limiting proposals. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire spoke very fairly when he made an admission very different, I must say, from the other statements that have been made. The right hon. Gentleman said—I cannot be sure I quote his exact words, but I do not think I deviate from his intention when I say he said—that if this Rule were passed as it stands, and if it were abused by the majority of the House, the effect would be that the majority of the House would suffer at once in the estimation of the people; and that if we came back to Westminster next year as a Government, we would come back as a Government weakened in our hold upon Parliament and public conscience. That means that the people of the Three Countries would disapprove of this tyrannical use of power, and would cause that those who were guilty should at once discover the result in the comparative weakness to which they were reduced. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) said that we ought not to make the folly or misconduct of the few the measure of the privileges of the many. It is a very sound sentiment, and it is exactly the sentiment which we quote in favour of our plan. What we allege is, that at this moment the misconduct which interferes with our progress is the misconduct of the few, and that the many are the victims of that misconduct. The many came here to perform the duty with which the nation intrusted them; they came here to watch and criticize the Government; and they came here to conduct the Business of Legislation; but the conduct of a few, of an insignificant minority — not absolutely, perhaps, of one political complexion, but certainly not amounting in all to one-twentieth part of the House of Commons—has been the main cause of bringing about this state of things. It is an actual fact, and not a remote apprehension, that the misconduct of the few has measured and has limited the privileges and the powers of the many. I do not at all disguise the fact that we have to deal with other matters besides wilful Obstruction and gross irrelevancy. There is amplitude of speech. It is very necessary that something should be done in that matter. I myself am charged as an offender in this respect. The other day I was taken to task by an hon. Member for the length of my speeches, and I am not prepared to deny it. I think there is good ground for the complaint which the hon. Member made. A great deal of responsibility attaches to one who holds high Office, or is the Leader of a Party; but look at the condition at which we have arrived! The hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) reproved me for amplitude, in perfect good faith, though he is not the Leader of a Party nor the holder of a responsible office—he reproved me for amplitude in a speech which was itself two hours long. Can it be that some change of a mild and reasonable kind is desirable in these respects. You say, and say truly, that the multitude of speakers is constantly increasing, and, with the further extension of the franchise, may still more increase. A cruel aggravation has presented itself to Gentlemen sitting on this side of the House. They have been subjected to pressure which is almost intolerable, and which, I confess, I have wondered at as much as I have admired the patience with which it has been borne. If hon. Gentlemen sitting on this side had spoken during the last two years in the same proportion as the other fractions of the House, I do not believe we should have made any progress at all. This is a matter which is not at all invidious; but one which requires a dispassionate examination. Is it necessary for the House to handle questions at such length as they are usually handled now? The House of Lords determined in a night to appoint a Committee to inquire into the Irish Land Act. We object to the proposal, and offer a Resolution, which is intended to express an opposite conclusion; but that Motion is not disposed of in one night, but it requires four nights. [An hon. MEMBER: Five.] I think it was four, but if it was five it is so much the better for my argument. And why is this? It is not because the House of Lords has less time at their disposal than we have, because they have a great deal more time; but they did not find it necessary to enter into the subject at length. We, however, cannot dispose of it under four nights. If it is to be considered as a political Motion, I have already pointed out that a far graver Motion was disposed of, 51 years ago, as rapidly as the House of Lords disposed of the question to which I refer. That was the case of Lord Ebrington's Motion in 1831, in this House, after the rejection of the Reform Bill by the House of Lords, which was disposed of in a single night. Last year we had 11 nights' debate on the Address, and this year eight nights. Is that really necessary? We ask how is this closing power to apply to it? In my opinion, it will apply to it, not only by a gentle action, but by a double action. I believe that it will be judiciously, cautiously, and fairly exercised by the Speaker in the Chair; and I believe that, as in the case of railways in regard to competition, the mere expectation of competition did a good deal to keep down abuses, the mere apprehension of the exercise of the power will have a gentle but material effect in checking the tendency to inordinate speaking. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) has seen that there are the greatest difficulties in the way of abusing a power of this kind. What is our exact position? We see the case as he does; but I think we see it on both sides. We see the House as it now stands, exhausted with its labours, failing in the performance of its duties, beginning to lose somewhat of its estimation in the public mind, and lapsing by degrees into a slavery to its own system. This House has conquered every external foe, and now it runs the risk of being vanquished itself by those who, perhaps, are not the noblest of its children. What do we ask? We ask you to apply, or to endeavour to apply, a remedy to this specific mischief, the growing amplitude of debate, which, even apart from positive disgrace, and apart from increasing mischief, is rapidly tending to a point which will soon make the transaction of Business impracticable. We have endeavoured to make the remedy mild and moderate and practicable. We do not ask you to assent to our remedy to-night. The words of the Resolution before you to-night are merely a few words necessary to form a peg upon which to hang our Resolution. We do, however, ask you, by negativing this Amendment, which shuts the door against every application of a remedy—we do ask you, by rejecting that Amendment, to assert a principle which means, and which assures the House, that this House is able, casting sophisms aside, to look at the substance of things. That it means not phrases, but work, and that neither individual folly nor combinations shall be allowed to stand between the House of Commons and the discharge of its great duties to the Crown and to the nation.

MR. HEALY, who rose amid interruption, remarked that hon. Gentlemen opposite need not be impatient, because he only wished to make a short reference to the speech delivered in the early part of the evening by the right hon. Member for Birmingham, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright). In the course of the night he had risen several times for the purpose of getting an opportunity of doing so. He had not intended, otherwise, to interpose in the debate upon the *cloture.* It was a question in which he took a very limited interest, for he had no objection to see the English House of Commons, having destroyed the Irish Parliament, now degrading their own. He should confine his remarks to the statements which had been made by the Chancellor of the Duchy. The right hon. Gentleman stated that his hon. Friend the Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) and himself (Mr. Healy) were present and spoke at the Chicago Convention, at which subscriptions were made for equipping soldiers to fight against the Crown, although both hon. Members had taken the Oath of Allegiance at that Table. He had informed the right hon. Gentleman, by a negative sign, that neither the hon. Member for Galway nor himself spoke at the Chicago Convention. They were simply present at a meeting in Chicago which was held later, and which was held altogether independent of the Convention. So far as he was concerned, the cause of his not speaking at the Convention at which they were present was not that he was afraid in the smallest degree of being involved in any responsibility for its proceedings, but because it should not be said that any of the Irish Representatives had interposed any authority or influence they might possess to induce the Irish people in America to come to any conclusion whatsoever. That was the sole reason of their silence. He fully and entirely endorsed every one of the resolutions come to at the Chicago Convention; and as to the subscriptions which the right hon. Gentleman said were raised to equip Irish soldiers, he must candidly say that he never heard a word about them until, on his way back from America, he read a speech delivered by the right hon. Gentleman at Birmingham, of which the speech made by the right hon. Gentleman in the early part of the evening was simply a re-hash. While he was upon his legs he was also anxious to contradict another statement which had been made by a Liberal Member—namely, that his hon. Friend the Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) subscribed £200 towards the objects of the Chicago Convention. He only wished that his hon. Friend had such a sum of money that he could afford to be so generous. His hon. Friend, no doubt, considered that he did sufficient for Ireland in devoting his time and his services to the Irish cause for five or six months in America; but his hon. Friend had promised no subscription whatever. But, of course, like another contradiction, in which a statement made by the hon. Member for Leeds (Mr. Herbert Gladstone) was repudiated, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster would not condescend to notice this one, but on some future day would go down to Birmingham and repeat his assertions in spite of what was now said; and in due course of time the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman would be handed down to his heirs, executors, and assigns in the Liberal Party of the future, to be utilized by them in their dealings with the Irish Members. Before he sat down he wished to make one remark upon a point in regard to which it was necessary to associate the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster with the Prime Minister. The Premier said the intention of the Irish Members was to enervate the power of the House of Commons and to reduce it to a state of incapacity for the discharge of its proper functions; and the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster said there was a Party in the House whose sole object was to insure the degradation of that Assembly. Now, he had no desire to place the Irish Members in a position which was not clearly intelligible, or to be laid open to the witty expression once applied by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) to the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell)—that he was "*un homme incompris.*" He would simply remind the House that the position of the Irish Members was not by any means the position which either the Premier or the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster asserted, and for this reason—that while those right hon. Gentlemen attributed to them disaffection, disloyalty, murder, and outrage there happened to exist in the background in Ireland a Party who were 10 times — aye, 1,000,000 times more opposed to the British Crown and Constitution than any Irish Member in that House. ["No!" *and* "Hear, hear!"] He did not expect that that declaration would be received with unanimous consent. The Irish Members in that House occupied a central or an intermediate position. If they were supposed, in their attacks upon the House of Commons, to represent the disloyalty of Ireland, then he confessed that he knew nothing about disloyalty. He frankly told the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister and Her Majesty's Government that, so far as the action of the Irish Members in that House was concerned, they might be thankful for the fact that it was only a very small portion—merely the half-notes of the minor key of Irish disaffection—that reached them from the Benches on which he sat. He would tell the Government that there was a power beyond the Irish Members in that House, and despite of them, with which they had nothing to do—with which they had no connection; and that it was well for the Government that they had only the Irish Members to malign. Her Majesty's Government could not reach these other men; and the Irish Members were not responsible for them. He had now explained what the exact position of the Irish Members was. It had been said that the Irish Members had been returned to the House for the purpose of breaking up and degrading Parliament. The fact was simply this. Their endeavour—certainly his endeavour—had always been to impress upon the Irish people that Parliamentary agitation was, to a large extent, of little avail unless they were themselves prepared to keep up the agitation outside the walls of Parliament. He had pointed out, over and over again, that, so far from the agitation of the Irish Members in the House of Commons being of any use whatever, it was a waste of energy, unless they were backed up outside. Trusted men at times were returned there, year after year, to oppose the Government in that House; and, year after year, the Government, by their strategies, had been able to win them over. There was the same probability of their turning round now as there was in bygone times. Hence he always told the Irish people that Parliamentary agitation was only, so to speak, the left arm of Ireland. If Parliament were to expel all the Irish Members to-morrow, he should care very little for it; because he knew that, although Parliament might gag the voices of the Irish Members to-morrow, they could not impose a *clôture* on the voice of the Irish nation. The Government must remember that they had not to deal only with the Irish Members in that House, but with 20,000,000 Irishmen outside the walls of Parliament. That, then, was the position of the Irish Representatives; and to-night, if his words could reach those hon. Members who attributed to himself and his Friends extraordinary ideas about Parliamentary government, he would ask them what the Irish Members possibly could be if they had not behind them the voices and the support of the Irish people? Personally, he should be but the fractious and vulgar humbug which he was continually told he was by the English Press, if he had not behind him the force, and the voice, and the feelings of a nation. With what courage could the Irish Members stand up in that House, before the exponents of "British fair play," drawing forth offensive speeches and derisive cheers, if they did not occupy the position of persons who knew they were suffering in a good cause, and that that cause had behind it the memories of the oppression, injustice, and misrule of seven consecrated centuries?

Question put, "That the words 'when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker,' stand part of the Question."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 318; Noes 279: Majority 39.

AYES.

Acland, Sir T. D.
Agnew, W.
Ainsworth, D.
Allen, H. G.
Allen, W. S.
Allman, R. L.
Amory, Sir J. H.
Armitage, B.
Armitstead, G.
Arnold, A.
Asher, A.
Ashley, hon. E. M.
Baldwin, E.
Balfour, Sir G.
Balfour, J. B.
Balfour, J. S.
Barclay, J. W.
Baring, Viscount
Barnes, A.
Barran, J.
Bass, A.
Bass, H.
Bass, M. T.
Baxter, rt. hon. W. E.
Beaumont, W. B.
Biddulph, M.
Blennerhassett, Sir R.
Blennerhassett, R. P.

Bolton, J. C.
Borlase, W. C.
Brand, H. R.
Brassey, H. A.
Brassey, Sir T.
Brett, R. B.
Briggs, W. E.
Bright, J. (Manchester)
Bright, rt. hon. J.
Brinton, J.
Broadhurst, H.
Brooks, M.
Brown, A. H.
Bruce, rt. hon. Lord C
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Bryce, J.
Buchanan, T. R.
Burt, T.
Buszard, M. C.
Butt, C. P.
Buxton, F. W.
Caine, W. S.
Cameron, C.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Campbell-Bannerman, H.
Carbutt, E. H.
Carington, hon. R.
Carington, hon. Col. W. H. P.
Cartwright, W. C.
Causton, R. K.
Cavendish, Lord E.
Cavendish, Lord F. C.
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Chambers, Sir T.
Cheetham, J. F.
Childers, rt. hn. H.C.E.
Clarke, J. C.
Clifford, C. C.
Cohen, A.
Colebrooke, Sir T. E.
Collings, J.
Collins, E.
Colman, J. J.
Colthurst, Col. D. La T.
Corbett, J.
Cotes, C. C.
Courtauld, G.
Courtney, L. H.
Cowan, J.
Cowper, hon. H. F.
Craig, W. Y.
Creyke, R.
Cropper, J.
Cross, J. K.
Crum, A.
Cunliffe, Sir R. A.
Davey, H.
Davies, D.
Davies, R.
Davies, W.
De Ferrieres, Baron
Dickson, J.
Dickson, T. A.
Dilke, A. W.
Dilke, Sir C. W.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dodds, J.
Dodson, rt. hon. J. G.
Duckham, T.
Duff, R. W.

Dundas, hon. J. C.
Earp, T.
Ebrington, Viscount
Edwards, H.
Edwards, P.
Egerton, Adm. hon. F.
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Errington, G.
Evans, T. W.
Fairbairn, Sir A.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fawcett, rt. hon. H.
Fay, C. J.
Ferguson, R.
Ffolkes, Sir W. H. B.
Findlater, W.
Firth, J. F. B.
Fitzmaurice, Lord E.
Fitzwilliam, hon. H. W.
Fitzwilliam, hon. W. J.
Flower, C.
Foljambe, C. G. S.
Foljambe, F. J. S.
Forster, Sir C.
Forster, rt. hon. W. E.
Fort, R.
Fowler, H. H.
Fowler, W.
Fry, L.
Fry, T.
Gabbett, D. F.
Givan, J.
Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gladstone, W. H.
Glyn, hon. S. C.
Gordon, Sir A.
Gordon, Lord D.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Gourley, E. T.
Gower, hon. E. F. L.
Grafton, F. W.
Grant, A.
Grant, D.
Grant, Sir G. M.
Grenfell, W. H.
Grey, A. H. G.
Guest, M. J.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hamilton, J. G. C.
Harcourt, rt. hon. Sir W. G. V. V.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Hartington, Marq. of
Hastings, G. W.
Hayter, Sir A. D.
Henderson, F.
Heneage, E.
Henry, M.
Herschell, Sir F.
Hibbert, J. T.
Hill, T. R.
Holland, S.
Hollond, J. R.
Holms, J.
Holms, W.
Hopwood, C. H.
Howard, G. J.
Howard, J.
Hutchinson, J. D.
Illingworth, A.
Inderwick, F. A.
James, C.

James, Sir H.
James, W. H.
Jardine, R.
Jenkins, D. J.
Jenkins, J. J.
Jerningham, H. E. H.
Johnson, E.
Johnson, rt. hon. W. M.
Jones-Parry, L.
Kingscote, Col. R. N. F.
Kinnear, J.
Labouchere, H.
Laing, S.
Lambton, hon. F. W.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lea, T.
Leake, R.
Leatham, E. A.
Leatham, W. H.
Lee, H.
Leeman, J. J.
Lefevre, right hon. G. J. S.
Leigh, hon. G. H. C.
Lloyd, M.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Lymington, Viscount
Lyons, R. D.
Mackie, R. B.
Mackintosh, C. F.
Macliver, P. S.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Arthur, W.
M'Clure, Sir T.
M'Intyre, Æneas J.
M'Lagan, P.
M'Laren, C. B. B.
M'Minnies, J. G.
Maitland, W. F.
Mappin, F. T.
Marjoribanks, E.
Martin, R. B.
Maskelyne, M. H. Story-
Mason, H.
Matheson, A.
Maxwell-Heron, J.
Meldon, C. H.
Mellor, J. W.
Milbank, F. A.
Monk, C. J.
Moreton, Lord
Morgan, rt. hn. G. O.
Morley, A.
Morley, S.
Mundella, rt. hon. A. J.
Nicholson, W.
Noel, E.
O'Beirne, Major F.
O'Brien, Sir P.
O'Conor, D. M.
O'Shaughnessy, R.
Otway, Sir A.
Paget, T. T.
Palmer, C. M.
Palmer, G.
Palmer, J. H.
Parker, C. S.
Pease, A.
Pease, J. W.
Peddie, J. D.
Peel, A. W.
Pender, J.
Pennington, F.

Philips, R. N.
Playfair, rt. hon. L.
Porter, A. M.
Portman, hn. W. H. B.
Potter, T. B.
Powell, W. R. H.
Pugh, L. P.
Pulley, J.
Ralli, P.
Ramsay, J.
Ramsden, Sir J.
Rathbone, W.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Reid, R. T.
Rendel, S.
Richard, H.
Richardson, J. N.
Richardson, T.
Roberts, J.
Robertson, H.
Rogers, J. E. T.
Roundell, C. S.
Russell, G. W. E.
Russell, Lord A.
Rylands, P.
St. Aubyn, Sir J.
Samuelson, B.
Samuelson, H.
Seely, C. (Lincoln)
Seely, C. (Nottingham)
Shaw, W.
Sheridan, H. B.
Shield, H.
Simon, Serjeant J.
Slagg, J.
Smith, E.
Smyth, P. J.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stanley, hon. E. L.
Stansfeld, rt. hon. J.
Stanton, W. J.
Stevenson, J. C.
Stewart, J.
Storey, S.
Stuart, H. V.
Summers, W.
Talbot, C. R. M.
Tavistock, Marquess of
Tennant, C.
Thomasson, J. P.
Thompson, T. C.
Tillett, J. H.
Tracy, hon. F. S. A. Hanbury-
Trevelyan, G. O.
Verney, Sir H.
Vivian, A. P.
Vivian, H. H.
Waterlow, Sir S. H.
Waugh, E.
Webster, J.
Whalley, G. H.
Whitbread, S.
Whitworth, B.
Wiggin, H.
Williams, S. C. E.
Williamson, S.
Willis, W.
Wills, W. H.
Willyams, E. W. B.
Wilson, C. H.
Wilson, I.
Wilson, Sir M.

Wodehouse, E. R.
Woodall, W.
Woolf, S.

TELLERS.
Grosvenor, Lord R.
Kensington, Lord

NOES.

Alexander, Colonel
Allsopp, C.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Archdale, W. H.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Aylmer, J. E. F.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Balfour, A. J.
Baring, T. C.
Barne, F. St. J. N.
Barry, J.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bateson, Sir T.
Beach, rt. hn. Sir M. H.
Beach, W. W. B.
Bective, Earl of
Bellingham, A. H.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Beresford, G. de la P.
Biddell, W.
Biggar, J. G.
Birkbeck, E.
Blackburne, Col. J. I.
Boord, T. W.
Bourke, rt. hon. R.
Brise, Colonel R.
Broadley, W. H. H.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brooke, Lord
Brooks, W. C.
Bruce, Sir H. H.
Bruce, hon. T.
Brymer, W. E.
Bulwer, J. R.
Burghley, Lord
Burnaby, General E. S.
Burrell, Sir W. W.
Buxton, Sir R. J.
Byrne, G. M.
Callan, P.
Cameron, D.
Campbell, J. A.
Carden, Sir R. W.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cecil, Lord E. H. B. G.
Chaine, J.
Chaplin, H.
Christie, W. L.
Clarke, E.
Clive, Col. hon. G. W.
Close, M. C.
Coddington, W.
Cole, Viscount
Collins, T.
Commins, A.
Compton, F.
Coope, O. E.
Corbet, W. J.
Corry, J. P.
Cotton, W. J. R.
Crichton, Viscount
Cross, rt. hon. Sir R. A.
Cubitt, rt. hon. G.
Dalrymple, C.
Daly, J.
Davenport, H. T.
Davenport, W. B.
Dawnay, Col. hon. L. P.
Dawnay, hon. G. C.
Dawson, C.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dickson, Major A. G.
Digby, Col. hon. E.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Donaldson-Hudson, C.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Eaton, H. W.
Ecroyd, W. F.
Egerton, hon. W.
Elcho, Lord
Elliot, G. W.
Elliot, Sir G.
Emlyn, Viscount
Ennis, Sir J.
Estcourt, G. S.
Ewart, W.
Ewing, A. O.
Feilden, Maj.-Gen. R. J.
Fellowes, W. H.
Fenwick-Bisset, M.
Filmer, Sir E.
Finch, G. H.
Finigan, J. L.
Fitzpatrick, hn. B. E. B.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Floyer, J.
Folkestone, Viscount
Forester, C. T. W.
Foster, W. H.
Fowler, R. N.
Fremantle, hon. T. F.
Freshfield, C. K.
Galway, Viscount
Gardner, R. Richardson-
Garnier, J. C.
Gibson, rt. hon. E.
Giffard, Sir H. S.
Gill, H. J.
Goldney, Sir G.
Gooch, Sir D.
Gore-Langton, W. S.
Gorst, J. E.
Grantham, W.
Gray, E. D.
Greene, E.
Greer, T.
Gregory, G. B.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, I. T.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G.
Harcourt, E. W.
Harvey, Sir R. B.
Hay, rt. hon. Admiral Sir J. C. D.
Healy, T. M.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hicks, E.
Hildyard, T. B. T.
Hill, Lord A. W.
Hill, A. S.
Hinchingbrook, Visc.
Holland, Sir H. T.
Home, Lt.-Col. D. M.
Hope, rt. hn. A. J. B. B.
Hubbard, rt. hon. J. G.
Jackson, W. L.
Johnstone, Sir F.
Kennard, Col. E. H.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Knight, F. W.
Knightley, Sir R.
Knowles, T.
Lacon, Sir E. H. K.
Lalor, R.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir T.
Leahy, J.
Leamy, E.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Lee, Major V.
Legh, W. J.
Leigh, R.
Leighton, Sir B.
Leighton, S.
Lennox, Lord H. G.
Lever, J. O.
Levett, T. J.
Lewis, C. E.
Lewisham, Viscount
Lindsay, Sir R. L.
Loder, R.
Long, W. H.
Lopes, Sir M.
Lowther, rt. hon. J.
Lowther, hon. W.
Macartney, J. W. E.
M‘Carthy, J.
M‘Coan, J. C.
Macfarlane, D. H.
M‘Garel-Hogg, Sir J.
Mac Iver, D.
M‘Kenna, Sir J. N.
Macnaghten, E.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Manners, rt. hn. Lord J.
March, Earl of
Martin, P.
Marum, E. M.
Master, T. W. C.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Metge, R. H.
Miles, C. W.
Miles, Sir P. J. W.
Mills, Sir C. H.
Molloy, B. C.
Monckton, F.
Moore, A.
Morgan, hon. F.
Moss, R.
Mowbray, rt. hn. Sir J. R.
Mulholland, J.
Murray, C. J.
Newdegate, C. N.
Newport, Viscount
Nicholson, W. N.
Noel, rt. hon. G. J.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
North, Colonel J. S.
Northcote, H. S.
Northcote, rt. hn. Sir S. H.
O'Connor, A.
O'Donnell, F. H.
O'Gorman Mahon, Col. The
Onslow, D.
O'Shea, W. H.
O'Sullivan, W. H.
Paget, R. H.
Patrick, R. W. C.
Pell, A.
Pemberton, E. L.
Percy, Earl
Percy, Lord A.
Phipps, C. N. P.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Power, J. O'C.
Power, R.
Price, Captain G. E.
Puleston, J. H.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Redmond, J. E.
Rendlesham, Lord
Repton, G. W.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, C. T.
Rolls, J. A.
Ross, A. H.
Ross, C. C.
Round, J.
St. Aubyn, W. M.
Salt, T.
Sandon, Viscount
Schreiber, C.
Sclater-Booth, rt. hon. G.
Scott, Lord H.
Scott, M. D.
Selwin-Ibbetson, Sir H. J.
Severne, J. E.
Sexton, T.
Smith, A.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smithwick, J. F.
Stanhope, hon. E.
Stanley, rt. hn. Col. F.
Storer, G.
Sullivan, T. D.
Sykes, C.
Synan, E. J.
Talbot, J. G.
Taylor, rt. hn. Col. T. E.
Taylor, P. A.
Thomson, H.
Thornhill, T.
Thynne, Lord H. F.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tollemache, hn. W. F.
Tottenham, A. L.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Wallace, Sir R.
Walpole, rt. hon. S.
Walrond, Col. W. H.
Walter, J.
Warburton, P. E.
Warton, C. N.
Watkin, Sir E. W.
Watney, J.
Welby-Gregory, Sir W. E.
Whitley, E.
Williams, Colonel O.
Wilmot, Sir H.

Wilmot, Sir J. E.
Winn, R.
Wolff, Sir H. D.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wroughton, P.
Wyndham, hon. P.
Wynn, Sir W. W.
Yorke, J. R.

TELLERS.
Cowen, J.
Marriott, W. T.

Main Question again proposed.

Debate arising.

Debate *further adjourned* till *Monday* next.

BILLS OF SALE ACT (1878) AMENDMENT BILL.—[Bill 108.]

(*Mr. Monk, Mr. Serjeant Simon.*)

THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

Mr. WARTON said, he was certain the measure would be amended in "another place." There never was a Bill more scandalous and absurd than this was in its present shape.

Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

MOTIONS

COMMONS REGULATION PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hibbert, Bill to confirm the Provisional Orders for the regulation of certain lands known as Crosby Garrett Common, in the parish of Crosby Garrett, in the county of Westmoreland, and for the regulation of certain lands known as Stivichall Common, in the parish of Saint Michael Coventry, in the county of Warwick, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson, and Secretary Sir William Harcourt.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 117.]

TURNPIKE ACTS CONTINUANCE ACT, 1881.

Select Committee *appointed,* to inquire into the Fourth and Fifth Schedules of "The Annual Turnpike Acts Continuance Act, 1881:"—Lord Edward Cavendish, Mr. Wentworth Beaumont, Mr. Beach, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, Mr. Thomas Salt, Mr. Wilbraham Egerton, and Mr. Hibbert; Three to be the quorum.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to inquire and report to the House under what conditions, with reference to the rate of interest, expenses of management, maintenance of road, payment of debt, and term of years, or other special arrangements, the Acts of the Trusts mentioned should be continued.

Ordered, That all Petitions relating to the continuance or discontinuance of Turnpike Trusts be referred to the Committee.—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

CORRUPT PRACTICES (DISFRANCHISEMENT) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Attorney General, Bill to disfranchise, permanently or temporarily, on account of Corrupt Practices, certain Cities and Boroughs, and to disqualify certain Voters, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Attorney General and Secretary Sir William Harcourt.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 118.]

COPYRIGHT (WORKS OF FINE ART, &c.) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hastings, Bill to amend and consolidate the Law of Copyright in Works of Fine Art and in Photographs, and for repressing the commission of fraud in the production and sale of such works, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Hastings, Viscount Sandon, Mr. Hanbury-Tracy, Sir Gabriel Goldney, and Mr. Agnew.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 119.]

House adjourned at half after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 31*st March,* 1882.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Bills of Sale Act (1878) Amendment * (60); Union of Benefices (London) * (61).

Second Reading—Duke of Albany (Establishment) (58).

DUKE OF ALBANY (ESTABLISHMENT) BILL.—(No. 58.)

(*The Earl Granville.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Earl GRANVILLE, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, observed that he did not believe that it was necessary for him to say anything whatever in addition to what had been said and so well received on a former occasion in support of the Motion.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl Granville.*)

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Thursday* the 20*th of April* next.

JURY LAWS (IRELAND).

OBSERVATIONS. QUESTION.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE, in rising to call attention to the Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the operation of the Irish Jury Laws, and to ask, Whether Her Majesty's Government propose to act upon any of the recommendations of the Committee? said, their Lordships would recollect that, during the last Session of Parliament, a Select Committee of the House was appointed to inquire into the operation of the Irish Jury Laws. There was little difference of opinion as to the necessity of such an investigation. Ten years had passed since a revolution had been effected in the jury system of Ireland —a revolution which was a good deal questioned at the time, and had been a good deal discussed since. The legislation of his noble and learned Friend (Lord O'Hagan) was an attempt to popularize trial by jury in Ireland. Up to the year 1871 the jury system had existed somewhat as an exotic on Irish soil. The qualification for service on the jury was so high, the system of selection by the Sheriff so little suited or convenient to the habits of the people, that it had very little hold of their sympathies. But the legislation of his noble and learned Friend the late Lord Chancellor of Ireland changed all that, and substituted for the high and exclusive qualification then in force a low rating qualification, and for nomination by the Sheriff selection through the mechanical agency of the ballot.

The first question which the Select Committee had to consider was whether the general direction of those changes was right or wrong; and he believed he might say with confidence that the Committee were unanimously of opinion that no reversal of the spirit of that legislation could be contemplated at the present time. He thought there were many reasons why such a conclusion was irresistible. What was the real justification of a recourse to trial by jury? They did not resort to the assistance of the 12 persons who chanced to be called together into the jury-box because it was impossible to ascertain the law, or to enforce it without their assistance, but because their finding gave them some guarantee that the average intelligence of society was in sympathy with the law, and that the action of the Courts, enforced with this sanction behind it, would be approved and supported by public feeling outside. The jury was the connecting link between the dry technicalities of the law and the common sense of the people of the country generally. He did not think that anyone would contend that the old unreformed juries had fulfilled that condition. The old qualification was so high that it was at times necessary to ignore it altogether; and the selection by the Sheriff, though he could not say that there was evidence to show that it was used corruptly, yet was undoubtedly open to suspicion. The Committee, therefore, were of opinion that the general direction of his noble and learned Friend's legislation could not be reversed.

Admitting, then, the principle of the Acts of 1871 and 1876, the Committee had to consider how far the juries brought together under those Acts had performed their duties satisfactorily or not. What, to begin with, was the composition of those juries? He was sorry to say they found very considerable reason for dissatisfaction with the manner in which they were composed. The structure of common juries in Ireland was a reflection of the weakness of the structure of Irish society generally. Irish society in most parts of the country was purely agricultural; and the Committee found that, as a rule, and in most parts of Ireland, the common juries were composed exclusively, or almost exclusively, of persons belonging to the farming class. There was a complete want of that variety in the composition of juries which was found in this country. It was, no doubt, to be expected that in a country such as Ireland, with a low rating qualification for service on the jury, that there should be a predominance of farmers in the jury-box; but that did not account for the complete absence of any representatives of the better educated and more independent classes. Such an exclusion, most certainly, was no part of Lord O'Hagan's intention. Lord O'Hagan had, indeed, expressly stated his conviction that those classes ought not to be, and would not be, excluded by his Act. The Committee had endeavoured to discover how it came to pass that those persons of better position—the representatives of property and education—came to be so completely absent. They found that there were several causes that helped to keep them out. In the first place, a certain number of the higher class of jurors were required for service on the Grand Juries; others, again, were absorbed by the special juries. Again, it was the fact that among the higher classes there were many who, no doubt, had a great disposition to shirk service on the jury. He did not know that they could be much surprised at that, because service on a jury was not particularly attractive in any part of the United Kingdom; and in Ireland there were various reasons why such service was specially unattractive. The Committee, at any rate, found that the fines imposed upon jurors who were not in their places when the panel was called over, though perhaps sufficient to insure the attendance of the humbler jurors, did not deter their wealthier brethren from absenting themselves. There was another reason which operated in the same direction. The accused person in every case of felony had a right to challenge 20 names on the list; and there was the strongest evidence to show that that right was generally made use of in order to exclude from the jury any person who, from the fact that he belonged to a class somewhat superior to the ordinary run of jurors, might be expected to be a man of particular independence of character, and likely to hold opinions at variance with those which might happen to be prevalent in the locality. In this manner, and by the combined action of these different causes, the panel, originally deficient in variety and in respect of the representation of the better educated and more independent classes, came to be, in the end, entirely denuded of them, until in nine out of ten juries they were almost unrepresented.

Such being the composition of the juries, the Committee had to discover how they performed their duties. He was glad to say they had received evidence from several districts tending to show that the conduct of juries was all that could be desired; but from many other districts—and notably from those in which the present agrarian agitation was going on—they found that the disquieting rumours which had reached their ears were only too well founded. He had often heard it said that the break-down of justice in many parts of Ireland was due, not so much to the misconduct of the juries, as to the difficulty or impossibility of obtaining evidence. It could not be denied that there was the greatest difficulty in obtaining evidence. No one who read the statistics, and saw how large was the number of crimes committed, and how small the number of persons in proportion who were made amenable, could doubt that that absence of evidence was one of the great difficulties with which they had to contend. How could it be otherwise? How could they expect those terrorized peasants to come forward and tender evidence when they knew beforehand that their evidence would be disregarded by the juries? The persons who were in a position to supply evidence knew that if they did tender it, it would lead, not to the conviction of the person accused, but to their own punishment by that terrible organization which now pervaded too many parts of Ireland. They were in a vicious circle. They did not get evidence because they did not get convictions, and they did not get convictions because they did not get evidence. He thought it, however, his duty to impress upon their Lordships that, although there was a great difficulty in obtaining evidence, there were a large number of cases in which the evidence was forthcoming, and in which the jury, in spite of it, refused to convict. He would read to the House an extract from the evidence of Mr. Justice Lawson. This was Mr. Justice Lawson's account of his own experience—

> "Three men attacked a house at night near Tralee, with their faces blackened and disguised; they were knocking at the door, calling to have the gun brought out. While they were engaged in this operation three policemen came up, and the head constable instructed his men each to capture a person; he himself captured his man, and held him; the other two persons escaped.
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> "In that case the accused person was caught red-handed?—He was caught red-handed. I said to the jury—'This is the man before you now whom the constable caught at the door and took to the barracks. He has been brought from the barracks here, and there he is before you.' That was of no avail whatever. When that verdict was announced the court-house rang with applause from all the spectators present. The sub-sheriff informed me that on the way down from the court-house the men were followed by a shouting multitude, who cried out—'We knew they would not dare to find you guilty.' That is case No. 1. Now to give another case, which is a remarkable one. Four or five men came to a house at night; they knocked up the inmates, they took the man of the house out of his bed,

put him down on his knees, and cut his ear; they were persons well known to the inmates of the house, and were living not very far from them. The inmates of the house identified them all. There were five of them there, and they were all acquitted.

"Was any defence set up in that case?—Yes; there was the usual fabricated *alibi*.

"May we understand that you quote these cases as cases typical of the prevailing state of things in that part of Ireland?—I think so; quite."

Evidence to the like effect was given by Mr. Justice Fitzgerald.

"I should mention, with the permission of the Committee, two remarkable cases as illustrating what was going on. One was a prosecution against two persons for retaining forcible possession. The evidence was quite clear. . . . The defence was that they were put back by a blackened, and armed, and disguised party, which is a common excuse; but it turned out that the leader of the blackened party was the son of one of the defendants, and the brother of the other. I pointed out to the jury that, even though they might have been excused for being put back forcibly in possession, they were not excused for forcibly detaining, which they had done, and saying that they would never give up possession. To my surprise in that case, after giving proper direction to the jury, without turning round, they acquitted both prisoners, and acquitted them amongst thunders of applause in court. I observed myself that the applause came from a particular direction, and that was the place set apart for jurors in waiting; and the applauders were the jurors in waiting. Upon that occasion I addressed very strong remonstrances to them, and those words have equally been interpreted as words of menace, whereas they were words of warning only. I told them that if that kind of thing went on it would lead to a suspension of trial by jury."

Now, the evidence given by these witnesses was entirely confirmed by the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland in the House of Commons. That hon. and learned Gentleman, in August last, said that there were then 192 "suspects" in gaol; and he added that in 119 cases which he had picked out from the gross number of offences it would have been the duty of any honest and impartial jury to convict the persons accused.

The Committee had to consider these facts, and to endeavour to obtain some explanation of the causes to which they were attributable. They had to consider, in the first place, whether the misconduct of the juries could be attributed to a want of intelligence on the part of the jurymen. That was not an explanation which the Committee was able to accept. There had, no doubt, in the early days of the new system, and before the jurors became familiar with their duties, been several grotesque exhibitions of ignorance on their part. The evidence, however, went to show that in this respect the common juries were steadily improving; and he was bound to add that he did not believe that anyone acquainted with the character of the Irish peasants would accuse them of being deficient in point of intelligence.

Then, again, there was the question of intimidation. Beyond all doubt there were cases in which fear had operated. How could it be otherwise, at a time when terrorism was so prevalent, and when persons in every class of life, and in regard to every kind of transaction, were deterred by threats from acting according to their own judgments. They had had, within the last few days, a striking illustration of this. The Government had been obliged to offer a reward of £100 for the detection of persons who had, in the city of Cork, posted placards threatening with vengeance any jurors who should venture to do their duty during the recent Assizes. There could, therefore, scarcely be a doubt that jurors were at times liable to such intimidation. The conclusion, however, to which the Committee had come was that, if there had been miscarriages of justice, they were due not so much to the ignorance or to the fears of the jurors as to a third cause, partly connected with the unfortunate history of the country, partly resulting from the pernicious influences which had lately been brought to bear upon the uneducated classes in Ireland. He was afraid they could not shut their eyes to the fact that in many parts of Ireland the sympathies of the people were entirely opposed to the law of the land, and that, in judging of certain questions, they adopted a standard of right and wrong which was not the standard of any Act of Parliament. It had been stated to the Committee by witnesses that the people habitually spoke of one class of crime as being "dirty," and of another class as being "clean." They would say—"Yes; I was convicted, but not, thank God, for anything disgraceful." The kind of crime which was considered as specially venial was, in the first place, any offence arising out of political or social differences. Then it appeared that the whole class of aggravated assaults were looked upon in a particularly favourable light by common jurors. One witness spoke of the "usual Tipperary fracture," which involved not only the breaking of the law, but the breaking of another person's head, as being regarded with exceptional indulgence. But it was, above all, in cases arising, directly or indirectly, out of land that juries could not be depended upon to do their duty. In such cases there could be no doubt that the jurors entered the box having made up their minds to acquit the accused. As the Prime Minister said, last summer—"In agrarian cases the whole judicial system had completely broken down;" and Mr. Justice Lawson said that—

> "To send such cases for trial, and to send Judges round to try them, with a certainty of a failure of justice, was a great deal worse than useless, because it was the worst public manifestation of the impunity with which crime might be committed."

It came, therefore, to this—that they had in Ireland to deal with a society which was purely agricultural, with a great epidemic of agrarian crime, and with a system of trial under which criminals were tried by juries composed almost entirely of persons who, as a rule, belonged to the same class as the criminal; and who, in many cases, entered the jury-box with the deliberate intention of disregarding the law. In view of such declarations and such cases, the Committee had to consider whether they could suggest any remedy for this deplorable state of things. They had, first, to deal with the manner in which the juries were composed. As to increasing the rating qualification of jurors, they thought that was not possible, because, while a large increase in the rating qualification would in a great number of districts get rid of the jury panel altogether, a slight increase of the qualification would certainly not lead them into the stratum of jurors whom they could depend upon as free from the influences to which he had referred. They considered, therefore, that if anything was to be done in the direction of improving the composition of the juries, it should be attempted rather by infusing into the panel some of that variety in which, as he had stated to their Lordships, it was at present so lamentably deficient. The Committee, with that object, made certain recommendations. They recommended that the panel should be strengthened by adding to the qualifications now in force certain special qualifications by means of which persons who had not the necessary rating qualification, but who were otherwise fit for service on the jury, might be admitted. They also proposed a diminution in the number of exemptions; and in order to make sure that those jurors who belonged to a class superior to the rest should be represented, not only on the panel, but in the jury-box, they recommended that the fines now imposed for non-attendance should be enforced with more strictness than at present. They further suggested that upon every common jury there should be three jurors with the higher qualifications required for service on the special jury—an arrangement which, he believed, prevailed in Scotland, and which it was considered worked very well. They also proposed that persons on the common jury should be relieved of their duties as grand jurors in connection with the criminal business of the Assizes; and, finally, they suggested that the right of challenging the jury panel in cases of felony should be reduced from 20 to six. They believed that these modifications in the law recommended by the Committee would tend to improve the composition of the juries.

Although the Committee thought that these changes would be useful, and would do something towards removing the imperfections which experience had disclosed in the existing law, they could not shut their eyes to the fact that these changes alone would be absolutely insufficient to improve the state of things which was found to be in existence. They believed that if any improvement was to take place they would have to go further. They had, in the first place, to consider the fact that during a time when agitation was prevalent in Ireland, a great number of offences were being continually committed—not, perhaps, in themselves of a very serious nature, but very serious when they were considered as being the manifestations of deeply-seated social disorganization. Such offences as those of intimidation, assault, interference with persons engaged in carrying out the law, and so forth, were the kind of offences from which the agitation in Ireland derived its real strength, and it was clear that something must be done to deal effectually with them. And what was the most effective way of dealing with them? Their Lordships would agree with him that such offences should be dealt with, not necessarily with inordinate severity, but with promptitude and a certainty of justice. What was the case now? He was afraid that an exactly opposite state of things prevailed in Ireland; so that, although the law might award a severe punishment, it was either very tardily inflicted, or not inflicted at all, to the complete frustration of the ends of justice. Either through unwillingness to incur the odium of deciding the cases, or through such cases not being actually within their jurisdiction, or because they believed that the penalty they could impose was insufficient, the magistrates nearly always sent these cases for trial. The person suspected probably would be let out on bail. Weeks and months passed by, and in the end, when the accused was tried before a jury, he was, very likely, acquitted, amidst the applause of those assembled in Court. To remedy such a state of things, the Committee suggested that the summary powers of the magistrates should be revised, and made sufficiently extensive to enable them to deal with such offences as cases of rioting, aggravated assault, cases of forcible possession where the question of right had already been decided by a Court of Law, assaults on process servers and all agents of the law, posting or sending threatening notices, intimidation, and other offences of a like character. They also recommended that the magistrates should be bound to deal with such cases, and should not send them for trial by jury, unless by special direction of the Public Prosecutor. They further suggested that when such cases were dealt with by the local magistrates, they should be assisted by the resident, and that in this view additional resident magistrates might be appointed—a recommendation which had been partly carried out by the recent appointment of special stipendiary magistrates.

Such an enlargement of the jurisdiction of magistrates could only be applicable to comparatively insignificant offences, and they had to consider how offences of graver character should be dealt with. As to these, it was suggested that, as miscarriages of justice were often owing to local and social influences, these influences might be avoided by transferring the trial, in all cases where such influences might be expected to operate, to places beyond the reach of such influences. That was a suggestion which had much to recommend it; the more so because such a course had already been resorted to under the existing law, and with good results. Where proof was forthcoming that there was no prospect of a fair trial in the place where it would naturally proceed, an application might already be made to the Court of Queen's Bench for permission to change the venue. The success which had lately attended the Winter Assizes, at which offences were tried away from the local venue, offered further encouragement in this direction; and the Committee were of opinion that every facility should be given for such changes of venue wherever the circumstances called for it. There were, however, obvious limits to the extent to which such an expedient could be resorted to. The removal of a trial from one part to another of a district suffering from the effects of the agitation would be useless, while its removal to an entirely different district, such as from Cork to Belfast, might not be fair to the prisoner. The consideration of these facts forced upon them the conclusion that, if anything was to be done to stem the tide of agitation in Ireland, and to avoid the recurrence of abuses which had come to their knowledge, it would be necessary to take steps of a considerably more stringent and far-reaching character; and, after carefully weighing all the circumstances, the majority of the Committee had agreed to insert the following paragraphs in the Report:—

> "The evidence which we have taken has forced us to the conclusion that as long as a large portion of Ireland continues under the influence of the present agitation, the adoption of the steps we have suggested will probably not prove sufficient to insure the punishment of crime, and to restore public confidence in the minds of the law-abiding portion of the population.
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> "The evidence shows that the area in which trial by jury has broken down is not a small one, and that the social disorder, of which this is one of the numerous manifestations, is so deeply seated, that its rapid disappearance cannot be confidently looked for; nothing will so much retard its appearance as the prolongation of a state of things under which crime can be committed with impunity, and justice publicly outraged.

> "Under the circumstances it will be for Her Majesty's Government to determine whether or not trial by jury should for a limited time, within a limited area, and with regard to circumstances of a well-defined character, be replaced by some form of trial less liable to abuse."

Up to that point the Committee had been absolutely unanimous in all their proceedings; but there, he was sorry to say, the noble Lords the Lord Privy Seal (Lord Carlingford) and the Lord President of the Council (Earl Spencer), felt they could no longer join the other Members of the Committee. But the difference between them, he was glad to say, was very slight. The Lord Privy Seal proposed to substitute for the paragraphs which he had just read the following words:—

> "But we feel bound to add that the evidence which we have taken has forced upon us the conclusion that such reforms will be of little use so long as the present agrarian agitation and organization remain dominant within a large part of Ireland. Should this state of things unhappily continue, the responsibility will rest with the Government to provide the necessary means for the due maintenance of the law and the punishment of offenders."

This paragraph, he submitted to their Lordships, contained two statements, the first of which was that the reforms of the Committee, as already recommended, would be useless as long as the present agrarian agitation continued. These words were absolutely identical in meaning with the recommendation which he had mentioned, and which the majority of the Committee approved. The second statement respecting the provision by the Government of the necessary means for the due maintenance of the law and the punishment of the offenders was an admirable and almost oracular statement, sounding, perhaps, a little too like an official statement of official infallibility. He did not think anyone could conceive a Government that was not responsible for providing necessary means for the due maintenance of the law and the punishment of offenders. Yet he could not regard those words as a mere truism written without any idea of their meaning, or as a threat uttered without any definite conception of the manner in which the words were to be made good. What were the circumstances under which these words were written? The Committee recommended certain alterations in the law; so did the noble Lord the Lord Privy Seal. The Committee said that if the agitation continued those alterations of the law would not be sufficient. The noble Lord the Lord Privy Seal agreed to that, and added that, these alterations not being sufficient, the Government would have to do something more in order to provide the necessary means for the due maintenance of the law. The noble Lord the Lord Privy Seal never told them, while deliberating with the Committee and taking evidence, of any other means of enforcing the law, and providing for the punishment of offenders other than those which were mentioned in the Report. He could not help believing that, after all, the noble Lord, in his heart, entirely agreed with the recommendation of the majority of the Committee; but that, from a regard for the susceptibilities of his countrymen, he did not like to call things by their proper names, or put upon paper any passage in which the suspension of trial by jury was clearly pointed at.

He could assure the House that those who formed the majority of the Committee had made their recommendations with a very full sense of the responsibility which devolved upon them; but they could not close their eyes to the facts—the alarming facts—which the evidence brought within their knowledge. Behind them they had the humiliating experience of the past. Before them were the terrible possibilities of the coming winter. They felt that they had no choice but to state that, in their opinion, if no signs of improvement manifested themselves, it would be the duty of the Government of the country to consider whether, within a limited district and for a certain time, trial by jury should not be superseded. Their Lordships would observe that, although the majority of the Committee expressed its belief that the time might come for such a change, they did not actually say that it had come already. At the time when the Report was written a great measure of remedial legislation was passing through Parliament, and very sanguine hopes were entertained of the effects which it was likely to produce. He would not enter into that question then; but, at any rate, it was possible to believe that its passing might have had an effect in improving the state of Ireland, and the Committee felt that it would only be reasonable to allow time for the trial of that great experiment before any change so stringent as that which they conditionally recommended should be resorted to. What he thought they had to ask Her Majesty's Government was, whether the success of that measure, and the success of their policy in Ireland, had been such as to render it possible to govern that country without some further steps for securing the enforcement of the law? What had been their experience since the Report of the Committee was written? They had had, in the first place, the Winter Assizes. He knew that the conduct of the juries during the Winter Assizes was a subject of a great deal of congratulation; and, no doubt, that conduct did present a marked contrast with the conduct of other juries; but their Lordships must remember that the experience of the Winter Assizes was absolutely worthless as any indication of what the conduct of the juries in ordinary Assizes was likely to be. In the Winter Assizes the juries were composed, to a great extent, not of persons of the farming class, but of tradespeople and shopkeepers. In fact, the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had stated publicly that the Cork juries were doing their duty because the shopkeepers were beginning to find out that non-payment of rent meant non-payment of debts. That was the real explanation of the improved conduct of the juries at the Winter Assizes. Then they had the Spring Assizes. Of course, there were no statistics yet open to the public with regard to them; but he had given attention to the reports of what took place in the different districts, and he observed that there had been in most of the Circuits a very large increase of crime, notably of agrarian crimes, and that a very few persons had been made amenable—while of those who had been made amenable, a mere handful, whom they count over on their fingers, were convicted. He saw that the acquittals were specially numerous in agrarian cases, and that when there was an acquittal, although the evidence might be of the strongest possible character, the result was generally accompanied with those scandalous scenes, the verdict of acquittal, or the disagreement of the jury, being again and again received with the tumultuous applause of crowded Courts. In one or two cases, moreover, he had observed that the Judges had rebuked the jurors for the manner in which they performed their duties. All these were ominous and disquieting facts, and he would be glad if any Member of the Government could re-assure the House with regard to them. If the Government could not re-assure them, if the tide of disaffection was not receding, if the juries were still deliberately disregarding their oath, then their Lordships might depend upon it that they would have to make out a debtor and creditor account against trial by jury in Ireland; and if they found that its advantages were outweighed by the miscarriage of justice and by the outrages to common decency to which it had given rise, then they would have fearlessly to find some other means of trial to put in its place. Above all things, they should divest their minds of the superstition that to replace trial by jury by trial without jury was necessarily a great infringement of public liberty. It might well be asked what room there was for public liberty in Ireland in the present condition of that country? Public liberty was being crushed out of existence in Ireland between the repressive measures to which the Government had been driven to resort on the one hand, and the domestic tyranny of the Land League on the other. They had on the one side intimidation, terrorism, and outrages of every kind—"Boycotting," mutilation, panic, murder; they had on the other suppression of the freedom of public speech, the prohibition of free discussion, and the imprisonment without trial of large numbers of the Queen's subjects. Which of the two was the greatest interference with liberty—to keep a man for months together in prison without any trial at all, or to put him on his trial before a properly-constituted tribunal, even although that tribunal was not aided by a jury? It seemed to him that the moment was not one for squeamishness in regard to liberty in Ireland; and he was only afraid that, in this and in other matters, they might be found clinging to the mere semblance and shadow of liberty long after the substance of it had lost its place in their midst.

After all, was it quite clear that trial by jury was so essential in the interests of liberty and of the rights of individuals? Had their Lordships considered the enormous number of cases which were already in the United Kingdom disposed of by magistrates without any juries at all? In England, speaking roughly, 517,000 cases were so disposed of by magistrates without a jury, against 14,000 sent for trial before a jury; in Ireland there were nearly 200,000 cases dealt with summarily by the magistrates, and only 1,600 cases sent for trial—that was to say that, taking the whole United Kingdom, out of every 46 cases, 45 were already tried without any jury at all. Then, again, in civil cases, they had but to consider the enormous amount of business transacted in the County Courts in the United Kingdom. There were about 750,000 cases tried in the County Courts, of which only about 1,000 were tried before a jury. He observed, further, that the Report of the Committee on the Law of Judicial Procedure recommended additional changes in the direction of superseding trial by jury in civil cases. He did not think it could be contended, in face of these facts, that trial by jury was really and absolutely essential to the protection of litigants or to the preservation of public rights. Trial by jury was a means to an end. The end was to secure public sympathy on the side of the law, and to have the law effectually enforced. If trial by jury failed to obtain those ends, they must provide some means which would do so. He had put this Notice on the Paper because he thought the evidence collected by their Lordships' Committee too important to be consigned to the limbo of forgotten Blue Books. He would not ask Ministers for a premature disclosure of the policy of Her Majesty's Government, for he knew the difference between the position of a private Member who asked a Question and a Member of the Government who had to answer it. Still, he felt that upon some of these points Ministers might vouchsafe the House a little information. The Committee had recommended, unconditionally and apart from the concluding portions of their Report, certain alterations in procedure intended to remedy grave defects which experience had disclosed in the working of the jury system in Ireland. He could not help thinking that the Government might tell their Lordships whether, upon the whole, they agreed in the recommendations of the Committee upon these points, and whether, when the state of Public Business permitted, they would consider the propriety of taking some steps in order to give effect to those recommendations. As to the further and more serious recommendation of the Committee, the House would bear in mind that it was made conditionally. The suspension of trial by jury was advocated only in the event of the state of Ireland showing no improvement, and of a continuation of the scandals which he had described. They had, he thought, a right to ask Ministers whether those scandals still continued; whether it was still the case that owing to the conduct of the juries "crime can be committed with impunity, and justice publicly outraged;" if so, if there was no alteration in the state of things disclosed to the Committee in August last, they had no choice but to ask Her Majesty's Ministers what steps they proposed to take in order to make good those words of the noble Lord the Lord Privy Seal, in which he had solemnly pledged the Government to provide necessary means for the due maintenance of the law and the punishment of offenders? The noble Marquess concluded by asking the Question of which he had given Notice.

Lord CARLINGFORD said, he was not surprised that his noble Friend (the Marquess of Lansdowne) should have thought it well to make the able statement which he had made to the House with respect to the proceedings and the recommendations of the Committee of last Session upon the Irish Jury Laws. That was a Committee of great importance; and he (Lord Carlingford) might be permitted to say that the Report prepared by his noble Friend was as well-considered a Report as ever was adopted by a Committee of that importance dealing with so weighty a subject. That Report consisted of two parts. The larger part, upon which the Committee were happily unanimous, consisted of recommendations of various reforms in the system of Irish Jury Laws. The smaller and latter part of the Report, and one of the greatest and most critical importance, was of a very different nature. It did not recommend reform, but the suspension of trial by jury in Ireland. That recommendation was made in the most guarded and most careful terms, and evidently with the fullest conviction of the grave and serious character which it bore. It was not even a recommendation made positively to the Government, or by way of direct advice to Parliament. It was made in terms which left it to the responsibility and discretion of the Government as to whether it should be adopted or not, and as to when it should be adopted. It did not attempt to recommend or suggest what mode of trial should be substituted for trial by jury. Of that recommendation, however guarded, however cautious it might be, the minority of the Committee, including his noble Friend the Lord President of the Council and himself, were not able to take the responsibility, or to concur in it. His noble Friend (the Marquess of Lansdowne) had been very critical as to the language of the Amendment which was moved by himself (Lord Carlingford), and which was concurred in by the minority of the Committee, and it was very possible that the mere words of the Amendment were not the best that could have been chosen. He did not deny that that might be so. But the noble Marquess said that the difference between the majority and the minority of the Committee appeared to be infinitesimally small. The difference was this—that the minority, including himself (Lord Carlingford), declined to concur in the advice and recommendation which his noble Friend desired to offer; while the majority concurred with him in giving that advice, and in making that recommendation. This, he thought, was a distinction and a difference which hardly could be described as infinitesimal. He did not complain in the least of the appeal that had just been made to the Government on the subject of the suspension of trial by jury in certain districts in Ireland; but he was bound to say that his attitude towards the recommendation must be the same that day as it was on the day when the Report of the Committee was adopted. He was not able, on the part of the Government, to take a different attitude at the present moment. He was not able to do what his noble Friend invited him to do, for it was impossible for him, on the part of the Government, to announce further legislation in connection with the subject at that critical period in Ireland. The Government had already, by the aid of Parliament, furnished its Representatives in Ireland with laws of the most vigorous and exceptional kind. They had been, and were still using, the powers so given to them, and all other powers, to the very utmost of their ability; and, as he had already said, it was not his duty now to announce to their Lordships any further legislation upon the subject. Their Lordships, therefore, would probably not blame Her Majesty's Government if he (Lord Carlingford), on their part, declined to discuss with his noble Friend under these circumstances, and at that time, the question of the suspension of the Jury Laws in Ireland. He would only make one observation connected with the part of his noble Friend's speech that related to the experience which they had had of trial by juries in Ireland since the sitting of this Committee, and since the adoption of its Report. He referred to the experience gained at the Winter and Spring Assizes. He thought his noble Friend had underrated the importance of the experience gained at the Winter Assizes. As far as his own experience went of the Winter and Spring Assizes in Ireland, it appeared to him that the remarkable success of a good many trials in strictly agrarian cases in the South of Ireland showed more strongly than ever the important effect of removing the trial of agrarian offences from the district in which they had been perpetrated, and the associations of the place where they were committed. He could not help thinking that if these facts had been then before them the Report upon that point would have been considerably stronger than it was at present. As to the Spring Assizes, he was obliged to agree with his noble Friend that the results had been of a different kind. The number of cases tried had not been large; but in many of them undoubtedly the results had been most unfortunate, and there was every reason to believe that during these Assizes there had been serious and lamentable failures of justice, though the contrary had been the case in some few remarkable exceptions. He wished, at the same time, to add that the main and salient fact in connection with these Assizes was undoubtedly the extremely small number of cases which had been brought to trial. That was the first fact that struck one in examining the circumstances—namely, the lamentable absence of evidence, and the deplorable unwillingness of the sufferers themselves to prosecute.

Passing now from the question of the suspension of trial by jury in Ireland to the valuable suggestions made in the Report for the amendment of the Irish Jury Laws, and for strengthening the weaker points of the system which had been so carefully investigated by the Committee of their Lordships' House, he wished to say that with respect to that part of the Report he was of the same opinion now as he was at the time. The Government felt fully both the importance of the subject itself and of the recommendations of the Committee; and it was their belief that those recommendations would form important materials for the improvement of the Irish jury system when time and opportunity could be found for dealing with the subject. With that qualification he could assure his noble Friend that the Government acknowledged the weakness and imperfections, in some important respects, of the Irish jury system; but he must say that the time and opportunity had not yet arrived when, with the assistance of the Report of their Lordships' Committee, those defects might be removed, and those weaknesses might be cured.

The Duke of ARGYLL: My Lords, I do not think many of us will be disposed to find any very serious fault with the answer which has been given by my noble Friend the Lord Privy Seal (Lord Carlingford) to the very able and powerful statement of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Lansdowne). I do not think we shall be disposed to find fault, when we consider the position of a Minister of the Crown, that the Lord Privy Seal is not able to announce any measures on behalf of the Government—the Government, perhaps, not having made up their minds, or, if they have, considering it inexpedient at present to disclose them. But, having said so much, I feel that thanks are due to the noble Marquess for having brought the subject forward; and I should deem it almost a neglect of my duty if I failed to express the obligations we are under to my noble Friend, on behalf of this House, and on behalf of this country, and, I will add, on behalf of the people of Ireland, for the dignified, thoughtful, and temperate statement which he has made. I should like, also, to say a few words with regard to the alleged failure of the measures of coercion which last year were taken by the present Government. It is commonly said that these measures of coercion have wholly failed. I cannot see the justice of that observation. They certainly have not succeeded in preventing terrible outrage and crime in Ireland, or the continuance of crime in Ireland; but those who say that these measures have failed forget that but for these measures crime might have been ten-fold more rampant than it is at present. They have failed in this sense, certainly—that they have not produced a complete reform; but it does not follow that they have failed in diminishing crime. I must point out, however, what is the real character of these measures of coercion to which the Government and Parliament have had recourse. The noble Marquess asks us to come to the conclusion that trial by jury has failed in Ireland. Is this a very terrible thing, when the Government has come to the conclusion long ago that it was necessary to give them arbitrary powers to arrest and imprison men without any trial whatever? It is a far more arbitrary system of coercion which you have had recourse to than that which is pointed to by my noble Friend. It is a course of coercion of which the country has reason to be ashamed, in this sense, that the Government of Ireland should be compelled to resort to such measures. Well, now, it is quite evident that the measures of coercion to which we had recourse last year are in some danger of producing a re-action in the public mind. It is inevitable, in the circumstances of the case, that when, under these powers which Parliament has committed to you—I am not arguing that Parliament was wrong—I believe it was a necessity—but the consequence of these powers, to a very large extent, has been that men's minds have become shocked with the fact that 500, 600, or 700 persons are or have been in prison in Ireland without having had any trial whatever. It is inevitable that there should be a re-action in the public mind. But one cannot help looking forward with some alarm to the Parliamentary condition of things. These powers of coercion which the Government possess are limited in point of time, and, therefore, we shall have to consider what is to be done. The Government will very soon have to make up its mind whether they will ask Parliament to renew them. I ask, is it possible, in the face of the facts brought before us to-night by the noble Marquess, to deny that strong powers are necessary in the hands of the Government in regard to agrarian crime in Ireland? Then you must make your choice between continuing a purely arbitrary system of arrest without any trial at all, or so strengthening the ordinary law that through the law you can strike the wrongdoer. You are holding in prison some 600 or 700 men whom you suspect of having incited to crime. That is a very strong power; it is a power which you have been compelled to use to a large extent, and no one has confessed more frankly than the Chief Secretary for Ireland that he has been obliged to exert those powers to a much larger extent than he expected when Parliament intrusted them to him. It may be that those powers will have to be renewed; but I, for one, frankly state that I would infinitely prefer to see a strengthening of the ordinary law in the direction pointed out by my noble Friend than any indefinite prolongation of these arbitrary powers. I agree very much with all the arguments and statements which have been made by the noble Marquess. I think there is an undue superstition with regard to trial by jury. It has been a great bulwark, no doubt, of political freedom, and I believe and trust it will continue to be so; but there are conditions of society—and really the condition of Ireland is one—in which trial by jury is practically useless for the detection and punishment of crime. You have passed a great remedial measure, and you have given a great deal of the property of Ireland over to the farmers, and you ought now to insist upon it, by a judicious strengthening of the ordinary law, that crime shall be repressed; and I, for one, would recommend the remedy suggested by my noble Friend, that in agrarian cases, well-defined, and in districts well-defined also, those offences should be tried before a Commission of Judges. I believe that is the only way in which you can repress crime. The state of things in Ireland is really frightful. My noble Friend, since he sat down, has put this telegram into my hands. In some of the morning papers your Lordships may have seen that there has been another terrible agrarian murder in Ireland. This information has been forwarded to him. I do not give the names of the persons from whom it comes; but it bears so directly on the condition of things we are now discussing, that I will read it to the House—

> "You may state that Mr. Arthur Herbert was shot dead yesterday, because he told the Judge at the last Assizes that a fellow-juror had stated he would hold out for a week before he would find a verdict of guilty."

Here is a case where there is every reason to believe that this murder has been committed because one man insisted on doing his duty as juror in giving information to the Judge in regard to the conduct of his fellows. I do not wish to make a speech, following up this matter, further than to say that when such is the state of Ireland, none of us would wish to say anything which would embarrass the Government. I wish to say everything that I can to help the Government in expressing the opinion of at least many who stand around, and on this occasion I must say that I heartily concur in the speech of my noble Friend.

LORD INCHIQUIN said, that, in his opinion, trial by jury, as it now existed in Ireland, was in no sense efficacious. The liberties of the people of Ireland would be very much better preserved than they were at present if some temporary change were to be made in the direction which the Committee of last year pointed out. The evidence which came before that Committee was so convincing, backed up as it was by the opinion of the most eminent Judges in Ireland, that they reluctantly came to the conclusion that if things remained in the same state as they were when the Report was made, they had no other alternative than to make the recommendations in question to the House. He believed if such changes were carried out at the present time, they would shortly find that the state of affairs in Ireland would rapidly improve. The tenant farmers, the labourers—in fact, every class in Ireland—were anxious that the present terrorism should cease; and he would ask their Lordships and the Government to say how such a state of things could be put an end to. As long as crime was committed with perfect impunity, and as long as people were compelled to obey the unwritten law—which their Lordships knew was really the present law of Ireland—of course he could not expect that Her Majesty's Government should be prepared to make such changes prematurely; but he would ask them to consider them. There were at present 600 or 700 men in gaols in Ireland without trial. If many of those imprisoned were not guilty of murder, they were guilty of inciting to murder; and if a Commission of Judges were sent down to districts such as that with which he was particularly acquainted to try those men who had been taken up by twenties, thirties, and fifties, it would be much more satisfactory to everyone concerned, and would soon put an end to the lawlessness which was kept up by those wretched secret societies which existed in Ireland. It would be a good thing for Ireland, and have a much better effect than imprisonment without trial. He therefore trusted the Government would consider whether it was not much better to have a ready and prompt trial by a Commission of Judges, or even the establishment of martial law, than to allow the country to drift into a still more dangerous state than it was at present. No one was better pleased than he was by the success of the Winter Assizes; but he was much afraid that its effect would be to prop up the Irish jury system for a while longer. He could not agree with the noble Lord the Lord Privy Seal that the difficulties which they now experienced would be put an end to by a change of venue, and the opinion of all the Judges was to that effect.

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN said, he was delighted to hear the noble Duke (the Duke of Argyll), with his usual eloquence, advocate what he (the Earl of Dunraven) had himself long looked upon as the only common-sense view of that matter, and declare that, in view of the valuable evidence and the most able Report of the Committee which had inquired into the Irish Jury system, and taking into consideration what they knew to be the state of Ireland, the only thing that could under the circumstances be done, with any practical effect, would be to substitute some other form of trial, instead of trial by jury, for dealing with cases of an agrarian nature. The Committee said that justice had almost completely failed in Ireland owing to various reasons. They reported that in many cases juries were subject to such intimidation that they dared not convict; that in others they were so completely in sympathy with the accused that no intimidation was necessary; and also that many of the acts which were considered crimes by us, and which were rightly considered crimes, were not considered crimes at all by the jurors who had to try them. As regarded the last, if a crime was not regarded as a crime by jurors, trial by jury became a meaningless farce; while the only practical way in which jurors who were intimidated could be saved from that intimidation was by relieving them from their duties; because, whatever alteration of the law was made, and however much they hoped that the state of Ireland would improve, no reasonable man could be sanguine enough to expect that intimidation would become impossible in Ireland in a short time. Even if the rating qualification for jurors could be made much higher—and the Report showed that that was impracticable—the effect would be bad, because it would be indirectly superseding trial by jury whilst retaining the form, and it would tend very much to increase that bitterness between class and class which already prevailed too much in Ireland. Various alterations were suggested by the Committee, which would no doubt be beneficial. But to suppose that those alterations could possibly work such a change in the condition of the country and in the temper of the people, and in the view they took of crime of an agrarian nature, was to ignore the whole modern history of Ireland. The case of the "suspects" in prison had been commented upon, and he would wish to add a word or two on that point. He felt very deeply how discreditable it was to England, and especially, as it seemed to him, to the Liberal Party, that between 600 and 700 men should now be in prison in Ireland without any trial whatever, and without either themselves, their friends, or the public having any opportunity of knowing the particulars of the crimes of which they were accused, or the evidence which could be brought against them. He did not mean to say that strong powers of the kind taken by the Government were not necessary; but he had thought from the first that there were two alternatives open to the Government at that time. They could either have asked Parliament to give them power of trying prisoners for certain offences by some other mode than by jury, or they could have obtained strong and exceptionally arbitrary powers. The Government adopted the latter course and obtained the powers they required, though it was doubtful whether Parliament would have granted them if they had foreseen how they would be used; but he believed that the former course would have been very more efficacious, and it would have saved this country from that which had happened—namely, that, owing to the way in which they had exercised their powers, the Liberal Party had been utterly discredited in Ireland. Trial by jury in Ireland in certain cases had long ago been shown to be useless. How many times had it not been found necessary to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland; and would it be contended that Ireland, under those circumstances, was in the enjoyment of those liberties which were looked to be secured by trial by jury? It would be absurd. Trial by jury, without the Habeas Corpus Act, became a mere name and nothing more. Men's liberties would be much better guarded if there were some kind of trial instituted whereby justice might be meted out to those offenders who now got off scot free, than when men could be imprisoned without any form of trial whatever, and when the Lord Lieutenant or the Chief Secretary for Ireland could incarcerate any man without he himself or his friends knowing what was the charge that could be brought against him, or what was the nature of the evidence to be adduced. Trial by a Commission of Judges would be infinitely preferable to a system under which men were punished without any trial at all. At any rate, the whole circumstances of the case would be known to the accused and to the public. He thought the question of the "suspects" was a very serious one. To some of the "suspects" imprisonment, as now carried out, was scarcely any punishment at all; while to others, owing to their circumstances in life or the effect it had on their business, the deprivation of personal liberty was a very great punishment indeed. So far as he recollected, the object of the Coercion Act was that persons who were reasonably suspected might be held in gaol in order that they should not incite the people to commit certain crimes; but he saw that the Chief Secretary for Ireland the other day said in a speech which he made in County Clare that the "suspects" would not be released until the people of Ireland behaved themselves better. That appeared to him to be quite another matter. He did not know whether it was that, having reverted somewhat to mediæval ideas in our system of dealing with land tenure, it was also thought right to revert to mediæval notions in other matters, and to take hostages for the good behaviour of people. According, however, to the Chief Secretary for Ireland, those 600 or 700 men were to be held in prison until their countrymen learned to behave themselves more decently. He agreed with the noble Duke that strengthening the present law would, besides being more Constitutional, be much more efficacious than that system of arbitrary arrest. There was a difficulty in dealing with the "suspects;" but there would not have been such a difficulty if Parliament had boldly grasped the question, and endeavoured to come to a conclusion at first. If England was to continue to govern Ireland, and if remedial measures and measures such as the Land Act were to have a fair trial, it was absolutely necessary that the weak should be protected against the strong, that those who were guilty of crime should suffer punishment, and that the law-abiding should not be afraid to range themselves on the side of law and order. From the experience of many years past, that appeared to be impossible in Ireland under trial by jury. It was the first duty of any Government to see that the weak were protected, that law-abiding citizens did not suffer for ranging themselves on the side of law and order, that the innocent should be unmolested and the guilty punished; and if that could not be done by trial by jury, it was the first duty of a Government to see that it was done by some other means.

EARL FORTESCUE said, that he agreed with almost every word uttered by the noble Earl (the Earl of Dunraven), and in none more emphatically than that it was the first duty of a Government to use all its power for the preservation of law and order, for the protection of the innocent and the punishment of the guilty. He did not, however, believe that the obviously desirable measure of superseding trial by jury in a considerable number of cases, and especially those of an agrarian character, would have rendered unnecessary the Coercion Act, or, as he preferred to call it, the Act for the Protection of Life and Property, which had been only too tardily introduced by the Government last Session. He had been one of those who had, early in the autumn of 1880, publicly called upon the Government to take efficient steps, or, if necessary, seek the additional powers requisite, for at once suppressing the lawlessness which had already commenced showing itself in agrarian outrages, before, encouraged by impunity, it became too widely and strongly developed to be put down. To him, as a consistent supporter of civil liberty all his life, it was most painful to see hundreds of men kept imprisoned for months by the Government without being brought to trial; and nothing would have reconciled him to this but his conviction, contrary to that of the President of the Board of Trade, that the maintenance of law and order was the first duty of Government. He did not doubt, however, that the number of "suspects" imprisoned would have been much diminished if Judges had been sent down to certain districts to try prisoners without the aid of juries, which he quite agreed involved far less sacrifice of liberty than shutting up men indefinitely without trying them. In this, as in other instances, the Government timidly sacrificed the object to the name, the substance to the shadow, of liberty. Dispensing with juries was not without precedent in Ireland. It had been adopted in 1822 or 1823, he believed, with great advantage. He did not doubt that, sooner or later, the Government would have to follow the recommendations of the Committee presided over by the noble Marquess who had rendered such valuable service in so ably bringing the question under their Lordship's notice to-day. But, as usual, the Government would have lost much precious time. The conduct of the Irish Executive put him in mind of an anecdote, which he read some years ago, of Troughton, the famous optician. It appears that he had promised George III. to make and send him a certain instrument by a certain day of a certain month; and he duly did so on that day of the following year, when the King said to him—"Very well made, very well made, Troughton; and punctual to a day, too, punctual to a day; only mistaken the *Anno Domini*." So, he said, the Government had mistaken the *Anno Domini*. Even when they had done or said what was right in Ireland, they had always been at least a year, or six months, or six weeks too late in doing or saying it. The Chief Secretary had just made two energetic speeches, one in Ireland and one in "another place." But how doubly valuable they would have been in March last year! For more than a year process-servers had from time to time been ill-treated, wounded, and even murdered in different parts of Ireland. Yet it was only this year that Government, in concert with the Judges, adopted the obvious remedy of rendering service by post legally valid under certain circumstances. It was only yesterday that the Lord Privy Seal tardily acknowledged the valuable public service rendered by the Property Defence Association in doing what neither the Government nor mere private individuals would have been able to effect. He hoped the Government were at last beginning to be awakened to a perception of the right way of dealing with Irish lawlessness, and he felt confident that in that they would have the support of both political Parties in both Houses of Parliament. Only they must lose no time in taking effectual steps for the pacification of Ireland, for restoring it at least to the state in which it had been undeniably handed over to them by their Predecessors, orderly and tranquil, though, as Lord Beaconsfield had rightly warned them, profoundly disaffected.

LORD DENMAN said, that their Lordships might remember that when a Select Committee was moved for on the Jury Laws of Ireland, he had requested that more attention might be given to the discussion of the subject at the Social Science meeting, which was to take place in October, in Dublin, than to any evidence brought to this country. Their Lordships might recollect that no change in the Jury Laws could be made, except by Act of Parliament; and if the intentions of the Government prematurely were known, all juries would be put on their mettle, and no conviction could be obtained until the change was complete. He had heard the persuasive explanation of the whole state of the Jury Laws by the Right Hon. Dr. Ball, at Dublin, and he believed that safe measures could be carried if his views on the subject were fully considered. If any sudden outbreak should prevail, martial law might be proclaimed; but no hasty declaration of intentions could do any good.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE—THE CHANNEL TUNNEL SCHEME.

OBSERVATIONS.

LORD STRATHNAIRN, in rising to call attention to the danger of establishing railway communication with the Continent, in connection with the widespread disaffection now and constantly prevailing in Ireland, and the uncertain reliance to be placed on the immature soldiers of our army as lately exemplified in South Africa, said, it was impossible to comprehend the great danger of England's changing her insular position, which had always protected her freedom and her independence, and made her the greatest naval and commercial nation in the world, for a railway communication—that was, a land communication with France and the Continent—unless they contemplated the question by the light of past and present times. That contemplation was most discouraging as regarded Ireland, which he had mentioned in his Notice, and was the perpetual cause of England's weakness and anxiety. Ireland's proverbial and treasonable watchword was—"England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity." Then foreign affairs indicated, he feared, a change of that national policy which for centuries had upheld their possessions in India, and their commercial and maritime rights in the Mediterranean and the East. The disaffected masses in Ireland had never been able to take the field against our organized troops; but they had been able to organize Riband Societies and carry on agrarian campaigns. They had asked for and obtained no fewer than 11 times foreign aid, for war against England, in men, arms, and munitions of war. They had also instilled into Irish soldiers treasonable disaffection. Our distrust of the Irish Militia prevented their being called out for training. It was dangerous to allow the first-class Army Reserve in Ireland —all Irish trained soldiers—to remain without officers or military organization, scattered through the country; and it was all the more dangerous now that their numbers were increased. In case of difficulty or invasion the Irish Militia could not remain in Ireland. All this evinced the deep-rooted disaffection of the Irish masses, and the intensity of their hostility to English government, law, and connection, which proved that it would be a misprision of common sense and every principle of the art of war and strategy to give to a foreign enemy the means of a successful invasion of England by the Tunnel—afforded him by traitors in the camp, such as Fenian soldiers. To show the bad spirit which prevailed amongst Irish soldiers at times, he would state that during his period of command in Ireland, which began in 1865—the commencement of the Fenian period—it was his painful duty to bring to courts martial no less than 80 soldiers for different degrees of treason. In all the foreign quartermaster-generals' departments, Ireland was noted, on account of her disaffected population, as the point of descent, either for diversion in favour of a descent on some part of the English coast, or as the base of an actual invasion; and he had no doubt if a foreign enemy attacked us on the shores of Ireland, we should have to contend against an enemy from within as well as one from without. Under such circumstances, what was to be done with the Irish regiments? He would not go into all the details of how these numerous regiments, with sympathetic masses in the towns and districts, might operate. Favoured by night, the Tunnel might fall into the hands of an enemy, who would lose no time in entrenching the heights above it as a defence for the first invaders, reinforcing them to any extent with concentrations carried through the Tunnel. All this would be accompanied, as a matter of course, by continued feints along the coast, which, as frequently happened, might divert from the Tunnel attention and troops. The strategy would be facilitated by the probable collapse of the moral courage of our under-aged soldiers enrolled under the short-service system, which gave us immature and inefficient men, whose numbers were increased by fraudulent enlistment. But, besides the under-age of the troops, which might cause a Tunnel disaster, there were other causes which would operate unfavourably in similar circumstances. That was the mistaken instruction of officers under the present system. He had so often had the honour to submit opinions in proof of this, which had never been contradicted in the House, that it would be superfluous to enlarge upon the subject on the present occasion, especially as he intended to bring forward a distinct Motion upon it as soon as possible after the Recess. The remaining causes were the want of reconnoitring, of the knowledge of the ground, and of a second line of fortifying heights, through which the disasters of South Africa might be repeated on our coasts and in front of the Tunnel.

LORD WAVENEY said, the question why the Irish Militia was not called out had not received a satisfactory answer. He could not understand why that step had not been taken, seeing the disturbed condition of the country. The Duke of Wellington showed no distrust of the Irish Militia when, at the beginning of the century—in 1806 or 1807—it was said that the Irish people generally were only waiting for an invasion of the enemy. He brought the Irish Militia, then a very powerful body, numbering 26,000, under arms. He (Lord Waveney) did not believe in the policy of not calling them out, and he was convinced that the Irish Militia would do their duty as well as any other servants of the Crown.

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, he felt some difficulty in dealing with the subject, owing to the confusion arising from the combination of the two questions of the Channel Tunnel and the state of Ireland. The noble and gallant Lord (Lord Strathnairn) had travelled over a very wide field; and he would excuse him if he (the Earl of Morley) did not go into the various topics affecting the condition of Ireland, short service, &c. With reference to the Channel Tunnel, he could say no more than he had said on two former occasions—namely, that a Scientific Committee was inquiring into certain points connected with the defence of the Tunnel; and until that Committee had reported, and the Military Authorities had had an opportunity of advising the Secretary of State for War on the general policy of the construction of the Tunnel, he could not but regard any discussion of the subject as premature, and he could take no part in it.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE EASTER VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

QUESTIONS.

LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for War, On what principle it is intended to distribute brigades between officers of the Army and officers of the Volunteer Force at the Easter Monday field-day?

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, before the Question was answered, he would like to ask the noble Earl who had a previous Notice on the Paper (the Earl of Dunraven) why he had not been called upon—why the matter had been postponed?

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN said, that, as the Question had been asked, he must state that he had postponed calling attention to the statement of the Prime Minister relating to the decision of the Court of Appeal in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath" for obvious reasons—the length of the discussions on the previous questions and the state of the House. When he brought on the matter after Easter, he hoped there would be more time for its discussion.

THE EARL OF MORLEY, in reply, said, the principle on which the appointments were made was that the officer commanding a regimental district should also command a brigade composed of battalions localized in the district. Two exceptions, however, had had to be made owing to the absence of officers, and in those cases two distinguished Volunteers (Lords Bury and Ranelagh) had been appointed to commands.

VISCOUNT BURY said, he agreed that, as a general rule, it was perfectly right that the Regular officers commanding the districts should command the brigades; but for more than 20 years Volunteer officers had been regarded as eligible for employment as brigadiers, and he hoped that the plan of which his noble Friend had spoken of giving commands generally to Regular officers of the Army would not be carried to such an extent as to exclude Volunteer officers when duly qualified.

LORD TRURO said, he could assure his noble Friend (Viscount Bury) that he expressed the feeling throughout the whole Volunteer Corps, when he said that the course which the Government had in its wisdom thought proper to pursue had had the effect generally throughout that Body of depriving it of officers of that social position which it was most expedient that it should have if the Force was to continue what at its commencement it unquestionably was. This was not the occasion for any lengthened comment on the Volunteer Force; but he would take some future occasion to point out what were the particular drawbacks which had had the effect generally of lowering the condition of the Volunteer Force. He submitted that that Force would have to be placed in a better position. Sooner or later it must become the National Army as contrasted with the Imperial Army; and if the Government meant to do the Force justice, it must provide better officers.

LORD WAVENEY hoped that the noble Lord (Lord Truro), in his estimate of the National Army, would not entirely forget the Militia. He (Lord Waveney) had great respect for the Volunteer officers; but he thought that the Militia officers were also entitled to recognition.

GIBRALTAR (RELIGIOUS DISSENSIONS) —DR. CANILLA—THE PAPERS.

QUESTION.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN asked the noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies, When the Papers would be laid on the Table relating to the religious dissensions at Gibraltar?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY, in reply, said, that the Papers in question were in course of preparation, and would be laid before the House after Easter.

UNION OF BENEFICES (LONDON) BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend an Act passed in the twenty-third and twenty-fourth years of Her Majesty's reign, intituled "An Act for the Union of Contiguous Benefices in Cities, Towns, and Boroughs"—Was *presented* by The Lord Bishop of LONDON; read 1ª. (No. 61.)

House adjourned at a quarter before Eight o'clock, to Thursday, the 20th April next, Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 31*st March*, 1882.

MINUTES.] — PRIVATE BILLS (*by Order*)— *Second Reading*—Lynn and Fakenham Railway; Thames Deep Water Dock Railway*.
PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Settled Land* [120]; Conveyancing* [121].
Withdrawn—Chaplains to Workhouses, &c.* [10].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

LYNN AND FAKENHAM RAILWAY BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Charles Forster.*)

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he thought that the ground of the opposition which he had to offer to the Bill might be stated very shortly. In the first place, he wished to explain that he gave an entire adherence to the principles which usually governed the proceedings of the House with respect to Private Bills—namely, that unless some novel principle were involved, or unless some very special conditions existed in a particular case, it was desirable, as a rule, to send a Bill upstairs in order that it might be threshed out by a Select Committee. That was undoubtedly the rule, and he should be glad to follow it now; but he believed he should be able to show the House that special circumstances existed in this case, and that there were vital principles involved to which the House ought not to assent without full consideration. The fact that the House consented to read these Bills a second time at all was a proof that the House desired that, when necessary, they should receive full consideration. He admitted, however, that the case of sending a Bill upstairs was somewhat strengthened when the Bill itself was in the nature of an Omnibus Bill, because they could not reject such a Bill without defeating a good many parts of the scheme which they had no real wish to reject. He had endeavoured to get rid of this difficulty by placing on the Paper a Resolution precisely defining the limits of his opposition; and, having done so, he was ready to say to the promoters of the Bill that if they were prepared to meet him by striking out that part of the Bill which dealt with the particular portion of the line to which objection was raised, he would at once withdraw his opposition to the Bill so amended, and allow it to be read a second time and sent to a Committee upstairs. He had heard it stated that there existed a strong feeling in Norwich in regard to the defective nature of the present station accommodation. He could very well believe it. He could very well understand that great advantage would accrue to the inhabitants of Norwich from the construction of a central station; but, as a matter of fact, it would be easy to show that this particular scheme was not the only one possible, and that by rejecting one part of the Bill they would only be postponing the matter for a year, and enabling the promoters to apply to Parliament another year for an amended scheme. The grounds of his opposition to the Bill were clearly expressed in the Resolution on the Paper. In the first place, it was contended that the Bill unnecessarily interfered with the precincts of Norwich Cathedral. There had been circulated among the Members of the House within the last day or two a map which he ventured to describe as a very misleading map. It had been prepared by the promoters of the Bill, and its object was to show that although, technically, the line would interfere with the Cathedral precincts, yet, as a matter of fact, it passed at some distance from the actual precincts of the Cathedral. The truth of the matter was, that it was proposed to carry the line through an inclosure commonly known as the Cathedral precincts, although he readily admitted that the part of the inclosure through which the line would run was not occupied by Cathedral buildings. But he might venture to rest his case in regard to this Cathedral property entirely on the tenderness which Parliament always manifested in regard to places of this description. That tenderness might be based on the higher ground of the associations which these places created in the minds of all of them, even in these somewhat too practical times; or it might be based on the desire to preserve the privacy of places devoted to repose and study, and the desire to keep open spaces in the neighbourhood of our large towns. But, whatever the feeling might be, nobody would dispute the special tenderness of Parliament in this matter. If they wanted an instance, it would be found in the case of the Colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, and the grounds and gardens connected with them. Parliament had always anxiously guarded the people connected with those Colleges from the intrusion of the Railway Companies. It was upon similar grounds that he trusted the House would show its tenderness in regard to the present Bill. The fact was, that he was opposing the Bill not mainly upon the extent of the interference with these precincts, but on the ground of the principle of the interference; because he believed, if this part of the Bill were to be passed, the thin end of the wedge would be introduced, and a vital precedent would be created, which might be used in a damaging manner hereafter in dealing with similar cases. The second ground of opposition was the interference of the Bill with the historical gateway. Now, the gateway within the precincts of Norwich Cathedral was one which belonged formerly to a Benedictine Monastery, and it was supposed to bear date as long ago as the beginning of the 14th century. It was one to which a special interest was attached by antiquarians; and yet it was included, he was told, within the limits of deviation of this Bill. It was quite true, as stated by the promoters, that it was not intended to pull down the gateway. The promoters alleged that they were not going to interfere with it at all. But what was the fact? They were going to run an embankment, from 18 to 25 feet in height, immediately in front of this gateway, isolating it entirely from the rest of the precincts and the close, and shutting it up in a narrow space between the river and the embankment, entirely destroying all the beauties of the spot which had been so much appreciated. He did not wonder, then, that a strong feeling had arisen in Norwich and elsewhere against the Bill. All of them knew that the feeling was not confined to Norwich, but that it extended all over the country. The Society of Antiquaries in London felt strongly on the subject, and desired most anxiously that this gateway should be preserved. Of course, they would all admit that if it was absolutely necessary for the sake of public improvement, and if it could be shown that the requirements of the public were paramount, and that, in spite of all the objections he had urged, it was essential that the railway should be brought in at this particular spot, then he would be one of the first to admit that the Bill must be passed. But that was not so. Anybody who took the trouble to look at the map could satisfy himself in five minutes that the construction of the line in this particular spot was not in the least degree necessary, but that a small deviation would carry it across the river at another point, without interfering with the gateway, and consequently removing all objection. It was on these grounds that he ventured to move the Resolution which stood in his name, believing the House did not desire to establish so dangerous a precedent; and that, while anxious to give all reasonable facilities for the extension of railway enterprize where it could be proved to be necessary, the same jealous care which had always been displayed where interests of such great importance were affected would continue to be exercised.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is not desirable to proceed with a Bill which unnecessarily interferes with the Cathedral Precincts at Norwich, and with the ancient historical gateway there,"—(*Mr. E. Stanhope,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. THOROLD ROGERS said, the hon. Gentleman who had just addressed the House had entirely covered the ground which he (Mr. Thorold Rogers) had proposed to occupy in the Motion for the rejection of the Bill which stood on the Paper in his name. If the House accepted the Amendment, as he trusted it would, his Motion would be rendered altogether superfluous. But, beyond the points urged by the hon. Gentleman, it was as well to add this also—that, although the course which the line was proposed to take would only touch portions of the precincts of very little importance, yet, as it was intended to construct a central station in Norwich, which would be very close to the Cathedral buildings, it would seem to be absolutely impossible but that, at some time or other, the contingency to which the hon. Gentleman referred must come, and the extension of the central station, with sidings in the direction of the Cathedral precincts, would be inevitable. He did not object to the Bill on general grounds. He knew it was necessary to the town and city of Norwich that there should be a central station, and he disclaimed all hostility to the Bill. But he did think that, under the circumstances, the House should be invited to pronounce an opinion whether they would sanction an entirely novel course in regard to the lines on which railways in future were to be constructed; so that if they were to permit Railway Companies to invade these open spaces, they should in this case do it with their eyes open, before sending the Bill to the House of Lords.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY said, he had the honour to act as Chairman of the Committee by which the extension of this line into Norwich was sanctioned two years ago, and he therefore hoped that he would be allowed to state a few facts. The railway was one which had had a stormy existence during the time it had been before the world. It was originally a small line through Lynn to Fakenham; but the promoters saw that it was possible by its means to open out a fresh communication between Norwich and the great Midland districts. It was strongly approved by the landowners, who were anxious to break down the monopoly of the Great Eastern Railway Company, and in spite of great opposition and contest, lasting over four or five weeks, the Committee unanimously decided to sanction the Bill. They were told that there was not the slightest chance of the line ever being made; but within the two years which had since elapsed he believed it was rapidly approaching completion, and that it would shortly be opened into Norwich itself. He need not say the line passed through a very important district—important to the agricultural industries of Norwich, and to the much larger connections it opened up. It was now naturally exciting a great deal of alarm by the proposal to enter, in however small a way, into the Cathedral precincts; but he thought that a greater objection to it in the minds of many was that it had committed the greater audacity of attempting to compete with the Great Eastern Railway in that district. As the line was originally passed, a station was sanctioned in the north part of the city of Norwich, and one chief recommendation of that station at the time was that, although not central or convenient, it would be the means of clearing away some very bad rookeries and some very poor buildings which it was most desirable to remove. But it was always felt that it would be a great advantage if the station could be brought to the southern side of the town, in the hope of connecting it with the other railways. The reason of the alteration now proposed was that it was felt desirable to bring this railway, feeding a very important agricultural district, into immediate communication with the Cattle Market of Norwich. That was felt to be a most important object by the Corporation of Norwich, who would, no doubt, be represented in the House that day, and who, by a large majority, had passed a resolution approving of the Bill. At the same time, he could not wonder for a moment at the jealousy which had been excited by the proposal, both on the part of the Dean, who was the natural guardian of the Cathedral and of its precincts, and of the public, whose interest was naturally and laudably on behalf of these ancient monuments of which the people were so proud in England, and for the preservation of which the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) was constantly asking the sanction of Parliament. But the question was really whether they were in a fit condition in that House to decide the matter on *ex parte* statements, either on one side or the other. If they took upon themselves the responsibility of accepting the Amendment, the case made out in its favour ought to be an absolutely unanswerable one. In this case there was something, at all events, to be said on the other side. His hon. Friend who moved the rejection of the Bill said that it unnecessarily interfered with the precincts of the Cathedral at Norwich. He (Sir John Kennaway) held in his hand a letter from a Norwich clergyman—Prebendary Brereton—in which that gentleman said that the proposed railway would be nearly a quarter of a mile from the Cathedral, and that, although it crossed a portion of the precincts, it would do them no injury. Indeed, it was in the very position of the railway at Oxford, with which the hon. Gentleman had compared the proposed line. It would no more interfere with the Cathedral precincts at Norwich than the line at Oxford did with the gardens and Colleges there. And, further, he was told that these precincts at Norwich were neither ornamental nor attractive, being nothing more than tumble-down buildings and groups of pigsties. Nor was it intended to isolate or intercept the interesting old water-view; but the railway would pass at a convenient distance from it, and so high as to leave the gateway uninjured. He did not vouch for these statements; but, as he had told the House, there was a Norwich clergyman who did vouch for them. Of course, the statement about the thin end of the wedge they had often heard before. This, however, was a case that ought to be decided on special merits; and where there were these strong differences of opinion, the best place for settling them was a Select Committee upstairs, where every statement could be thoroughly examined, and a fair hearing given to all the parties concerned.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he sympathized with the feeling of the Dean and Chapter with regard to the sacredness of these precincts, and he should certainly support the Amendment of his hon. Friend, if he did not hope that he could see his way to a very fair compromise between the Dean and Chapter and the promoters of this railroad. He had been spoken to on both sides of the question, and he therefore desired to effect a compromise. The question was this. There was really a double opposition to the proposed line. There was the opposition of the Great Eastern Railway with regard to competition in Norwich, and also the opposition of the Dean and Chapter, founded on the more reasonable grounds so eloquently stated by his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Stanhope). He wished to have the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Lyon Playfair) for a few moments while he stated what the nature of the compromise he had to suggest was. The objections raised to the line by the Dean and Chapter were because the line went right across the Cathedral precincts, and proposed by an embankment to shut out the water-gate. That water-gate was a monument of great historical value, and therefore, in the first place, the Dean and Chapter did not wish the precincts to be touched; and secondly, they did not wish to have the water-gate shut out from view. He was authorized by the promoters to state that if his hon. Friend would withdraw his Amendment, they would undertake entirely to abandon the line through the precincts of the Cathedral, to carry the line over the river and back again, so as to skirt the precincts without in any way affecting the Cathedral property, except in two small corners, which it would be absolutely necessary to cross in order to avoid blocking up a public road and destroying some vinegar works, the compensation for which would be very large. By this means there would be no embankment in the Cathedral precincts at all, and no shutting out of the water-gate from the public view. The deviation would go to the other side of the river, and the line would run then upon the south side, and thus approach the central station which it was proposed to make near the Cattle Market. The promoters proposed to carry out this compromise in the following way. There would be some difficulty in carrying it out this year, unless they could make private arrangements with the owners of property. They would therefore withdraw that portion of the Bill this year, on condition that the Dean and Chapter would not oppose their application next year for a Bill in the terms he now suggested—namely, to leave the precincts entirely free except at these two corners which it was a matter of public necessity to take. The water-gate would not be interfered with, and the embankment and other works would be carried to the other side of the river. He thought the offer was a fair one, and he hoped his hon. Friend, on the assurance he now gave, would withdraw his opposition to the Bill.

MR. TILLETT said, he held in his hands a Petition from the Corporation of Norwich in favour of the Bill. After referring to the project contained in the Bill, it went on to state that the proposed railroad would be of great advantage to the city. It had been stated by the hon. Gentleman who moved the rejection of the Bill that there was considerable alarm in the locality in regard to the provisions of the measure. He (Mr. Tillett) was rather surprised to hear such a statement; and it was a singular fact that no Member representing the locality had come forward to move the rejection of the Bill in the place of the hon. Gentleman. He observed on the Paper three Notices of Amendment—one by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Stanhope), another by the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers), and a third by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton); neither of whom in any way represented the district. Surely it was remarkable, if so strong a feeling existed in Norwich and the neighbourhood against the measure, or against the particular part of it to which reference had been made, that neither of the Members for Norfolk, nor either of the Members for the City of Norwich, had been induced to come forward to move the rejection of the Bill. The fact was, that the strong feeling in Norwich was in favour of the Bill. The inhabitants desired to have a central station, as the hon. Gentleman had rightly observed; and he (Mr. Tillett) thanked the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir John Kennaway), who was Chairman of the Committee two years ago, for the reference he had made to the actual facts of the case, because he was quite convinced that a considerable number of hon. Members who had cheered the statements made in opposition to the Bill did not know the locality, or the nature of what was called the contemplated invasion, or what was the real aspect of this picturesque water-gate. The fact was, that there would be, as things stood, three railways in the city of Norwich—one of them with a station at a place Heigham, in the north-west corner of the city; another with a station called Victoria, on the south side; and a third in connection with the Company opposing the present Bill. It was extremely inconvenient and perplexing to the public to have these distinct and distant terminii for approaching the city of Norwich; and this Bill proposed to construct a central station, and to extend the terminus of the Lynn and Fakenham Railway from somewhere about Heigham in the north-west corner to the foot of the Cattle Market. Norwich being the Metropolis of a large agricultural district, and one of the principal Cattle Markets in the Kingdom, it would be of great advantage not to Norfolk only, but to the Northern and Midland districts, to have this station constructed. It was because the Bill proposed to give to Norwich the prospect, and also the assurance, of a central station that the people of Norwich were strongly in favour of its being sent to a Committee. In 1845 the Great Eastern Railway Company, or rather the Associated Companies that were afterwards amalgamated under the name of the Great Eastern, did actually project an extension of this railway to this very spot, or near to it. They applied to Parliament for a Bill in 1845, and obtained the sanction of Parliament to it. They thereby recognized that it was important and desirable for their own interests and the interests of the community that this central station should be made. But from 1845 down to the present time not a single step had been taken in the direction of carrying out that which was the implied purpose of the Railway Company. And now that Norwich saw the chance and the promise of a central station, the inhabitants were very anxious indeed that the House should not allow the Bill to be strangled in the way now proposed, but that it should be sent upstairs and be inquired into, so that the real interests of the public and the real interests of the agriculturists might be considered in the matter, and that it should not be made a mere question of bargaining between the Dean and Chapter and the promoters of the undertaking. He held it to be exceedingly inconvenient that questions should be raised upon the details of Private Bills in this way. The House was already overcharged with Public Business, and questions of urgent importance in which the entire nation was concerned could hardly be advanced a single step. There were now before the House some 180 or 200 Private Bills upon which questions of this kind could be raised and the Business of the country be almost put a stop to. That would not only be a source of great inconvenience to the House, but it would be a source of injustice to the country, because hon. Gentlemen would attend the Sitting of the House at 4 o'clock who had received private letters and been invited to discuss these questions upon *ex parte* statements, without having been able to hear the evidence of the engineers or to look at the proper plans. If this course were to be sanctioned, there was extreme peril that undertakings of the greatest importance to particular localities and to the community at large might be put an end to by an opposition raised in this way. He had no wish to pronounce an opinion in favour of every detail of the present Bill. If it could be shown that it was not necessary for the line to go through the precincts of the close; if there was a wanton and unnecessary invasion of what was called the sacred close; then let a Committee ascertain the fact on the evidence of the engineers, and let them decide accordingly. But the question ought not to be decided by the House upon a one-sided statement. He was able to confirm the assertion already made, that this railway did not propose to go within a quarter of a mile of the Cathedral at the point where it passed the property of the Dean and Chapter. He believed that 400 yards, or thereabouts, was the distance at which it passed the meadows, and it did not touch a single building upon the property of the Dean and Chapter. It came up to a street called Cathedral Street, at a distance of more than 300 yards from the Cathedral. He was prepared to concede that if the line unnecessarily intruded upon the privacy and seclusion of the Cathedral precincts, it ought to be resisted; but that was a question for a Committee upstairs, and he should not complain if, after hearing all the evidence, a Committee arrived at the opinion that such an objection was a fatal objection to the Bill. What he objected to was, that in that House, upon mere *ex parte* statements, they should be called upon, without having before them the substantial facts of the case, to reject the Bill.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, that, by the indulgence of the House, he wished to say one word in regard to the compromise which had been offered by his hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff). He was afraid that he was not able to accept that compromise. The proposal of his hon. Friend was, first of all, that the line authorized to be constructed by Part No. 6 of the Bill should be withdrawn for the present year. So far he had no objection to make. But his hon. Friend went further, and proposed that he (Mr. Stanhope) should give an undertaking that no opposition should be given by the Dean and Chapter, or any other person in whose interests he had been speaking, next year, when a Bill was to be brought forward for a railway which would cut the Cathedral close in two different places. [Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Only two corners.] It must be obviously clear that he could not accept a conditional scheme of which he knew nothing whatever upon a mere statement of this kind by his hon. Friend. Such a scheme, when submitted to Parliament, might be found to be in the highest degree objectionable; and, therefore, he must reluctantly press the Resolution.

MR. BULWER said, he should not have troubled the House if it had not been for the speech of the hon. Member for Norwich (Mr. Tillett), who had stated that no Member who had any connection with the county of Norfolk had been found to put down his name in opposition to the Bill. Now, when he looked at the Notice Paper, and found that three Notices had already been given for the rejection of the Bill, he considered it unnecessary, although a Norfolk man, to add another, or otherwise he should undoubtedly have done so. It was scarcely necessary to remind the House that this was not a case of opposition to the whole Bill. The Company promoting the Bill had a station already at Heigham, and the opposition was only directed to a portion of the present scheme—the portion delineated on the map by a red line. No objection was raised to the construction of a line to Norwich from the station at Heigham, but only to that portion of it which ran through the precincts of the Cathedral. He agreed with his hon. Friend on the Front Bench, the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Stanhope), in all the objections he had so eloquently urged against the invasion of the precincts of the Cathedral, and also to the contemplated appropriation of open places in that already crowded city. At the same time, he should have thought that the compromise suggested by the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) would have been in many respects a reasonable one, because the railroad would then be carried on the opposite side of the river, and there could be no very great objection to the slight invasion of the Cathedral property which would then be necessary. The junior Member for Norwich (Mr. Tillett) said the great object of promoting the line was to bring the station into the Cattle Market in the centre of the city. He should have thought that the Corporation of Norwich would themselves have been extremely jealous of having this space in the centre of the city occupied by a station of that kind, and that they would have preferred a station in another and more convenient place, exactly opposite the station of the Great Eastern Railway Company, which led to Yarmouth and the Eastern Coast. He felt it necessary to point out that if the Bill was to pass in its present form, and if this was to become a great cattle line, passing cattle through Norwich to the Northern and Midland districts, it was quite obvious that an increase of station accommodation would be required as the cattle trade developed, and if that accommodation could not be found in the city it must be found somewhere close at hand. They would not be able to obtain this increased accommodation in the direction of the river, as the hon. Member for Norwich had shown; and if it was hereafter found necessary to provide it, the provision must be made not on the river side, but by further encroachment upon the precincts of the Cathedral. He thought that was a fatal objection against allowing the Bill to pass in its present shape. At the same time, he would repeat that the compromise which had been suggested was not an unreasonable one to consider. As to the question in dispute being one between two Railway Companies, he had nothing to do with that. He had no interest in either of the Companies, and he ventured to think that getting two railroads into Norwich might, after all, be of no very great advantage to the citizens of Norwich, so far as competition was concerned. Hon. Members knew very well, from past experience, that even where the public had two Railway Companies to deal with, those Companies had only to put their heads together, and the public found themselves ground between two millstones instead of by only one.

Mr. LYON PLAYFAIR said, he thought the promoters of the Bill must see that there was a strong feeling in the House against interfering with the precincts of the Cathedral more than was absolutely necessary. The compromise suggested by the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) was practically a new suggestion, and was altogether outside the limits of deviation contained in the Bill. He would suggest that the promoters should withdraw Part 6 of the Bill, which authorized the construction of the works that were objected to, and go on with the other parts of the Bill against which there was no contention. If this suggestion were accepted the Bill might be read a second time, and the promoters would be able to bring forward a Bill next year without any pledge on the part of the Dean and Chapter. He would, therefore, suggest that the promoters should give an undertaking that Part 6 of the Bill should be withdrawn, and that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Stanhope) should then withdraw his opposition to the Bill.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he had no right to speak again; but, with the indulgence of the House, perhaps he might be permitted to say that the promoters of the Bill authorized him to state that, in accordance with the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Lyon Playfair), they would withdraw that portion of the Bill which affected the precincts of the Cathedral.

Sir WILLIAM FFOLKES, as Vice Chairman of the Company who were promoting the Bill, said, he would be happy to give a guarantee on their part that that portion of the measure which referred to the precincts of the Cathedral of Norwich should be withdrawn.

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, that, upon that understanding, he begged leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

QUESTIONS.

DUBLIN CITY MARKET COMPANY.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, under a Bill obtained some years ago by the Dublin City Market Company, authorising them to buy houses in South Great Georges Street, Dublin, Mr. Joseph Fishbourne was appointed arbitrator, but resigned without making the awards; whether Mr. Posnet was appointed arbitrator in the room of Mr. Fishbourne, and, in several cases heard by him about a year ago, has not yet made awards; whether the Market Company are throwing down houses adjoining those in respect of which, after a period of a year since hearing, awards have not yet been made; and, whether he can say how soon Mr. Posnet may be expected to discharge his functions?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that he had no responsibility in the matter, which lay within the province of the Board of Works. He believed that as much progress was being made as possible.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—MESSRS. CROTTY AND OTHERS.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that seven persons, namely, Messieurs Crotty, O'Brien, Clune, Scanlan, Hogan, and Marogire, of Scariff, county Clare, and John Gregg, of Tulla, in the same county, were arrested under the Coercion Act on the 17th ultimo, and confined in the lock-up, or "black-hole," of the Police Barrack at Tulla from about 11 a.m. on the 17th ultimo, till about 3 p.m. on the following day; whether, during the time referred to, none of the seven men were permitted to leave the "black-hole" for any purpose whatever; and, whether this "black-hole" is a place that measures eight feet by seven?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, these men were not arrested under the Protection Act. They were arrested on a charge of treason-felony. They were brought to Tulla on the 17th ultimo, and were committed on the 18th. In the meantime, they were detained in the Tulla police barracks. He was sorry to say that the room in which they were kept was a small one; but there was no probability of obtaining cars on the same day to remove them, the police having been "Boycotted" by the car-owners. They were removed to Ennis the next day on cars brought out from that town. During the time they were in the barracks at Tulla they were allowed to see their friends, and relieved of as much restraint as was consistent with their safe custody.

STATE OF IRELAND—OUTRAGE AT DERRY.

MR. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that a serious outrage, said to have been committed upon some of the servants at Government House, Derry, during the visit of the Irish Society to Derry in August 1880, was reported to the Constabulary; whether said outrage was ascribed as a party one to the Roman Catholics of the neighbourhood; whether, during subsequent inquiries by a detective into an alleged larceny of spirits and wine, the property of the said Society, it transpired that no such outrage had been perpetrated; whether the supposed outrage was not an act done by the servants themselves; and whether this is the first occasion that strong suspicion has attached to some of the employées of the Society in connection with serious party outrages in Derry not long since; and, whether, in view of the stigma placed upon the Catholics of Derry, he will order an independent investigation into the circumstances?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, the occurrence referred to in the Question took place in August, 1879, and was believed at the time to have been a party outrage. A magisterial investigation, however, failed to elicit any evidence implicating any parties. He believed some wine, the property of the Irish Society, was alleged to have disappeared at the railway station at Londonderry; but it subsequently transpired that it had been correctly delivered. He saw no necessity at present of ordering an investigation.

INLAND REVENUE STAMPING DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND).

DR. CAMERON asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the inconvenience suffered by persons in Glasgow requiring forms to be stamped, through the necessity of sending them to Edinburgh, and the great delays which frequently occur through the inability of the Edinburgh office to overtake its work; whether it is a fact that on the 9th of March the Controller of Inland Revenue at Edinburgh advised the Department at Glasgow, that, owing to the demand for penny forms, consequent on the adoption of limited liability by the Scottish banks, large orders for "one penny" forms could not be supplied from Edinburgh in less than three weeks, while by sending them to London or Manchester for stamping they could be obtained in one week; and, whether he will consider the propriety of establishing in Glasgow an independent stamping department?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: I regret to learn that there has been some delay in obtaining the necessary stamped forms in Glasgow. It was due, I am informed, to the adoption of limited liability by the Scotch banks; and, in order to meet it, the assistance of the Stamping Departments in London and Manchester has been called in. This arrangement, it is believed, is approved by the principal persons concerned. The pressure due to temporary causes would not, in my opinion, justify the expense of a Stamping Department at Glasgow, in addition to that at Edinburgh.

DR. CAMERON: Would the noble Lord recommend the Committee to send the press of work to London, or somewhere else, where it could be done, so as to enable the work to be got through?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: That is what I have stated is being done. The work is sent to Manchester and London.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. JAMES DOOLEY.

MR. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that Mr. James Dooley, at present detained under the Coercion Act in Clonmel Gaol, had at the time of his arrest a licence for the sale of arms; whether such licence was revoked fourteen days after his arrest; whether all his arms and ammunition were at once given up to the police; whether he has since been unable to obtain payment, as provided by the Arms Act, for such arms, although four months have elapsed since they were surrendered; and, whether he will inquire into the cause of this delay?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that this prisoner was arrested on the 18th of November, his licence for the sale of arms was revoked on the 19th of November, and the arms and ammunition which belonged to him given up to the police on the 14th of December. The person acting on his behalf sent in a bill for the price of the arms, £54 odd, and he was asked for the invoice, which he failed to produce. That was the reason of the delay.

Mr. REDMOND asked if the man was to be left without the price of his arms until he produced the invoice, which, perhaps, was lost?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he could get another from the person from whom he purchased the arms.

VACCINATION ACT (1867), SEC. 31.

Mr. BURT asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he is aware that section thirty-one of the Vaccination Act of 1867 was obtained from Parliament on the express understanding that it was needed in order to give jurisdiction over children born before the new Act came into operation, but since the Act of 1853; and whether, as the section is no longer needed for its original purpose, and as there are no children now to whom the rest of the Act does not apply, he will consider the propriety of ordering the use of Section 31 to be discontinued?

Mr. DODSON: The Question of my hon. Friend is based upon an erroneous assumption. There is nothing in the Act of 1867 limiting it to the children referred to; and, so far from there being any understanding that Section 31 should be limited as suggested, it is so drawn as to include all children, whether born before or after the passing of the Act. I cannot, therefore, assent to the conclusion that the section in question is no longer required for its original purpose. I am desirous that the powers of the section should not be abused; but I have no authority to order the use of it to be discontinued.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. RICHARD HODNETT.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that Mr. Richard Hodnett, suspect, while in Cork Gaol, was called on by two gentlemen on the 3rd February; whether the gentlemen were informed by a warder that Mr. Hodnett refused to see them; whether he is aware that Mr. Hodnett denies having given any such message; but, on the contrary, states that he was anxious to see his friends; and, what notice the Government propose to take of the matter?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that two men called on Mr. Hodnett, while in Cork Gaol, on the 3rd of February. He was informed of their arrival, and he stated to the warder that he could see no visitors that day. The warder informed the two visitors accordingly.

Mr. HEALY said, the truth of this statement was altogether denied by Mr. Hodnett.

INTERNATIONAL LAW—THE SPANISH STEAMER "LEON XIII."

Dr. CAMERON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is a fact that the master of the Spanish Steamer "Leon XIII." having been imprisoned by the British authorities at Singapore for refusing to produce the engineers of the vessel, British subjects, whom he had arbitrarily placed in irons, the vessel a fortnight ago "escaped" from Singapore, carrying off the engineers in question; whether, before escaping, she complied with the Law as to clearance at the Custom House; if not, whether he will insist upon the Spanish Government restoring to British jurisdiction the British subjects thus piratically carried off; and, whether he will instruct our representative at Manila, whither the "Leon XIII." is bound, carefully to watch over their interests?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The statement of my hon. Friend with regard to the imprisonment of the master, and the escape of the engineers, of the *Leon XIII.* is substantially correct. No Custom-house exists at Singapore; but the engineers in question have been handed over to the British Consul at Manilla.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—SUPERANNUATION OF DR. ALEXANDER SMILEY, MEDICAL OFFICER AT BALLYCURRY.

MR. MELDON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that Dr. Alexander Smiley, who had served for nearly thirty years as medical officer of the Ballycurry Dispensary district of the same Union, had been compelled by broken health (brought about by the arduous duties he was called on to discharge) to resign his office, had been recently refused any superannuation allowance by the guardians of the said Union, although the dispensary committee of the district had unanimously recommended him for a pension; and, if so, what was the reason assigned for such refusal; and, whether, considering the public disadvantage that a medical officer should, at the age of sixty-four, after thirty years' service, and in ill health, be compelled to persevere in the attempt to perform his duties, night and day, in a district the area of which is 14,215 acres, with a population of 4,533 persons, mostly in poor circumstances, he would take some steps to avoid this public evil?

MR. W. E. FORSTER understood that, in the main, the facts, as stated in the Question, were correct.

MR. BIGGAR asked by what evidence the right hon. Gentleman said the last portion of the statement was correct?

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he thought it almost spoke for itself. It would be very hard that an officer who had attained the age of 64 years should be obliged to perform the duties of such a district.

MR. BIGGAR said, he asked the Question with reference to the two last lines, which stated, "with a population of 4,533 persons, mostly in poor circumstances."

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I am afraid it is the case with many people in Ireland.

MR. BIGGAR: No; it is not.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—THE NEW CODE, SCHEDULE VI.—PUPIL TEACHERS.

MR. SALT asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether any representations have been made to him as to the inconvenience that will arise in certain of the elementary schools in arranging the daily school-work, if the teaching hours of the pupil teachers are reduced from thirty hours to twenty-five hours per week, as proposed in Schedule VI. of the new Code; and, whether he will consider the possibility of some modification of this general restriction, under the authority of the inspector or otherwise?

MR. MUNDELLA, in reply, said, that representations had been made to him as to the inconvenience that would arise in certain elementary schools if the teaching hours of the pupil teachers were reduced from 30 to 25 per week, as proposed in Schedule VI. of the new Code; but he thought they were made under a misapprehension. Existing contracts were not at all affected by the change. It was only the contracts of the pupil teachers in the future that would be affected; and they should be very loth indeed to increase the hours, for they believed pupil teachers had been greatly over-worked, and that there had been a great deal of suffering in consequence. If inconvenience were found to result from the regulation, it could be modified; but he would wait for experience of its working before taking any step in that direction.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. THOMAS BRENNAN.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Thomas Brennan was suddenly removed, a few days since, from Kilmainham to Naas Prison, after an imprisonment in the former place for a period not far short of a year, many months of which he had spent in the infirmary of the Prison, where he was at the time of the order for his removal; whether the removal of Mr. Brennan was so suddenly executed as to prevent him from seeing, before his departure, his regular medical adviser, Dr. J. E. Kenny; and, whether the removal to Naas cuts Mr. Brennan off from Dr. Kenny's care; whether Mr. Brennan has been for some months in a precarious state of health; whether he will lay upon the Table Copies of the Report on Mr. Brennan's condition, made by Dr.

Robert MacDonnel about three months ago, and, since then, by Dr. Carte, the official medical attendant at Kilmainham Prison; and, whether any reason can be assigned for the removal of Mr. Brennan, in his dangerous state of health, from a prison, in which his own medical adviser had daily access to him, to one in which he is totally deprived of the exercise of that gentleman's skill and care?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that Thomas Brennan had not been removed to Naas Gaol, but to Kilkenny. It was not the fact that he had been so suddenly removed as to prevent his having been seen by a doctor before he left. He was informed two days before of his intended removal, and, in accordance with his wish, Dr. Kenny saw him before he was removed. Dr. Carte also saw him. Thomas Brennan was in his ordinary health, and for some time back no reasonable complaint had been made on the ground of ill-health. Instead of the change being dangerous to Mr. Brennan, it was thought it would be beneficial. He did not consider he was called upon to lay upon the Table the certificate of the doctor.

Mr. SEXTON: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will tell the House why Mr. Brennan was removed to Kilkenny?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, the reason Mr. Brennan was removed to Kilkenny was that the Executive found it necessary to secure the safe-keeping of the prisoners; and also to prevent their carrying on practices for which it had been found necessary to detain them, and to prevent them carrying on communication with outside parties.

Mr. SEXTON gave Notice that he would move for Papers bearing on this question.

STATE OF IRELAND—RIOT AT BALLYRAGGET.

Mr. PATRICK MARTIN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Adams, of the Munster Circuit, who acted as counsel for the next-of-kin of James Marsfield, in respect to whose death the jury at the inquest, held in Ballyragget, returned a verdict of wilful murder against the sub-inspector in charge of the police, which has been lately quashed by the Court of Queen's Bench, on the application of the Attorney General for Ireland, stated that when the first witness on behalf of the next-of-kin, John Delaney, of Abbeylaix, attended at the police barracks, pursuant to the coroner's directions, in order to identify the sub-inspector who gave the order to charge, Delaney, on entering the police barrack, was threatened, and it was stated his name would be taken down for the purpose of having him prosecuted; whether, during the inquest, and within forty-eight hours after this threat, John Delaney was in fact arrested under the Coercion Act, and has been since detained in Naas Gaol; what is the date of the warrant under which the said John Delaney was arrested; was not the said John Delaney at the time conducting a considerable business in Abbeylaix, which has been greatly injured by his detention; and is it the intention of the Chief Secretary to prolong the imprisonment of Delaney, which has now continued over five months, or to direct an inquiry into the circumstances of his case?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson), in reply, said, he was not informed Mr. Adams was present. Delaney was arrested under the Protection of Person and Property Act, on the 17th of October, under a warrant dated the 14th instant. His case was under the consideration of the Lord Lieutenant.

Mr. PATRICK MARTIN asked whether, if it was proved to the satisfaction of the right hon. and learned Gentleman that Mr. Adams and the Coroner were present, any steps would be taken for the release of Delaney?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, he thought not, and for this reason—he thought it would be a bad precedent to establish—that of making counsel in a case a witness in the case.

Mr. PATRICK MARTIN asked whether, in point of fact, the right hon. and learned Gentleman had received information to the effect that Mr. Adams was not present?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): I have received no information at all about Mr. Adams.

ARMY — QUARTERMASTERS SERVING IN INDIA.

COLONEL ALEXANDER asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether he will make Clauses 198 and 201 of the Royal Warrant applicable to Regiments serving in India, with a view to enable Quartermasters of those Regiments to obtain the advantages to which Quartermasters serving elsewhere are entitled; and, if he will state the reason why Quartermasters serving in India, who hold the rank of Captain, do not receive the allowances always granted in India to officers of that rank?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON, in reply, said, that, so far as their English pay was concerned, Quartermasters of regiments serving in India came under the conditions and rates of the Royal Warrant referred to in the Question. With respect to their Indian pay and allowances, the Government of India would be addressed in view of their reporting on the subject of the hon. and gallant Member's Question; but he had to observe that the rank held by Quartermasters serving in India, as elsewhere, was honorary and relative only, and did not, therefore, necessarily carry with it the pay and allowances of substantive rank.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—THE NEW CODE—ARTICLE 109, G.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether, under the New Code (Art. 109, G. IV.), it is intended that scholars who may choose to remain at school after passing Standard VII. should contribute to the Grant made to their school, either by their attendances (Art. 13), or by their passes on re-examination in Standard VII.?

MR. MUNDELLA, in reply, said, that it was the intention of the Department that scholars who remained at the school after passing Standard VII. should contribute to the Grant.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Are those attendances to be included in the average attendances?

MR. MUNDELLA: Certainly.

EGYPT—ROBBERY OF BRITISH SUBJECTS.

CAPTAIN AYLMER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he has received any communication from our representative in Egypt regarding the robbery, reported in the "Globe," of all the effects of six English gentlemen, who have been travelling in the Atbara Mountains, by an Abyssinian tribe; and, whether the Egyptian Government have been asked to send assistance to these gentlemen?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: No information has been received from Her Majesty's Agent in Egypt with regard to the robbery of Englishmen by Abyssinians in the Atbara Mountains; but as it is known that some of the party are personally acquainted with Sir Edward Malet, there is no doubt that he will do all in his power to assist them.

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT—THE NEW WAREHOUSING SCHEME.

MR. SPENCER BALFOUR asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If it is still intended to enforce the superannuation of those upper division clerks of the Customs Warehousing Department in the prime of life who do not wish to undertake service in the Outdoor Department, while retaining in other departments some thirty clerks who are upwards of sixty years of age?

MR. THOROLD ROGERS asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he will inform the House what are the immediate and prospective savings, if any, in the Estimates, from the impending changes in the Customs Department; and, whether they will not involve the superannuation of many public servants in the prime of life?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: It is impossible, in the present state of affairs, to give a definite answer either to this Question or to the latter part of that of my hon. Friend the Member for Southwark. When we know how many of the warehousing clerks are willing to accept posts in the re-organized Department, and how many wish to retire, we shall be in a position to consider whether it will be necessary to compel any officers under 60 years of age to retire. I hope it will not be so necessary; and we shall endeavour to avoid this result by every means consistent with the interests of the public service. As regards the former part of the Question of my hon. Friend the Member for Southwark, I have to state that the Estimates now before the House are framed on the basis of the old establishments. The changes are expected ultimately to produce a considerable reduction of expense; but the amount of that reduction cannot yet be stated. Economy was not the first motive for making the change.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MESSRS. ALLIS, CULLINANE, FLOOD, AND DALTON.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will have any objection to allow the four Poor Law guardians of Tipperary Union, at present confined as suspects in Kilkenny Gaol, Messrs. Allis, Cullinane, Flood, and Dalton, to be released on parole in order to take part in the election of officers for their union on Tuesday next?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he did not think that was a ground for releasing the prisoners in question.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—OUTBREAK OF FEVER IN CLONMEL GAOL.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can give the House any information as to the outbreak of fever in Clonmel Gaol, and as to the disposition or removal of the suspects therein confined? The hon. Member said he put the Question in consequence of a telegram he had received stating that this was the second outbreak of fever in the prison, and that prisoners were put in the cells next those where the sick prisoners were, and no attention had been made to complaints.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that he had sent a telegram that morning directing the Governor to inform him if fever had broken out in Clonmel Gaol, and, in reply, he had received a telegram which stated that a case of typhoid fever had occurred. The inspector and architect of the prison had gone to see what could be done for the safety of the prisoners; but he had not yet received their Report.

In reply to Mr. Healy,

Mr. W. E. FORSTER assured the hon. Member that he would do all he could in order to prevent a spread of the fever; and he should at once telegraph to inquire as to how the prisoner was who had been attacked by the disease.

Lord Frederick Cavendish

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. MARTIN O'SULLIVAN.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that Mr. Martin O'Sullivan, who was arrested on the 23rd June 1881, was deprived by the Governor of Limerick Gaol of his necktie; whether, although Mr. O'Sullivan demanded it several times, the Governor refused to give it up; whether it is true that the flags in one of the yards in Limerick prison on a wet day are so covered with water that the yard cannot be exercised in, and that in another yard there is a closet which sometimes emits such an odour as to prevent the suspects from going within a long distance of it; whether it is a fact that, when letters are stopped by the Governor of Limerick Gaol, he will not return to the suspects the penny stamps on the back of the envelopes; and whether it is true that, in this and other gaols, suspects are charged for having their cells cleaned?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that when Mr. O'Sullivan was arrested he wore a large green tie with "Land League" and a harp without a crown worked in with white silk. The Governor took the tie from him. He asked for its return, and it was refused; but when he was discharged it was returned to him. There was a closet in the yard; but it was a good one. During alterations portion of the yard was exposed to the bad weather; but it was now enclosed. In future, when it was necessary to stop a letter at Limerick Gaol, the stamp would be returned to the sender. It was quite true that the "suspects" were charged 1*d*. a-day for having their cells cleaned, unless they did it themselves; but that matter was discussed last year, and he did not see any reason now for making a change.

STRAITS SETTLEMENTS—SLAVERY IN THE MALAY PENINSULA.

Mr. GORST asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House Papers which will show the policy in reference to slavery pursued by the British Government in the protected Native States in the Malay Peninsula; and, what steps have been taken subsequent to the Despatch of the late Secretary of State of March 5th 1879, to promote the Abolition of Slavery in Perak?

MR. COURTNEY: Papers on this subject shall be prepared and laid upon the Table of the House. The existence of slavery in the Malay Peninsula attracted the attention of the late Secretary of State, who took steps to secure its gradual extinction; and in the despatch of the 5th of March, 1879, gave orders to prevent the application of the system of debt-slavery to any new cases. In a despatch written on the 4th instant the Earl of Kimberley directed the Governor of the Straits Settlements to report on the progress that had been made towards the extinction of debt-slavery since the despatch of his Predecessor.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881, SEC. 8 —"ADAMS *v.* DUNSEATH."

MR. HEALY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Cullen, tenant, Bunbury, landlord, reported in the "Freeman's Journal" of the 24th instant, in which Judge O'Hagan commented on the "extreme difficulty of the task imposed on the Land Commission" by section eight, sub-section five of the Land Act, which requires the Court, on application, to fix a specified value of a tenancy with a view to a subsequent sale, and expressed a wish that he could, if possible, evade the difficult task thus imposed on the Court; whether he is aware that the same difficulty has arisen before the Sub-Commissions all over Ireland, and resulted in extreme divergence of practice and procedure among those bodies; whether it is the case that one Sub-Commission has decided that its duty, under the circumstances referred to, is to fix the highest market value of the tenancy as the specified value, while Mr. Justice O'Hagan has expressed an opinion that the specified value should not be the highest market value; that another Sub-Commission was in the habit of fixing, as the specified value, the maximum amount of compensation for disturbance which the tenant would be entitled to if arbitrarily evicted, and without any reference to the tenant's improvements, but was subsequently compelled to change this practice; that one of the Sub-Commissions has refused to fix a specified value at all, unless specific evidence on the point is offered, while all the other Sub-Commissions fix the value without any evidence on the point having been offered, and discourage the practice of offering such evidence; whether it is the case that the Lord Chancellor and the Master of the Rolls, in their respective judgments in the case of Adams v. Dunseath, expressed contrary opinions as to the meaning of the phrase "true value" of a tenancy; whether it is a fact that the power of fixing a specified value does not apply at all when a holding is subject to the Ulster Custom; and, whether, having regard to the difficulties and contradictions which section eight, sub-section five of the Land Act has given rise to, the Government will take steps to have it repealed?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have telegraphed to Dublin; but, unfortunately, in consequence of the absence of Mr. Justice O'Hagan, it is impossible for me to obtain either the verification or the correction of any of the recitals contained in this Question. I may, perhaps, remind the hon. Member that when the Land Act was in Committee, this rather important subsidiary provision of the Act was almost the only one which passed through the Committee without any opposition or discussion whatever. I do not think a single word was said on the subject. If the hon. Gentleman were correct in the allegations contained in the Question, we should be very desirous to know what are the views of the Judges and Commissioners about it—what light their experience may have thrown on the question; and we shall consider all information so obtained on that and other points without any prejudice whatever. With respect to the closing paragraph of the Question, and the engagement to make an amendment on the Act, I must refer the hon. Member to what I ventured to say a few days ago, and repeat that the Government must depend on the co-operation of the House with respect to their passing measures through the House, and be cautious as to engagements on that subject until they have secured an opportunity.

STATE OF IRELAND—MURDER OF MR. A. E. HERBERT.

MR. BOURKE inquired of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can give any information to the House with respect to the report which appears in the papers of the murder of Mr. Herbert, J.P., of Killentenna, Castleisland, county Kerry; and whether any arrests have been made?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I am sorry to say that the report is true that Mr. Herbert was murdered last night. He was fired at, and one of the shots struck him in the right lung. I have not heard whether any arrests have been made.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE)—THE DEBATE OF THURSDAY.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. LEWIS said, he had to ask the indulgence of the House for a few minutes while he referred to a statement made with reference to him on the previous evening by the Premier, and which he was perfectly astonished to read in *The Times* that morning. The Prime Minister said—

> "We have to deal, for instance, with an amplitude of speaking. I am myself charged as an offender in that respect, and the other day I was taken to task for the length of my speeches by the hon. Member for Derry. I am not at all prepared to deny that there is ground for the complaint which the hon. Member made. A great deal of responsibility attaches to one who holds high office, or is the Leader of a Party; but look at the condition at which we have arrived. The hon. Member for Derry reproved me for amplitude in perfect good faith, though he is not the Leader of a Party, nor the holder of a responsible office, and yet the speech in which he reproved me for amplitude was very nearly two hours long."

Now, he wished to assure the right hon. Gentleman that he was wholly and entirely mistaken with reference to the person whom he supposed to have made those remarks. Neither in the House nor elsewhere had he ever charged the right hon. Gentleman with "amplitude of speech"—[Mr. Warton: Hear, hear!]—and the only speech of any length that he had himself delivered this Session was on the occasion of the Motion censuring the House of Lords, when he had spoken, not for two hours, but for one hour and 10 minutes. He had looked at the report of this speech, and he found there was no trace whatever of the suggestion which the right hon. Gentleman had made. He had only further to say that in this speech there was only one reference to the Prime Minister. He spoke of the right hon. Gentleman's speech as reminding him of one of those fitful Atlantic storms, through which he had frequently passed—it was very fierce, very grand, very short, and left no trace behind it. He was, in fact, a most intense admirer of the oratory of the right hon. Gentleman. He should, therefore, be glad if the right hon. Gentleman would either give him some reference to correct what must be his very bad memory, or would withdraw what he had said.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I had no knowledge that the hon. Member was going to raise this question, or I would certainly have referred to the reports, in order that I might have been able to verify the accuracy of, or to withdraw, what I said. The House will bear in mind that in referring to the criticism of the hon. Gentleman, as I supposed it to have been given, I fully and frankly acknowledged its justice; but I observed that the criticism was delivered in a speech which I believed approached two hours in length. In the first place, then, I will give the hon. Gentleman my recollection, which, I think, is pretty accurate. He did say the speech was very short; but he added the very significant words, "for him"—a very concise and very effective criticism, of which I make no complaint whatever. In respect to the speech of the hon. Member, I really spoke according to what I believed to be the case, and I had paid some attention to the clock in the course of the speech. If I have over-stated the case against the hon. Member, I am sincerely sorry for it.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I beg to ask the Prime Minister, Whether the time has been fixed for taking the Navy Estimates; and whether there is any other information the Government can give us as to Business?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am glad the Question has been put. I will state what I think ought to be the course of Business. The House is aware that we propose to take the Miscellaneous Estimates on Monday. It will, however, be necessary, in consequence of circumstances that the House knows very well as to the date before which the annual Mutiny Bill must pass, that we should put down the second reading of that measure as the first Order on Monday. If the second reading be not taken to-night, it will be the first Order on Monday. We are already pledged to take the discussion upon the Army Estimates on Monday, the 17th—the first day after the Recess. We have considered whether it will be most convenient for the House that after that day we should proceed on Thursday with the Resolutions relating to Procedure, or whether we should consider further financial questions which have to be discussed. In the first place, we have a pledge, not so definite in point of time, but we have pledged ourselves to the Navy Estimates; and, in the second place, the time of year will have arrived at which it will be desirable to make the Financial Statement. Upon the whole, I think it would be most convenient and most satisfactory to the House if we take those subjects which are more or less allied together; and we therefore propose to take the Committee on Navy Estimates on Thursday, the 20th of April, and the Financial Statement on Monday, the 24th. After that we shall have the ground comparatively clear; and it will be more convenient to the House to take the subject of Procedure consecutively, so far as we can make it consecutive.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked when the Education Estimates would be taken?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, these Estimates would be taken first on Monday.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked what Business was to be taken at the Morning Sitting on Tuesday?

Mr. GLADSTONE: That must depend, in some degree, on the proceedings on Monday.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — MR. DILLON.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN said, he wished to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland a Question with regard to Mr. Dillon. It would be in the recollection of the House that Mr. Dillon was not a robust man. He was suffering from a hereditary illness, which was intensified by his confinement. Mr. Dillon was not a complaining or squeamish man, although the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. E. Forster) once called him a coward. Mr. Dillon had, he believed, made no request for release in consequence of ill-health; but he was a medical man, and as he (Mr. Cowen) was informed that, in his own judgment and that of his friends, Mr. Dillon's health was now in a serious condition, he wished to ask the Chief Secretary whether he had received any representation on the subject; and, if so, whether he was inclined to entertain it favourably?

Mr. DAWSON said, he had an opportunity of seeing Mr. Dillon a few days ago, and he could corroborate all that had been said as to the state of the hon. Member's health.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I wish I had received Notice of this Question, for I should have brought down a Report of an independent medical man of considerable position as to the state of Mr. Dillon's health. The medical man examined Mr. Dillon, and certainly he gives a Report which is an encouraging one. He is better than he has been. But, apart from this, I have no objection to state here what I have stated before—and Mr. Dillon has been informed of it by one acting on my behalf—that the doors of Kilmainham are open to him if he is willing to go abroad.

Mr. SEXTON: Would you state the name of the medical man?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I cannot recollect it; but I know it is a gentleman of high position.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean that he will release Mr. Dillon if he goes abroad from Ireland or from the United Kingdom?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Abroad from the United Kingdon.

Mr. HEALY: Shame! you offer transportation.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I am informed by his friends that it would be for the benefit of his health that he should go abroad. I again say if he likes to go to the Continent he can.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE)—THE DIVISION ON THURSDAY NIGHT.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I beg to ask the Prime Minister a Question of which I have given him private Notice. I beg to ask him, in view of the fact that the Government majority of 140 was in the division of last night reduced to under 40, and of the fact that a large number of the supporters of the Ministry voted only under severe pressure, and in fear of dissolution——[*Cries of* "Oh!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is now importing into his Question matter of debate.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Very well, Sir; I shall only ask, Whether it is the intention of the Government to press further their Resolution which establishes the *clôture* by a bare majority?

Mr. GLADSTONE: In the Question of the hon. Gentleman, as he has just given it, he call my attention to certain matters and allegations which he conceives to be of very pregnant importance with regard to the state of the Government majority; but in the Notice which he says he was good enough to send me, there is no reference to these great and important facts which he thinks it necessary to introduce as a preamble to his Question. With regard to the Question in the form in which I have received it, I have only to say, Sir, that the 1st Resolution is before the House in the form which the Government think best, and that we have no change in regard to the decision of last night to announce.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSION.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD, in rising to call attention to the Lands in charge of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England and Wales; and to move—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the position of the Ecclesiastical Commission with reference to the Lands and other Property vested in the Commissioners, and also into the work, in connection with real property, of the Church Estates Commissioners and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England and Wales,"

said, he wished to call the attention of the House to the affairs of the largest, the most wealthy, the most widely-operating, the most powerful, and the most dignified Corporation under the Crown. The business of the Ecclesiastical Commission was conducted by gentlemen of much respectability, while in the Commission were included 52 persons who were the highest functionaries in the State, the Church, and the Judiciary. The connection of those great personages with the Ecclesiastical Commission was, however, simply ornamental, except in the case of the Bishops. Five Ministers of the Crown were placed upon it to show that the Commission had public and official sanction; and it was on record that Lord Palmerston, while occupying the Office of First Minister of the Crown, did on one occasion attend the business of the Board. [Mr. Gladstone: I have done it.] That occasion was one in which this House had given some attention to matters connected with the Deanery of York; and what Lord Palmerston experienced on that occasion was that, whatever his power in this House, he was in a hopeless minority at the Board of the Ecclesiastical Commission. But for the information with which the Prime Minister had just honoured him, he was not aware that any Prime Minister had since entered the offices. Judges were placed upon the Commission in order to give the public confidence in the operations of the Board; but no Judge, with the exception of Sir S. Lushington, whose Court was a sort of half-way house between Church and State, had ever attended the meetings. It was supposed, at the outset of the Commission, that the Judges would attend and give their opinion upon matters of law; but no one would regret that they had thought it inconsistent with their duty to attend at the office of the Commissioners when a question might be referred to them which would afterwards have to be submitted to them in their judicial capacity. The Bishops and Deans had practically been, and were at this moment, the governing majority; and the House would not greatly err if it arrived at the conclusion, in regard to the Commission, that it was practically only another form of Upper House of Convocation. His remarks would deal wholly with the landed estates and other property in charge of the Commission. It was, as it were, by an accident that in 1843, by the instrumentality of Sir Robert Peel, this great Commission obtained the power of sale and purchase of land, under which it had conducted such vast operations. Sir Robert Peel proposed that a loan of £600,000 should be advanced from Queen Anne's Bounty to the Commissioners; and, in order to give better security for that loan, power of sale was given to the Commissioners, under which they had conducted their operations for the last 30 years. The Commissioners had, at the present time, investments in the Three per Cents amounting to over £5,000,000, of which a sum of £1,500,000 was derived from the proceeds of sales, which they were bound to re-invest in the purchase of land, but only "so soon as it might be convenient." The House would probably be aware that after the full development of the work of the Commission in 1850, the design and scope of their operations assumed this form—that they were prepared to take over from Ecclesiastical Corporations, from Bishops, Deans, Chapters, and Incumbents, their separate estates, guaranteeing to them a certain statutory income, authorized and fixed by Order in Council; and ultimately, having enfranchised their land and re-arranged those properties, to return the estates to their hands in sufficient extent to provide in perpetuity the income arranged by Order of Council to be given to them. What had been the results in reference to the endeavours of the Commission to go forward in this great undertaking? In the process of enfranchisement the area of Church lands—now including more than 500,000 acres—had been considerably reduced, because, while the Commissioners had been active in purchasing outstanding terms of leases for lives, they had over large areas sold the reversionary interest to the life tenants. From time to time episcopal and capitular estates had fallen into their hands, and there were only two Bishops—those of Llandaff and Bangor—whose estates had not passed on to the books of the Commission. In the operations of the Commission it had been assumed, as a matter of public policy, that Bishops and Deans and Chapters should have estates; and it was always held that when these estates had been enfranchised and had been "ring-fenced," they would pass away from the Commission into local control, under these conditions—that should the income prove more or less than the statutory salary, it would be for the profit or the loss of the incumbents. A Bishop, who took his estate back from the Commissioners—an estate supposed to yield his statutory income—farmed it, in fact, upon a lease for his life, and took it for better or worse. He had no interest in his successor, nor could it possibly be of interest to him to execute upon it the improvement which landed property must at all times require. It was assumed by the Commission that this work would be soon accomplished, and that the surplus in the hands of the Commissioners would have been determined long ago. In 1863 a Select Committee of that House was appointed to inquire into the then state of the Ecclesiastical Commission. One witness of authority gave his opinion that this redisposition of estates would be completed in 1870; and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge, who was for many years, from 1855, a responsible Member of the Commission, deliberately gave it as his opinion that all dealings with these estates would be ended in 20 years, and that then all these transactions would be completed. He did not regret, for reasons which he should presently state to the House, that the evidence upon which that Committee proceeded had been disappointed; and it was impossible to conceive a state of things more utterly unlike a realization of the predictions of the right hon. Gentleman than that which now existed. There were at present 30 Bishops, including two Archbishops, in England and Wales, and they were all Members of the Commission. Of these, only three—Canterbury, Hereford, and Lincoln—had taken back the re-arranged estates from the Commission; and it was a fact of great significance that no fewer than nine Bishops, whose estates had been re-arranged and returned into their hands by the Commission, had handed them back again into the permanent custody of the Commission, making them, in fact, a permanent agency for the management of episcopal estates. Those Bishops were York, Durham, Carlisle, Chester, Ely, Gloucester and Bristol, Norwich, Worcester, and Peterborough. The estates of Rochester, Salisbury, St. Davids, St. Asaph, Ripon, and Oxford, were in the office undergoing re-arrangement, so that, since the last Committee of Inquiry, there had been a wholly new departure, and the Commission had a practically permanent work upon its hands, and had now charge of nearly all the episcopal and a great number of the capitular estates. The system of accounts was condemned by the Committee of 1863, and had never been reformed. It was not easy to get at what was the real income of the Commission; but it appeared certain the rental of the estates vested in the Commissioners was not less than £880,000 per annum. The rental of agricultural land was about £300,000. The Commission derived nearly £150,000 a-year from rents of houses and premises in and about London; £270,000 a-year from tithes and corn rent charges; more than £200,000 a-year from mineral rights; and, in addition, large sums were received from ground rents and manorial fees. From the episcopal estates, given back after enfranchisement, they received more than £40,000 a-year, and £32,000 a-year from estates to be applied to specific purposes. Lord Chichester stated to the Duke of Richmond's Commission that the extent of the agricultural land managed by the Ecclesiastical Commission was 250,000 acres; but he thought his Lordship must have omitted the estates given back, and now permanently in the hands of the Commissioners. At all events, it was certain that the Commissioners dealt with an income in connection with real property not far short of £1,000,000 per annum. The Select Committee of 1863, which included Mr. Lowe, Mr. Walpole, Mr. Bouverie, and Lord Robert Cecil (the Marquess of Salisbury), arrived at two conclusions, which he desired especially to press upon the attention of the House. He frankly admitted that he would much rather his request for a Committee were negatived than that it should not be plainly understood that the design of a Committee, if a Committee be appointed, was to devise means for carrying into practical effect the two neglected conclusions of the Committee of 1863—namely—

> (1.) "That the system of throwing permanently the administration of large properties scattered over the whole country into the hands of one central body is objectionable;"

and—

> (2.) "That, independently of the political objection to such a concentration of property, this system unavoidably consumes a considerable part of the revenues of the Church in the expenses of valuing and re-valuing lands, and in the maintenance of a large establishment of secretaries and clerks. Your Committee are of opinion that this excessive expenditure is to be attributed in some degree to the fact that estates so widely dispersed are placed under the management of one Corporation."

He was not indifferent to the welfare of the Church; but he did not profess that that was the mainspring of the action he was taking that night. He was moved to ask for the appointment of this Committee because he thought that the ownership of land by Corporations was, in the words of the Select Committee, "highly objectionable," because he thought that such tenure of land was contrary in the highest degree to public policy and injurious to public interests. As to the limit he sought to impose in that respect, he held it to be a cardinal maxim of public policy that dispositions which took land permanently out of the ordinary conditions of proprietorship were to be defended only by showing that the particular dedication was of such necessity, or of so much value to the commonwealth, that an exception should be made in its favour. His main object was thus plainly declared. He did not desire the appointment of a Select Committee without an understanding that the execution of that public policy was to be a main line of its inquiry. He need not hesitate to recommend a purely economic policy on the ground that it would be productive of great material advantage to the Church. He ventured to say that the Ecclesiastical Commission was unrivalled amongst all the Public Offices of the country for what he might term respectable extravagance, though he did not mean that there was extravagance within the office of the Commissioners. The golden stalls of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners seemed to him to be filled with solicitors and land agents. So far as he could make out, the expenses of the Commissioners for last year, including £55,000 for the erection of buildings and works and for drainage, amounted to about £170,000—that was to say, a charge of about 20 per cent upon the gross revenue of the Commission. If, instead of £5,000,000 of Consols, the Commissioners had all their property similarly invested—with the exception admitted in his statement in definition of public policy—their expenditure would be reduced by nearly £150,000 a-year. He was not one of those who thought that the value of land in this country would fail to increase. He believed that at the present time land was a good investment, and that at no very distant time it would tend to increase in value; and those who, having regard to the cost of the Commission, might be unwilling to part in any way with their landed property, should bear this in mind—that while undoubtedly there was a probability that the value of land would increase, he did not think there was a probability that the value of the estates in the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners would augment by an accretion of £150,000 a-year. But, looking as he did at this matter from the point of view of public interest and policy, he turned his attention to the far greater advantage which, in his opinion, would accrue to the public from giving freedom to this vast area, which included some of the most fertile land in the country. He was a determined opponent to life tenancy in lands; but he believed the most disastrous to public interest was clerical tenure. He had observed with interest that one of the Assistant Commissioners had informed the Duke of Richmond that glebe lands were among the worst farmed lands in the country. Lord Spencer, before he quitted the Commission, asked Mr. Coleman—"What have you to say about Church estates?" to which the Assistant Commissioner replied—

> "Take glebe lands; are there any estates that are much worse managed than they? I say, for this reason, that the tenant is a life owner and in the most limited degree; it will not be his son or any relative of his own who will succeed him, and he gets as much as he can out of it during his life."

A fact worthy of notice was that the Duke of Richmond had received a Report from one of the assistants to his Agricultural Commission, stating with something very like complaint that "up to the present time the Commissioners have not adopted a tenant-right agreement." He gave his opinion deliberately that the remuneration of solicitors, surveyors, receivers, and architects, who last year appear to have charged in all something like £80,000, had been a very near approach to a scandal in the business of the Ecclesiastical Commission. There had been involved a continuous and needless waste of the funds of the Church. One great cause of the waste had arisen from the practice of paying their solicitors by fees instead of by salary. Why could not the Ecclesiastical Commission, which was at least 20 years behind the fulfilment of the expectation of its founders, adopt the same principles of payment as the Post Office or the Treasury? It had been said that the present system conduced to the quick despatch of business; but, considering its dilatory proceedings, he did not think much could possibly be lost in that way The business of the Treasury and Post Office was conducted by salaried solicitors and surveyors, and was quickly and satisfactorily done. He had always heartily believed in the doctrine set forth by Edmund Burke, who said—

> "That all public estates which are more subservient to the expense of perception and management than of benefit to the public revenue ought, upon every principle, both of revenue and of freedom, to be disposed of."

He would give an example of one of the 937 "Special Accounts" of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. The very considerable estates of the vicarage of Rochdale long ago passed under the control of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. The Commissioners were managing those estates, which were, or would be, worth more than £25,000 a-year, with very considerable ability; but they were doing it under conditions to which he made the most strenuous objection. There were politicians of all sorts in the borough of Rochdale—including, no doubt, men who were in favour of that policy which was called the Nationalization of Land—who were prepared to recommend that a Department of State should deal with farm leases and building leases, with sites for churches and for public-houses, and with all the claims of priority and pre-emption. He had always opposed those ideas as visionary and impracticable. He had always maintained the advantage of the institution of private property in land, and he had always contended that private property in land was the means by which they could secure its best cultivation, and the largest production; but if the farming of the Rochdale Vicarage estates by this Department in Whitehall, on a system which must, of necessity, be most inconvenient and expensive, was to be defended, what answer were they to give to those working men who were asking them to undertake the Nationalization of the whole land of the country? Were they to say that the Nationalization of Land was bad, while they contended that Corporations could farm and control estates like these in all parts of the country? There was no hon. Member in the House who did not know that this system was bad; that with the best intentions such management from Whitehall must be extravagant, dilatory, and tending to an imperfect use of the land. One singular feature of the Ecclesiastical Commission had been that when public opinion was turned upon it there was an immediate disposition to reduce expenditure. Within 30 years the Commissioners had spent more than £1,000,000 in agricultural improvements. There was a strong stimulus in that direction. The land agents received 5 per cent—£50,000—upon that outlay. Well, he had put this Notice on the Paper in 1880, and again in the Session of 1881. It was a curious coincidence that in February, 1881, the Estates Committee came to the conclusion that, as a general rule, the commission of 5 per cent on such improvements should be discontinued, and should be covered by the 4 per cent commission upon the rents. They had made further savings in the same direction. That showed the inevitable extravagance and development of a great land agency department. Next, as to tithes. According to present appearances the tithes in the charge of the Commission would, at no distant date, be trebled, and would exceed £600,000 a-year; and thus nearly one-sixth of the whole tithe-rent charge of England and Wales would be administered by the Commission. He should hope that, in these circumstances, if a Committee were appointed, they might entertain, perhaps through the machinery of this Commission, the question of the redemption of tithe. That would be a measure advantageous both to owners and occupiers of land. Then there was the question of copyholds. The Commission was lord of many manors, and by a curious practice the deputy-stewards gave no account of a moiety of the fees. He hoped that, while preserving the existing right of lord or tenant to compel enfranchisement, a general Statute might bring about the extinction of copyhold tenure within a period from the date of such a Statute of 10 years. He did not doubt that the case was made out for the appointment of a Select Committee; for not only had the propositions of the Committee of 1863 been neglected, but the evils against which those propositions were directed had immensely increased. The case was strong beyond denial; because the evidence upon which that Committee rested as to the termination of the estate business of the Commission had been utterly falsified by the results. He would fortify himself with a venerable authority with whom he did not often agree—namely, Lord Grey. In 1861, Lord Grey, alluding to the Greenwich Hospital Estates which had since been disposed of, said—

> "The proper mode of guarding against the evils anticipated is by selling the property. I am persuaded that the public is essentially a bad owner of landed property."

He hoped that sentiment would meet with general assent in that House. He acknowledged that it was most creditable to the distinguished ecclesiastics and Members of the Legislature who had guided the business of this great Commission for 40 years that he was constrained, not by considerations of personal courtesy, but by honest recognition of facts, to say that this vast business, set in the midst of so many and great dangers, had been free from scandalous report.

Mr. JAMES HOWARD, in seconding the Motion, said, the management of the ecclesiastical property of this country was a very great scandal; and, moreover, the plan adopted with regard to its management had a tendency to retard agriculture. That such was the case might be seen from a very interesting Report on the agriculture of Durham, published in the journal of the Royal Agricultural Society. Although improvements in the management of the estates of the Ecclesiastical Commission had taken place of late years, it would be seen from the Report of the Assistant Commissioner, Mr. Coleman, that very great improvements were still needed. While £8,700 had been put down for drainage in the Report of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, £33,000 had been put down as the cost of official management, and £16,000 as the amount of charges by actuaries and others. If the estates were in the hands of private owners, most of these official expenses would be saved, and a considerable addition, by the sale of the lands, might be made to the number of the landholders of the country. He contended that it was undesirable that land should be held in perpetuity; and especially that in England, where the amount of land was most limited, Corporations should have such a grip on our broad acres.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the position of the Ecclesiastical Commission with reference to the Lands and other Property vested in the Commissioners, and also into the work, in connection with real property, of the Church Estates Commissioners and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England and Wales,"—(*Mr. Arthur Arnold*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. GOSCHEN remarked, that there was but one part of this large subject on which he desired to say a few words, and that was the broad principle of the possession of land by Corporations such as the Ecclesiastical Commission. His hon. Friend had covered a great deal of ground, and nearly all the ground he covered was interesting and well deserving the notice of the House. He meant such points as the management of the property by the Commission, the question of the redemption of tithe, and many others which had been alluded to; but he wished to confine his remarks to that part of the speech which dealt with the question whether it was to the public interest that these Corporations should have so large a portion of the soil of this country? Now, upon that subject he had long had a very decided opinion, and it was, he thought, in 1874 that he called public attention to this matter, not only as regarded the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, but also as regarded most corporate bodies which held so much land. He raised the question at that time whether it was desirable that the Statute of Mortmain should practically be entirely neutralized? He was glad to think that there was a very considerable consensus of opinion on this point—that it was to the interest of the country that these Corporations should begin to sell their land. When he had the honour of being the First Lord of the Admiralty he acted, with the consent of the Government, upon the principle he had previously enunciated, and they sold a considerable part of the Greenwich estates, which at that time belonged to Greenwich Hospital, and that policy was continued by their Successors, the Conservative Government. He asked himself, when he was at the Admiralty, whether it was right for a Department which had charge of the enormous interests of the British Navy to be troubled at the same time with the management of vast estates, and to have to settle questions of leases and improvements, and generally to occupy the position of landlords? Fortunately, at that time the Civil Lord (the Earl of Camperdown) was very conversant with the management of estates; but it would have been a great anomaly for a Civil Lord who did not happen to be conversant with such subjects to have to consider questions of leases, drainage, and improvements. In the case of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners things were so far different, that here was a body of gentlemen who were trained to the work; but he thought his hon. Friend had, to a great extent, established that it was exceedingly difficult for them to manage these estates with all the advantage of private landlords. He did not mean only the advantage to the owner of the land; but he also alluded to the advantage to the tenant occupying the land and to the public interest. He was glad his hon. Friend had brought forward this question now; because it appeared to him that if there were previously foundation for a change of system as regarded the ownership of land by Corporations, the events of the last four or five years, and the general turn which agriculture had taken, had strengthened the argument for the change which ought to be made. All that they had heard during the agricultural depression seemed to show that land was a less desirable kind of property for these Corporations to hold than was believed before. The fluctuations in the rents, the lowering in the value, and all the difficulties that had surrounded the ownership of land were all difficulties in the way that were not thought of when agriculture went smoother. They had seen that many questions had been raised between landlords and tenants during the last four or five years; and he did not think it was probable that the discussion upon those questions would be lessened during the next four or five years, although it was to be hoped that better times for the agricultural interest would smooth the way in many respects; but, at the same time, he would ask the House if it was desirable these Corporations should have to undertake with their tenants the decision of the very complicated questions which had now arisen between landlord and tenants? There would be the question as regarded the Agricultural Holdings Act. Public bodies had been in this position—that they had not known whether or not to carry out that which had been the intention of the Legislature. They had been unwilling in some cases to avail themselves of those contracts which had been pointed out by that House as most desirable as forming an arrangement between landlord and tenant. He looked at this question upon the principle that it was undesirable that these Corporations should occupy so great a proportion of the soil of the country; and also upon the more modern ground that the pursuit of agriculture had become more and more a difficult business, requiring more scientific knowledge and more constant attention, both from the landlord and tenant. Upon these grounds, it seemed to him there was a case made for establishing the principle that these Corporations ought by degrees, without creating a depression in the price of land, to pursue the policy of selling rather than purchasing. He did not know what might be the best plan to pursue with regard to the Committee asked for; but whether the Government thought fit to grant the Committee or not, his hon. Friend had done good service by drawing the attention of the public to this most important question.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I think it would be for the convenience of the House that I should, at this early period, state the position of the Government with regard to this Motion. I should be very glad, indeed, if I could regard it as a subject entirely dissociated from the position of the Government. I do not think it is so. It appears to me that its magnitude, its complexity, its relation to the large question of principle, are such that inevitably cause it to assume an aspect of inquiry whether the Government are at the present moment prepared to deal with it or not. I do not think it would be advisable for the Government to assent to the appointment of this Committee as a mere matter of examination into the prudence of the detailed Rules under which the detailed business of the Ecclesiastical Commission is conducted. It is obvious that the question of the constitution of the Commission is open to a good deal of observation. It is rather constituted upon the basis which was the favourite one in former times—that of filling bodies of this kind with large numbers of persons already charged with heavy duties and great responsibilities, under the notion, which modern experience has not favoured, that a composition of that sort was not the way to secure an efficient and satisfactory transaction of Business. It is, however, one of the few propositions of my hon. Friend with which I cannot agree, that the Commission assumes, in its practical character, the aspect of another Upper House of Convocation; because, if I am correctly informed, the Bishops, with the exception of one or two, and especially the Bishop of London, who is on the spot, rarely attend its meetings. The attendance of Her Majesty's Ministers is also rare. I myself have attended one or more meetings of the Ecclesiastical Commission as a Minister; but upon the special occasion when Lord Palmerston was Prime Minister and I was Chancellor of the Exchequer, we attended a meeting on the question of principle as regarded the salary of the Dean of York, and I am sorry to say on that occasion there was a considerable collection of Bishops, and we had the misfortnne to be left in a minority. Upon the whole, it would be a mistake to consider this Commission as one, in the main, under ecclesiastical influences. I am bound to say, in my belief, the Commission, when its transactions come to be examined, would not come badly out of the inquiry. I mean, if you grant the principles upon which the Commission was founded; if you grant it is right that Corporations of this kind should exist to be the largest landowners in the country. It is, therefore, no discredit to the Commission at all if I admit that inquiry into the management of a Body of this kind by Parliament is not only a thing perfectly natural, and to be expected, but it is almost the duty of the Legislature that such inquiry should be made. It implies no discredit, no suspicion as towards those who are charged with the practical management of this Commission, and who, I believe, have applied themselves with zeal and general efficiency to the transaction of the business which it has in hand. I believe that in their capacity as landlords they have made great efforts to improve their estates. In the county of Durham, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have expended in improvements upon farms in the shape of buildings, £120,000; and in the shape of drainage, about £70,000. That is no inconsiderable sum within the limits of a single county. That does not touch the question which is the main subject of my hon. Friend's Motion. If this were only a Motion for Inquiry into the management of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, I should feel that inquiry was one of so limited scope that it might be within the power of independent Members of the House to conduct it to a satisfactory conclusion; but it is obvious, and my hon. Friend makes no secret of it—in fact, he rather makes it the main point of his Motion—this object is to raise the question whether the holding of land, to a large extent agricultural, by a Body of this kind is an economical management of the public resources, and whether it is for the advantage of the country the land should be held. Now, upon that subject, I must say I agree entirely, in my own personal conviction, with what has been stated by my hon. Friend, and the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. I am adverse to this method of holding land. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners offer to us one large case; but my hon. Friend very well knows that there are other cases which likewise cannot fail at some time to draw seriously the attention of Parliament. I do not speak now of the Crown Lands. In my opinion, the Crown Lands form a case by themselves; and it would not be perfectly accurate, in my opinion, to speak of the Crown Lands as held under mortmain. I give no opinion upon that subject at the present time. It involves a multitude of considerations quite apart from those raised by the present Motion. I am extremely glad my hon. Friend has raised this question alone; for, undoubtedly, it has been matter sufficient to draw our attention to. But when I consider the question whether the appointment of this Committee would be expedient at the present time—if it is to consider not merely the detail of the management of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, but the basis on which that institution stands, the question raised is one for the consideration of the Government, who are virtually asked to say whether they are in a condition at the present time to charge themselves, in the face of the House and the public, with the responsibility as well as the labour of conducting an inquiry into this kind of property. Well, I am bound to say that this is not the case. The unfortunate topic on which we were engaged last night, viewed in its largest aspect—namely, the incapacity of the House, under its present arrangements, to transact Business, and to meet the calls which naturally belong to its province—is a topic which returns upon us at every point. We have charged ourselves, in the face of the country, with obligations to endeavour to deal with certain subjects of great public interest; and now, when the Session is somewhat advanced, instead of being able to add to our obligations, we have to admit that our means of action seem month by month to diminish. Everything, so far as our view is concerned, must depend upon the efficiency, energy, and completeness of the arrangement which the House may make affecting its own procedure, and affecting its own method, in order to enable us to get at this question in a satisfactory manner. My hon. Friend will feel that it would not be creditable to give an engagement to undertake this subject, unless we were prepared with the means to redeem that engagement. We cannot afford to make such an addition to the labours with which we are charged. We sympathize entirely with the purpose of my hon. Friend—at any rate, to this extent—without seeking to pledge Parliament beforehand, that we would ask Parliament to recognize that the subject of the holding of land in mortmain by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners was a proper and fit subject for searching investigation; but we cannot see that our powers enable us to carry forward an inquiry of the kind at the present time. There is a plan which seems to promise very large advantage. The money invested in best securities at moderate rates of interest would be a profitable investment, as compared with an investment in land held under unfavourable circumstances. Strong as the Ecclesiastical Commission is, when we compare its position with the perfectly deplorable position at this moment of the individual clergy who happen to be dependent upon the land for their income—although its position is strong in comparison with theirs, its position is weak in regard to the general management of its estates. A body of this kind has not that independence in the face of its tenants which a private landlord has; and I believe the reductions which the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have been obliged to make under pressure to their tenants have been larger than those which private landlords have had to give. Nor can I fail to agree with the advantage of bringing into the market a considerable portion of the surplus, which, instead of being held under the present limitations, might pass into the hands of private proprietors, and become naturally the subject for the exercise of the energy and application of the capital which they would apply to their private purposes. I am glad that this question has been raised by my hon. Friend. I regard with goodwill the operation that he has taken in hand. I wish we were in a position in which we could promise the House to become responsible for the institution of this important and searching inquiry; but I must not shut my eyes to facts, or to the question, how much can we redeem of the promises that we have already made? And I feel convinced that my hon. Friend will admit that there is force and justice in my plea when I say that, in these circumstances, we ought not to offer a new promise. Sir, I shall be very glad when the House is restored to some part of its natural freedom, and is able to put forth those energies—which, so far as the capacity of its Members is concerned, or the goodwill of its Members is concerned, I believe never were more abundant — to put forth those energies at a time when we could be said to have emerged from the difficulties in which we are engaged. I feel that the premature appointment of a Committee of this kind, unless it could be followed promptly to its natural conclusion, by carrying forward for a very important end the legislation for which it would probably lay, as, I think, sufficient and ample grounds, might, instead of advancing, retard the progress of the views which my hon. Friend wishes to propagate; and, therefore, I hope he will not be surprised, and will not think it implies any inadequate appreciation of the subject or any want of sympathy with the views that he is inclined to propose, if I say that I trust we shall not be called upon to give a vote at the present moment on the Motion that he has made; and that, at any rate, the Government would not be parties to the responsibility of entering into an engagement which they doubted their present capacity to redeem.

Sir JOHN MOWBRAY said, he wished to point out several inaccuracies in the speech of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Arnold.) First, it was desirable to remember that the four last Bishoprics—namely, Manchester, Truro, Liverpool, and St. Albans—were without landed estates, so that the inquiry could not refer to them. The hon. Member said that the total land reached 250,000 acres, and his right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) said it was time they began to sell. The House would be, perhaps, surprised to hear that during the existence of the Commission, taking sales on the one side and purchases on the other, no less than 416,117 acres, formerly the property of the Church, had been enfranchised, and were now in lay hands. The land now held by the Commission, in their own right and in possession, was not 250,000 acres, but 190,000. The hon. Member for Bedfordshire (Mr. J. Howard) quoted some figures about drainage. Why did he begin with drainage? He looked to the Report of the Commission for 1881, and he found in that year £47,000 spent on farm buildings, and the year before £52,000 on the same item. Was that a fair way of stating the case—to give the small item about drainage, and leave the larger items alone? Since the Commission was instituted up to the 31st of October last the Ecclesiastical Commissioners had spent a total on farm buildings and improvements of £1,032,715, and on drainage £242,995. As to the surveyor's charges, he did not deny that the figures were large. The object of the Ecclesiastical Commission had been to keep the expenses of their operations within the lowest possible limits, and to revise and reduce them from time to time as occasion arose. The scale of these expenses had been originally settled on what was then regarded as a moderate ratio in 1851. It was settled by Lord Chichester, who was universally recognized as having the greatest knowledge of estates' management, as he (Sir John Mowbray) could testify, having had the honour of being associated with him for eight years. The scale of charges was reduced in 1857, again in 1864, again in 1873, and again in 1881. The late Mr. E. J. Smith—and he could not mention the name of Mr. Smith without expressing his sense of the great services rendered to the Church and the Commission by that eminent man—stated to the Committee of the House in 1863 that the total costs of the change of system from beginning to end would scarcely exceed a single year's income from the gain thereby obtained. After the Report of the Select Committee in 1863, Her Majesty's Government called the attention of the Commissioners to that Report, and the Ecclesiastical Commission went fully into every question raised in it; and their statement, embodied in the Annual Report of the Commissioners, was laid before Parliament in 1864. Since that there had been no proposal in either House of Parliament for a change in the constitution or practice of the Board. In that very year Parliament gave the Ecclesiastical Commission additional power; and since then more than 100 Acts had been passed, affecting the Commission more or less, and giving new or altered functions to the Board, some handing over property, as at Rochdale and elsewhere; others, such as the Endowed Schools Acts and New Bishoprics Acts, giving them very considerable discretionary powers. Parliament had thus, over and over again during 18 years, exhibited the utmost confidence in the judicious management of the Commission. No doubt the Commission had committed many faults; but, on a review of their situation, he challenged the hon. Member to show that they had in any way abused the important trusts that had been committed to their charge, misapplied their revenues, or mismanaged their property. Were they, then, not entitled to the confidence which the country had reposed in them for so many years? What was the great object with which the Ecclesiastical Commissioners were appointed? It was that they might, by a judicious management of ecclesiastical property, increase the Church revenues, so as to enable them to relieve the spiritual destitution of the country. And what had been the result of the Commissioners' efforts in that direction? They had augmented the value of the livings in upwards of 4,700 out of the 15,000 parishes into which England and Wales were divided. Then, again, did the hon. Member know the difference between the estimate which was originally made of what the action of the Commissioners would produce and what had been actually realized? During the period the Commission had been in existence they had added a sum of £19,000,000 to the property of the Church, besides having elicited a further sum of £4,000,000 in the shape of contributions from private sources—thus making a total sum of £23,000,060, for which the Church was indebted to the exertions of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners during the past 40 years, representing an annual income of £690,000. Let the House contrast this with the state of things anticipated in 1836 or realized in 1863. In 1836, a Royal Commission reported that they anticipated that the property which would accrue to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners would leave about £134,000 a-year available for augmenting small livings. In 1863 his right hon. Friend the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Walpole) stated to a Select Committee that the amount already actually exceeded that sum, and reached £146,000; and he (Mr. Walpole) added his belief, if the Commissioners went on, they would ultimately be able to realize to the Commission for the purposes of the Church a further surplus income of £150,000—making a total of nearly £300,000. But in 1881 they had doubled that sum. They had added to the property of the Church and re-distributed funds to the extent of £690,000 a-year, and the work was still going on. They were advised by their very cautious and experienced actuary that for some years to come there was every prospect of their being able to do what they had done for many years past—namely, adding year by year an additional capital sum of £600,000, representing an annual income of £20,000 in perpetuity to the Church. Such a work as the Commissioners were now doing had not been accomplished since the Reformation; and the question was, should they be allowed to go on or not with that beneficial work? The great object of terminating the wasteful system by which Church property was divided between lessors and lessees was not yet entirely accomplished, and could not be so for many years. Some leases would expire in 1884, others granted on lives or for 40 years' terms had longer periods to run. The expenses, it was said, were great, but the work was arduous. There was every conceivable kind of holding and every conceivable sort of property, from Northumberland to the Land's End, and from Wales to Norfolk. They had manorial rights, with an endless variety of customs—foreshore rights, mineral rights, and fisheries. The Commissioners were owners of coals, lead, ironstone, agricultural land, building land, tithes, and woods. There were surveys to be made, titles to be investigated, rights to be asserted, rights to be defended, and liabilities of every kind to be discharged. The work, he maintained, was, upon the whole, well done; and until Parliament had decided the great question of the tenure of land by Corporations, let them not interfere by Committee and stop the great work which had been so long going on to the benefit of the Church and the nation.

Mr. PUGH, who had an Amendment on the Paper to add—

> "And also into the management of the Crown Lands in Wales, by the Department of Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues,"

said, that, after what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister and from the hon. Member for Salford, he should not think of taking the sense of the House upon that Amendment on the present occasion; but he hoped to have an opportunity at another time of bringing the important question which it raised before the House. He thought there could not be any question as to the undesirability of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners continuing to administer estates. That administration was only carried on at a very great expense. He was exceedingly sorry to hear from the Prime Minister that he did not think the Government would be in a position at present to take up the question; but he felt sure that as soon as the Government were able to take it up it would give unqualified satisfaction, not only to the people of the country generally, but also, he believed, to the Church itself.

Mr. J. G. HUBBARD contended that the Commissioners must not be regarded as an entity like other Corporations. They were, in fact, stewards who had for their clients not only every Bishop in the Church, but a great number of the clergy also. There could not be better evidence of the good management of the Commissioners than had been given by the right hon. Member for the University of Oxford (Sir John Mowbray). Not only had they maintained the value of the property as it was intrusted to them, but they had increased it by exchanges and enfranchisements and good management. The Prime Minister had suggested that money payments would be more convenient than land as ecclesiastical endowments; but nothing was so fluctuating as money, and nothing so permanent as a representative of value as land.

Mr. J. W. PEASE said, that, as he represented a county (Durham) in which the Commissioners had a great amount of property, he felt obliged to say that, so far as his observation went, the management of the Commissioners was in all respects excellent. The Commissioners had lost an able and devoted servant in Mr. E. J. Smith, whose death was severely felt throughout the whole county of Durham. He wished also to bear testimony to the political impartiality always manifested by the Commissioners. In his county Party feeling ran high; but the agents, solicitors, and other persons connected with the Commission did not allow themselves to be influenced in the slightest degree by political considerations. He admitted, however, that in small transactions the expenses were very high; he had seen cases where the law costs, in the case of the redemption of copyholds, &c., exceeded the whole value of the property. But the real question, as had been stated by his hon. Friend the Member for Salford and the Prime Minister, was the general policy of so much land being owned by Corporations in mortmain. He fully agreed with his hon. Friend on that subject, and hoped he would be able on a future occasion to bring the question in a riper and more general form for the consideration of the House.

Mr. DODDS expressed his regret that the Commission had lost the valuable services of Mr. Edmund James Smith. Probably there were few men in the House who had had more to do with the Commission than he had, and he must say that in every department there was scarcely anything which he did not admire in the management of that Commission. But it appeared to him that the point of the Resolution of the hon. Member for Salford did not refer so much to the general management of the Commission, but to the management of their landed estates. The Motion really had reference to lands and other property vested in the Commissioners, and the work of the Commission in connection with real property, and when he told the House that the episcopal, capitular, and other estates in the county of Durham, now under the management of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, extended to upwards of 40,000 acres, with an increase amounting to over £109,000, the House would imagine that they were largely interested in this question. What he felt was that the management of these estates would be better left in the hands of individual owners than under the control of the Commissioners, because the former would be persons living in the county, and knowing the best means of utilizing their holding. He, however, hoped the present Motion would be withdrawn, and that on a future occasion it might be brought forward again in an amended and more advantageous form.

Sir HARRY VERNEY said, while he believed the Commissioners had done their duty, he thoroughly concurred in what the Prime Minister had said, that no Corporation could properly do its duty to the land. The personal residence of the landowner, when that could be obtained, was of more value than any charitable pecuniary contribution. He fully concurred in the remarks of the Prime Minister, and of the right hon. Gentleman behind him (Mr. Goschen), as to the great importance of getting these landed properties out of mortmain.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD, in asking permission to withdraw his Motion, disclaimed any desire for the appointment of a Committee merely to inquire into the business and general management of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and expressed his gratification at the statements made by the Prime Minister and his right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen).

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

HERRING BRAND COMMITTEE.

RESOLUTION.

Mr. DUFF, in rising to call attention to the Report of the Herring Brand Committee, and to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, effect should be given without delay to the recommendations of the Report of the Herring Brand Committee,"

said, he would not enter into any controversial matter as to the merits or demerits of the herring brand practice, as to which there was a good deal to be said on both sides. He craved for the Committee's Report that it was based on the preponderance of evidence laid before them; and he could only say that if the majority of the fishcurers and fishermen wished to retain the brand, and were, at the same time, willing to pay for it, he was not aware that there was any valid reason why it should not be continued still. What he proposed to deal with was the recommendations of the Herring Brand Committee; and the chief of those recommendations was that the surplus brand money should be appropriated for purposes beneficial to the fishermen and the trade. He had to state to the House what he meant by the surplus brand fee. In the year 1854, an Act of Parliament was passed imposing a fee of 4*d.* per barrel for every barrel of herrings branded with a Government mark. At the time this Act was passed it was distinctly stated that this fee was for defraying the expenses incurred; but since the Act was passed the herring fisheries of Scotland had so largely extended that, besides paying the expenses, the brand had been a considerable source of revenue. The existence of the herring brand surplus had been often denied; but it was distinctly proved before the Committee that the surplus, allowing for the largest expenditure, amounted to £31,571, and the surplus paid into the Treasury for the year 1880 amounted to £6,502. It had long been contended that this surplus ought to be applied to some purpose beneficial to the fishery interest; and the first recommendation of the Herring Brand Committee was that it should be applied to works on the piers and harbours of Scotland. The necessity for increased harbour accommodation seemed to be universally admitted. It had been pressed on public attention by too many lamentable disasters—disasters causing an appalling loss of life among the fishermen, and misery to all those dependent on them. The disasters in the Shetland Islands last August, and on the Berwickshire Coast last October, must be fresh in the memory of hon. Members. In the year 1879, the loss along the North-East Coast of Scotland, of fishing and coasting vessels, bore the saddest testimony to the want of adequate harbour accommodation. He therefore thought this was a very appropriate purpose to which to apply the surplus brand fund. But if the question were looked at from a national point of view, he ventured to say that a far larger claim than that he was now making might be substantiated. The Imperial policy appeared to have been to get as much money as possible out of Scotland, and to spend it on harbours in the Southern parts of the Island. £1,250,000 had been thrown into the sea at Alderney. Sums of nearly equal amount had been spent on Holyhead, Portland, and other English harbours; while, in the meantime, Scotland had been put off with a grant of £3,000 a-year to the Fishery Board, and a few grants of comparatively trifling sums to harbours, not very happily designed, at Wick, Anstruther, and Dunbar. He thought that the propositions put forward for the allotment of those fees to the purpose of improving the Scotch harbours were very modest. He might say that they were distinguished by the extreme modesty which usually characterized Scotch applications to the Treasury. The case for aid to Scotch harbours was strengthened when it was remembered that there was not now, as formerly, any fund which they could draw upon for assistance. Many of the harbours along the North-East Coast—harbours which the trade and fisheries had entirely outgrown—were constructed at the close of the last and the commencement of the present century, by the great Scottish engineers, Rennie and Telford, out of money drawn from the Forfeited Estates Fund. Speaking as a loyal subject, and also as a landowner, he would not affect any regret that that particular source of revenue was not likely to be revived. He referred to the Forfeited Estates Fund merely because, since it had been exhausted, he knew of no public fund for harbour improvement which had taken its place. The Royal Commission of 1859 reported that certain specified sums should be given by the Treasury to different localities for constructing harbours, on the understanding that those localities provided a proportionate amount; but that amount was so large that it was never forthcoming, and consequently the recommendations of the Report were never carried out.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. DUFF, resuming, said, that when he was interrupted he was referring to past legislation with regard to the harbours. From various causes the Act of 1861 had become almost inoperative, and, therefore, there was additional reason for granting aid from other sources. He wished, at the same time, to express a very decided opinion that the best means Government could adopt for assisting harbours was to lend money at the lowest possible rate of interest to supplement local efforts. Such a policy, in his humble opinion, would be attended with far better results than spending a large sum of money on any particular harbour. If the Scottish Members would concentrate their energies in inducing the Government to restore in its integrity the Act of 1861—which would be of general benefit—they would be doing far more good than by pressing the claims of any particular place for special assistance. With regard to the next recommendation of the Committee, that of extending the functions of the Fishery Board, he might say that there seemed a strong desire expressed by the Scotch Members, and by the public in Scotland who were interested in this subject, that the functions of the Fishery Board should be extended; and he had reason to believe that the recommendations of the Report in that respect had the approval of the Government. In connection with the duties he should like to see the Board undertaking, there was one he particularly wished to mention. He referred to the protection and the jurisdiction respecting mussel-beds. To those not acquainted with the practice of their Northern fishermen, this might seem a small subject; but it was really one of very considerable importance to the fishermen; and perhaps the House would realize this when he mentioned that it was calculated that in the district he represented each individual fisherman required in the course of the year two tons of mussels for bait. Now, he thought that one of the duties of the Board should be to encourage and protect artificial mussel-beds. Then the law respecting the right to mussel-beds was somewhat obscure, and gave rise to many disputes. The Government, he thought, should deal with the rights of mussel proprietors in the same way as they did with salmon proprietors. That was to say, where the proprietor of the land could show no Charter to the right of mussels the Crown should enforce their rights, take possession of the beds, and let them out to the fishermen. That was done in the case of coast salmon fishings, as he knew from personal experience. He succeeded to a property where the proprietors had always fished the sea for salmon; but when he was called upon to give a Charter he found he had none to produce, and the Crown seized his salmon fishings, and added insult to injury by proposing to let them to him at an exorbitant rent. He mentioned this control over mussels as one of the duties a Board with more extended powers might usefully perform. One other subject to which he should like to refer was the subject of telegraphs. The Report of the Committee recommended that facilities should be given, especially on the West Coast of Scotland, for extending telegraphic communication to all the important fishing stations. Applications from his hon. Friends the Members for Inverness and Argyllshire were now before the Postmaster General with reference to this subject, and he trusted they would receive the most favourable consideration, because it was very important that the fishery stations should have telegraphic facilities. The recommendation that an enlarged Fishery Board might deal with scientific questions regarding the artificial propagation of fish, which had been so usefully followed in America, was well worthy of consideration. He regretted that the hon. Member for the County of Waterford (Mr. Blake), who served on the Committee, was not in the House, because he had visited the United States, and his information on this point was most valuable. There was no industry that he was acquainted with—certainly no industry in the North of Scotland—which had grown with such rapidity as the fishery. No other industry that he knew of was capable of such extension, for the resources of the sea appeared to be inexhaustible. In many counties in Scotland the value of the herrings taken at the different stations exceeded the annual amount of the rental of those counties. In the Fishery Board Returns the value of herrings alone in 1880 was given as upwards of £1,800,000, and it was stated that their value in that year exceeded by 73 per cent the average value for the last 10 years. He, therefore, saw no limit to the increase of the herring fishings, provided that there was given proper assistance. He thought this industry was one which was well worth the attention and the encouragement of Her Majesty's Government. He was very glad to see that when the Civil Service Estimates were produced the Government had given an additional grant of £3,000 to the Scotch Fishery Board. He understood it was given in consequence of the Report of the Committee. If that was the case, he had to thank Her Majesty's Government for so far carrying out the recommendation of the Report, as the amount given was, he admitted, a fair average of the surplus of the brand fee. He trusted that, if the brand fee went on increasing, as he believed it would, the Government would give the increased surplus back for some object beneficial to the fisheries, and that in other respects they would see their way to carry out the recommendations of the Report, which, if adopted, would, he believed, aid and encourage the development of a very important, but hitherto too much neglected national industry.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR, in seconding and cordially supporting the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Banff (Mr. Duff), gave it as his opinion that no greater good could be done by the Government than by taking up the question of how to construct successfully harbours in Scotland. The Government were still engaged in assisting harbours in other parts of the country. For example, they had recently given £15,000 to Ardglass Harbour, on the East Coast of Ireland, and were about to give a like sum to Arklow, within a few miles on the same coast; and to lend, in addition, the large sum of £20,000. If the Government continued to give these grants of money, he thought it was their duty to ascertain whether or not the designs of these works were of such a nature as to fulfil their purpose. If an inquiry were made to see what mistakes had been made in the past, in unsuccessful attempts to construct sea-coast harbours, in order to ascertain what should be avoided in future, he believed the coasts would soon be covered with harbours. It was a curious fact that there was no money so difficult to obtain by loan from capitalists as that with regard to the building of harbours; yet he believed there was no public work which could be successfully undertaken that would pay the country better than harbours would. There was a small harbour in his own county (Kincardineshire), and he believed if it were enlarged and improved the value of the fish caught there would more than equal the whole of the land rental in the country, which was about £180,000. He cordially joined in the recommendation of his hon. Friend, that the formation and constitution of the Fishery Board should not only be improved, but its duties extended, so as to have a jurisdiction over all kinds of fishing, and over all harbours aided by Government funds. In France, Germany, and Norway they had statistics of the whole fish caught along their several shores; but in England, the great statistical country, which prided itself on its statistics with regard to its trade and commerce, they were entirely ignorant—except as to the herring—with regard to the other portion of the great industry of fishing. Yet, in a Report on the Fisheries, made about 16 years ago, by well-qualified Commissioners, of whom Mr. Caird, Dr. Huxley, and the present Chief Commissioner of Works were Members, it was fully shown that no portion of the land could supply wealth so easily as that which the sea could. If the fisheries were properly developed by means of safe harbours, to which boats could run in safety after being exposed to a four hours' gale, it would be found that an acre of sea ground on certain banks of the coast would greatly surpass in value the produce of similar extent in land. Then, with regard to the objection to applying the brand to Scotch herring barrels, on the plea that Irish barrels did not need to be branded, it must be stated that the herrings taken on the Coast of Ireland were not so suitable for export as those taken on the Scotch Coast, and the Inspector of Irish Fisheries had reported that the branding system was not well adapted for Ireland. Then, with regard to a further development of good fishing grounds, the Government might aid by surveying vessels, because there were banks on the Coast of England where fish abounded, which were partly defined; but in Scotland they were deficient of information of that kind, which would be of great benefit to the fishermen. There were many banks lying off the North-East Coast of Scotland full of fish, but their boundaries and positions were still only known to a few fishermen. The kind of fish, and the food for fish there existing, should be inquired into by the Government. In every other branch of industry millions were spent by the State to collect information; but no such assistance was given to collect information about our great fish industry. As to the herring brand fees, the Government had made a good beginning by giving a grant of £3,000; but he claimed that the whole surplus fees collected on account of the herring brand should be given to the Coast of Scotland. The inhabitants along the Scotch Coast gave a certain sum of money for a particular trade, and that money should not be spent over the whole United Kingdom, but should be used for the benefit of the Scotch people themselves. If they could improve their harbours and extend their fisheries as they had been doing within the last few years, instead of £3,000 they ought soon to have a surplus of 8,000. But the first and foremost consideration now was how to construct sea-coast harbours with success; and this the Government could alone ascertain by instituting an inquiry into the many past failures in harbour works, which had entailed the loss of millions of money.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, effect should be given without delay to the recommendations of the Report of the Herring Brand Committee,"—(*Mr. Duff*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON approved the remarks which the hon. Members had made in regard to the necessity of improved harbour accommodation. He quoted a Return which he obtained a short time ago from the Board of Trade, showing that during five years, between the Pentland Forth and Fifeness, no fewer than 367 vessels had been lost. On one night, the 18th of August, 1848, 124 boats were wrecked, and no less than 100 lives were lost. He did not quite know, however, what it was that the hon. Member for Banffshire (Mr. Duff) recommended the Government to do, he was so very vague. With regard to the brand fees collected on the Coast of Scotland, he thought it right that these should be applied in the districts where they were collected. Last year there were no fewer than 2,173 herring boats fishing from three ports in this country and employing 21,430 persons, compared with 245 boats employing 2,485 persons engaged at Banff, Buckie, and Findhorn. He maintained that the Government in spending this fee money should spend it in the districts where it had been raised; because if that was not done the money raised by the herring fishermen would be spent for the benefit of the cod and ling fishers, who gave nothing at all to the Government. Therefore, he thought that the application of the money generally all over the coast would benefit those fishermen who did not raise the fee, and he hoped the Government would bear that in mind in distributing the money. The Government were not able to distribute the excess of the fees. By the Act of Parliament they were bound to pay them into the Exchequer. They could not give money, except what was actually wanted for the expense of the branding; therefore, it was entirely delusive to talk about returning. The Government might give a grant of money from the Exchequer as they had done now; but he should like to ask the Lord Advocate how the £3,000 was to be spent—whether it was to be on the same footing as the statutory £3,000 which the Board had every year to spend, or whether it was to be spent according to the will of parties who might apply for it? He hoped it would be placed as the statutory £3,000, which required that the party receiving the money should provide themselves a certain proportion of the amount that was spent. He wished also to remind Her Majesty's Government that, with reference to the proposed alteration of the Fishery Board which had been suggested, that the Fishery Board had been appointed solely for the benefit of the trade of the herring fishery; and all their correspondence, and all their duties, were connected with the mercantile men in commercial matters. But it had been proposed by the deputation which the hon. Gentleman referred to that the duty of protecting the rod fishing in the rivers inland should be placed upon the Fishery Board. As now constituted the Fishery Board had nothing to do with salmon. Therefore he must protest against any interference with the very important interest now confided to them, unless they were prepared to create a separate or additional Board to carry out the new duties. They need not foster the cod and ling and other fishing, because they did not require it. The best plan would be to reduce the brand to one-half. It was now 4*d.* per barrel and 2*d.* the half barrel. A short Act of Parliament amending the present Act would relieve the curers of the payment of one-half of the fee, and that he believed would be accepted by them. Irish fishermen, finding they could not cure herrings in Ireland, came over last year, and no fewer than 49 boats came to the harbour of Aberdeen, and did better than our own people. If any alteration was to be made in the Fishery Board, which he thought very likely possible, he hoped it would be done after public inquiry, and not in consequence of the deputation to which the hon. Member had referred. Half the Members of the deputation did not know what they went there for. He himself did not know until they got into the room. He protested against that being taken as an expression of the opinion of the people of Scotland as to any change in the Board. He could not help fearing that if they joined the two duties they must have a joint Board. Inland proprietors must be represented on the Board as well as the great coast trade in herrings, and they would then have two separate interests, and a great deal of unpleasant work would go on in the endeavour of one party to get money for the benefit of inland as against deep-sea fishing. He maintained that the herring fishery trade was far more important than anything else; and he certainly hoped the Government would not interfere with that trade without public inquiry.

Mr. MARJORIBANKS said, that the necessity for further harbour accommodation had been brought home to him in a most terrible and a very close manner. On the 14th of October, between the Tweed and North Berwick, no fewer than 200 fishermen lost their lives in a single morning. That disaster would have been vastly increased had it not fortunately happened that the Dunbar boats had reached the harbour before the storm came on, and the Berwick boats had not gone to sea at all. In Berwickshire, out of a total of 500 fishermen, 175 were drowned; and there were 129 out of one village. It was difficult to convey any idea of the distress and misery which he witnessed in that village. If a similar disaster had happened on a railway, or from any other cause, there would have been Commissioners sent down to make inquiry, and all sorts of suggestions would have been made; but in this case no suggestion of any kind had been made by anyone of responsibility. He had no hesitation in saying that this disaster took place simply, solely, and entirely because there was no harbour to which the boats could run. The boats that did escape were boats that put to sea, and were out 56 hours, finally putting into the Tyne. It would be of considerable advantage to the fishermen of Scotland if the functions of the Board in Edinburgh were extended, to take notice of everything connected with the coast and deep-sea fisheries. He was very grateful for the additional £3,000 that had been granted. He did not mean to say that their fishery harbours should be constructed by grants from Government; but grants were useful and acceptable in aid now and again. They must look to local exertions. What they expected was that great facilities should be given by the Public Works Loan Commissioners for an object so desirable as the construction of a fishery harbour. As far as the North-East Coast of England and Scotland was concerned, he did not think that very much had been done, in consequence of the Act of 1861, on behalf of the fishery harbours. Between the Humber and Cape Wrath, to 11 harbours having incomes of over £2,000 a-year, £1,377,000 had been advanced. These were almost wholly commercial harbours. On the same portion of the coast to five, out of over 40 harbours with incomes under £2,000 a-year, and dependent mainly or entirely on the fishing industry, only £19,200 had been advanced. He thought the Fishery Board in Scotland should take care of the harbours. They would help them very much in this matter, because they would be able to give information as to the points most advantageous where harbours could be placed. He was not at all disposed to have harbours stuck here, there, and everywhere. He believed the little tidal harbours were simply man-traps and delusions that lured men to their death. They created a small colony of fishermen, and when a storm came on the men hailing from them rushed to these places, often to meet their death.

Mr. LYON PLAYFAIR said, as he had the honour of being Chairman of a Royal Commission for the Fisheries of the Northern Coast, he would not like the discussion to end until he had said a few words upon the subject. He did not agree with his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Alexander Gordon), who desired to limit the Board of Fisheries to the care of herrings. He was, like the hon. and gallant Gentleman, a Commissioner of that Board; but he thought, instead of limiting its action to the herring fishing, that its functions ought to be extended so as to promote all the fisheries, and the interests of the fishermen engaged in those fishing stations. Nor could he understand why he would restrict all the £3,000, which represented the money derived from the brand, to the interests of the herring fishing. They could not divide a harbour. A harbour might be as useful for cod or ling fishing as for herring fishing. The wider they could make the Board, and the less restrictions they put upon it, the better. The hon. and gallant Member did not desire to give special encouragement to cod and ling fisheries, and yet such aid would in reality best promote the growth of herrings. Let him give one curious illustration, which showed how closely all the fishings were related. Parliament interfered a great deal too much in its legislation with regard to fisheries. One of the restrictions in an Act now repealed was to enforce a close time for the herring fishing during a certain number of weeks or months, in which the herrings might be allowed to breed. Now, what was the effect of that legislation? Its effect was mainly to destroy the herring fisheries, and the reason was this. Man was the least enemy of the herring. His catch was perhaps not more than a few per cent as compared with the destruction which was caused by other enemies of the fish of the sea. The close time in the herring fishing gave an unexpected protection to cod and ling. At certain times cod and ling could only be caught with herring bait, so that the close time for herring meant a close time for cod and ling as well. What was the consequence? They did not know how many cod and ling there were in the sea; but they knew how many cod and ling were salted. Now, in the Commission on which he sat, he had the honour of Professor Huxley as one of his Colleagues. They frequently dissected cod, and they had found in their stomachs no fewer than 14 undigested herrings; but giving only six herrings a day to the cod and ling which were caught and salted, they would, had they remained in the sea, have devoured more herrings than all the fishermen in the United Kingdom, although 600 were added to their number. Therefore, the interference of the Legislature for the protection of the herrings was merely a law for an enormous destruction of the herrings. He quite agreed with the Report in saying that they should do nothing except to allow Nature to go unrestricted in her ways. There were balances of Nature with which, when they began to interfere, they interfered wrongly. He thought it important to broaden the duties of the Fishery Board under its re-organization, owing to the resignation of that efficient officer, Mr. Primrose. It would be very difficult to find a Secretary of equal ability and devotion to the service; but they might arrange the duties of the Board in a different way. He was speaking entirely independent of the Government, and as the case presented itself to his mind. He did think that a Board of Fisheries, which was to extend its influence and take in all the sea fisheries of the Kingdom, ought to have very efficient officers, and an efficient Inspector, so as to enable them to make those scientific observations, and give that scientific aid, which had produced important results in foreign countries. It was often said the herring was a most capricious fish. For a certain number of years it came to one part of the coast, and then deserted it. There was no caprice in that. They ought to know the meteorology of the sea, the effect of temperature of the ocean, and of the food presented to the herring under different conditions; and if they had scientific officers who could make these observations, which they were accustomed to make in America with so much advantage, he thought they could understand much more what was going on, and enable fishermen to take more advantage by the knowledge thus derived. It was for that reason he was anxious to see, in any re-organization of the Board now under the consideration of the Government, that while their functions ought to be broadened, so as to promote the building of harbours, they should understand also that part of the money should be devoted to proper efficient officers, who would be enabled to superintend fisheries with a knowledge of science; and, with such a re-organization and such officials, he believed they would find that the great value of the fisheries now going on in Scotland and the Irish Coast would be very largely improved by the application of knowledge to this subject.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, he thought he might say, on the part of the Government, that they were by no means unmindful of the importance of the recommendations in relation to the Board contained in this Report. In regard to the first part, he might state that in the month of December, when the Estimates were being prepared, the Fishery Board were requested by the Treasury to forward to them a statement setting forth the receipts and expenditure connected with the branding; and, in the statement forwarded, the amount of the receipts for the year 1881 was given at £8,236, while the expenses were given at £5,419, leaving a surplus for the year of £2,817. The Treasury had resolved to make a grant of the surplus, and they had not limited themselves to that precise amount, but had given the nearest round sum above it by introducing into the Estimates for the current year a sum of £3,000 for harbour purposes, in addition to the sum ordinarily granted for that object; so that his hon. Friend would see that in putting in this additional sum they were giving rather more than the aggregate gain on that head. He hoped that would be satisfactory to his hon. Friend. A question had been put as to the manner in which it was proposed that that money should be expended. The intention in that matter was, that it should be expended under the direction and at the sight of the Fishery Board, a proposal which, he believed, would also meet with general acceptance. Something had likewise been said with regard to the application of any profit resulting from brand fees to telegrams; and while he quite agreed with what had been said by one of his hon. Friends as to the impossibility of dividing the money applicable to harbours between white and herring fishing, where both kinds of fishing were practised from the same harbour, it would seem just that in the other matter—that was in regard to the telegrams—where there was room for distinction, any money resulting from brand fees should be applied to the part of the coast from which the brand fees were gathered—that was to say, to the East and North-East Coasts, because it was there alone, and not on the West Coast, that the branding system prevailed. He was happy to say that even that appropriation, which would probably commend itself to the sense of fairness of the House, would comprehend the Islands of Orkney and Shetland, where there was great need for additional telegraphic facilities as an aid and assistance to the herring fishing. The next point which had been referred to was the re-organization of the Fishery Board. That matter also was under the careful consideration of Her Majesty's Government; but it was not a matter as to which a resolution could be arrived at immediately, because——

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at half after Nine o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 3rd April, 1882.

MINUTES.]—New Member Sworn—Charles Thomas Dyke Acland, esquire, *for* the County of Cornwall (Eastern Division).

Select Committee — Ecclesiastical and Mortuary Fees, *nominated.*

Supply—*considered in Committee*—Civil Service Estimates — Class IV. — Education, Science, and Art.

Public Bills — *Ordered — First Reading* — Electricity Supply * [122]; Militia Acts Consolidation * [123]; Reserve Forces Acts Consolidation * [124]; Artillery Ranges * [125].

Second Reading—Army (Annual) [105].

Select Committee—Partnerships * [114], *nominated.*

QUESTIONS.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PERSONS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Prisons Board have received and considered complaints made by Messrs. Finn and McGrath, at present in Dundalk Gaol, with reference to punishments inflicted upon them for breaches of prison regulations; whether these punishments were in the one case the stoppage of all correspondence for three days, and in the other a sentence to punishment diet for three days; and, whether the Prisons Board have taken any action in the matter?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that Messrs. Finn and M'Grath, at present in Dundalk Gaol, were punished because during Divine Service, at the prayer for the Queen, they rose to leave the chapel, and refused to obey the order to keep their places. They were not compelled to attend Service. The Prisons Board approved the infliction of the punishment, and he saw no reason to dissent from the Board.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—GUN LICENCES.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that Mr. Charles Burke, of Ballinamore, county Galway, has been refused a gun licence by Mr.

Paul, R.M., although the local magistrate and police constable were favourable to his application; whether the grounds of refusal were that he had not a letter of recommendation from his landlord or land agent; and, whether it is a fact that Mr. Burke, under previous Acts, had always been granted a licence?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, with regard to this matter, the officer for granting licences to carry arms in this district, in the exercise of discretion vested in him by law, had refused the application made to him by Mr. Burke. He understood that Mr. Burke had a licence under the recent Act; but the local constabulary objected to his having the licence now.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—BELFAST POST OFFICE.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Postmaster General, If he is aware of the existence of a local rule in the Telegraph Department of Belfast Post Office, that clerks joining that office since 1878 are only granted an annual leave of two weeks although performing night and Sunday duties; clerks appointed before 1878 performing same duties being accorded three weeks' annual leave; is this rule enforced in any other large office, and is it with his sanction; and, if not, will he take steps to compensate those against whom this rule has operated?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, in reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that at Belfast there is no local rule in restriction of the authorized period of annual leave. In 1879 it was discovered that in this matter of leave the Telegraph Department at Belfast was being treated exceptionally—that it was enjoying privileges which were not conceded elsewhere in the United Kingdom at offices similarly circumstanced; and it was then decided that, if only with a view to uniformity, these privileges could not be extended to new entrants. From those who were then enjoying them, however, they were not taken away.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—CARNACUN, COUNTY MAYO.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the circumstances attending the eviction of three families, lately carried out on the property of Mr. C. Crotty, in the parish of Carnacun, county Mayo; whether it is true that the relieving officer of the Union of Castlebar, whose duty it was to be present, was not in attendance at the eviction; and, if so, who is responsible for his non-attendance; whether it is true that outdoor relief has been refused to these families; whether it is a fact that they have been evicted for the non-payment of an admittedly exorbitant rent, and that Mr. Crotty, on other tenants of his serving notices to have fair rents fixed by the Land Commission, agreed to a reduction of more than one-third of the former rental; and, whether it is not true that the district in which this property is situate is free from outrage and disturbance?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had inquired into this case. The relieving officer was not present at the evictions; relief had been offered either in the workhouse or by outdoor relief. In another case the relieving officer was informed that the tenant had settled with his landlord. The tenants had been evicted for non-payment of rents due for two years and a-half and three years. He was informed that the landlord had given a reduction. This place was not free from outrage and disturbance. Attempts had been made upon Mr. Crotty's life, and he was now under police protection.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—DEATH OF A WOMAN THROUGH REFUSAL TO VISIT HER SON IN PRISON.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been drawn to a notice in the "Freeman's Journal" of 28th March, of the death of a woman at Ballinglera, Donegal, whose death was attributed to anxiety about the imprisonment of her two sons, who were imprisoned on the charge of obstructing the sheriff in the work of eviction; and, whether the Lord Lieutenant refused to mitigate the punishment by a few days, to allow the dying woman to see her sons before her death?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the name of the woman was Julia M'Donogh, and she had sent a memorial asking that she might see her son, who was a prisoner in Sligo Gaol. A telegram was at once sent to the Sub-Inspector of police, asking whether her statement was correct, and a reply was sent back to the effect that the woman was dead. M'Donogh was, with 23 others, convicted before Baron Fitzgerald of riot, and sentenced to four months' imprisonment with hard labour, at the expiration of which sentence he was to give security for his good behaviour. He wished to point out that he was not a prisoner under the Protection Act.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY — CHARGE AGAINST CONSTABLE MOLLOY.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the inquiry into the charges brought against Constable Molloy, of Fahy Police Station, has yet concluded ; and, if so, with what result ?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, the inquiry had concluded. It was conducted by officers and others wholly unconnected with any previous inquiry, and the result of the investigation was the acquittal of the accused.

STATE OF IRELAND — ALLEGED ASSAULT ON MR. BOYLAN.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the inquiry instituted by the Commissioners of National Education into the alleged assault on Mr. Boylan, National School teacher, by Captain L'Estrange, R.M. has yet concluded ; and, if so, with what result ?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the inquiry in this case had also concluded. The Commissioners thought it necessary to point out that their rules and regulations required the manager of a school to receive visitors courteously. Those who had not done so were admonished severely. The Commissioners, at the same time, were of opinion that Captain L'Estrange had acted hastily.

Mr. REDMOND asked whether they were to understand that the Chief Secretary for Ireland would reprove Captain L'Estrange as the others had been reproved ?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he did not think there was any necessity for doing so ; but he thought Captain L'Estrange had acted hastily.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARMS FOR SELF-DEFENCE.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the speech of Major Traill, R.M., as reported in the "Ballenrobe Chronicle," in which that gentleman is reported to have said—

> "I myself have supplied him with revolver and ammunition, and I have taught him how to use them, as I am prepared to do for any one in my district, under similar circumstances, and I now tell him and them that every honest action of his for his own safety is an action of self-defence, for which 27 and 28 Vic. c. 47, s. 7, says, 'No punishment or forfeiture shall be incurred by any person who shall kill another by misfortune or in his own defence, or in any other manner without felony ;' "

and, whether he proposes to draw the attention of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland to the use of such language from the Bench ?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER : Sir, I believe Major Traill did take the course mentioned, and I entirely approve of his having done so. I believe that something may be done to stop the outrages which are now so constant and so deplorable if men are encouraged to defend themselves and their families. I believe so from what has happened in other countries, and also from the conviction that the men who attempt these outrages are as cowardly as they are bloodthirsty.

Mr. HEALY asked whether, in these circumstances, the right hon. Gentleman would consider the advisability of more generally granting licences to carry arms ?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER : Sir, before licences are granted we must have some security that those to whom we grant licences will not use the arms for the purpose of breaking law and order. No refusal has been given to any man who wanted arms when it was reasonable to suppose that he wanted to keep them for his own defence. There are some persons to whom it would be unsafe to give arms, because they have not the courage to keep them from the men who go about at night and break into houses in order to get arms. But whenever men have shown courage they have succeeded in keeping their arms. I think Major Traill was perfectly justified in the course he took, and I hope other magistrates will follow his example.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MESSRS. JOHN REA, D. HAYES O'CONNOR, EDMOND SYNAN, J. R. MURPHY, PATRICK O'BRIEN, AND JOHN R. O'GORMAN.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that John Rea, D. Hayes O'Connor, Edmond Synan, J. R. Murphy, Patrick O'Brien, and John R. O'Gorman, all of Charleville, in county Cork, have been imprisoned, under the Coercion Act, in Naas Gaol, since the 21st October last, and, during this period of over five months, have not received any intimation as to the reconsideration of their cases by the Lord Lieutenant; whether it is true that the Charleville district is, and has been, since and before the imprisonment of the persons named, entirely free from outrage; and, whether, in accordance with the principle adopted by him, he will now consider the propriety of releasing the men arrested in the Charleville district? The hon. Member said, he understood that since he had given Notice of this Question three of them had been released; but he wished to know whether the Chief Secretary for Ireland would adopt a similar course with reference to the others?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had looked carefully into these cases when he was in Ireland last. As the hon. Member was aware, two of these men had been released, and John Rea had been released on parole for a week. With reference to the other three, it was unusual to release prisoners unless a Petition in favour of doing so was presented. The state of the district showed signs of improvement; but they had still to keep an extra force of police there, and there was no immediate prospect of their withdrawal.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARREST OF EMPLOYES OF "UNITED IRELAND."

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that all the clerks employed in the commercial department of "United Ireland" have been released with the exception of Mr. Shelley; and, whether there is any exceptional reason for this gentleman's continued detention?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, it was a fact that all the clerks in the commercial department of *United Ireland* had been released with the exception of Mr. Shelley. His case was different from those of the others, and the Government did not consider he could be released with safety at present. He was recently transferred from Armagh to Kilmainham at the request of his relations.

STATE OF IRELAND — PROHIBITED PUBLIC MEETING AT LIMERICK.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that a proposed public meeting of the citizens of Limerick, to protest against the introduction of the Clôture system into the House of Commons, was prevented by the local magistrates; whether the troops in garrison were kept under arms, in order that they might be ready to disperse the meeting if any attempt should be made to hold it; whether he has seen the Resolutions which were to have been proposed at the meeting, and which have been published in most of the London papers, or is aware that they were Resolutions in condemnation of the Government's Clôture proposal, and of any Irish Member who should support or refrain from opposing it; and, whether, under the circumstances, the action of the magistrates has the approval of Her Majesty's Government?

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, within the present week and up to the present date, the Irish Executive have caused the police to tear down placards calling upon the electors to instruct their representatives to vote in opposition to the Clôture; whether the police have seized and confiscated parcels of such placards in different parts of the Country, and have arrested men engaged in distributing or posting them; whether the police and military forces of the Crown in Ireland have been called into requisition for the purpose of preventing electors in different constituencies from assembling constitutionally in public meeting for the purpose of expressing to their representatives in Parliament their view on the question of the Clôture; and, upon what principle of constitutional Government the Irish Executive justify such abolition of the constitutional rights of electors and constituencies in Ireland?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, it was a fact that the Mayor and magistrates of Limerick, acting on the responsibility which devolved on them for the maintenance of peace and order in the city, did prevent the meeting referred to, and the Government fully approved of their action, which was attended with good results. With reference to the Question of the hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond) he denied that the Irish Executive gave any instructions to the police as to these placards. In all cases the local police acted on their own responsibility. The placards, which were of a violent and inflammatory character, were calculated to lead to a breach of the peace—[Mr. Redmond: No!]—were, no doubt, intended to intimidate hon. Members of that House from the performance of their duty. In several parts of the country these placards were taken down by the police, and in some instances bundles of them were seized, and the parties in whose possession they were found taken before the magistrates, who discharged them with a caution. The magistrates did not appear to have acted elsewhere as they did in Limerick; but, undoubtedly, if there was the same probability of a breach of the peace occurring they would be justified in acting as the Limerick magistrates did.

ARMY—AUXILIARY FORCES—MILITIA UNIFORMS.

Colonel RUGGLES-BRISE asked the Secretary of State for War, in reference to the order to Militia officers to change their lace, facings, and accoutrements, Whether he is aware that a statement made by him has been interpreted by Militia officers generally (not Rifle Regiments) to mean that they have the right for many years to come to appear at a levee, or on parade, with a gold lace sash and a silver lace waistbelt, or with a helmet with silver plate, and gold lace on the tunic, or at mess with gold lace on jacket, and silver lace on waistcoat; and, if the above is not the correct interpretation of the statement, whether he will further consider the great expense that is entailed upon Militia officers (not Rifle Regiments) by these changes, and make a proportionate allowance to meet those expenses similar to that which is proposed for Rifle Regiments?

Sir HERVEY BRUCE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will re-consider the amount proposed to be given to Militia officers obliged to purchase new uniforms owing to a change in their Regiments, as £25 will be wholly inadequate for the purpose?

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, perhaps the hon. Baronet the Member for Coleraine will allow me to answer his Question at the same time as that of the hon. and gallant Gentleman. In doing so I must be permitted to remind the House that since 1857 there have been no less than 15 occasions on which Militia regiments have been ordered to alter their uniforms to and from Rifle, Artillery, Highland, red, and Fusilier dress, and that in no case was any allowance made to officers. In the same way the Yeomanry were ordered in 1877 to alter their lace from gold to silver, and no allowance was made to them, time only being given to make the change. I must express my regret that at the present time, when the change from silver to gold has been urgently pressed upon us by the general wish of Militia officers, and when for the first time we are making an allowance of £25 to each officer in every case of compulsory change of the more expensive character, these claims for money should be set up. In June last the clearest instructions were given as to the change from silver to gold, and officers were allowed full time to make it. Of course, nobody anticipated that they would think of wearing a mongrel uniform; and I, therefore, can only reply to the hon. and gallant Member for Essex that the change must be complete, and may be deferred as long as the officer wishes before it becomes necessary to replace the uniform he possesses. To the hon. Baronet I can only say that, compared with the 15 cases I have spoken of, the grant of £25 a-head is liberal, and I have no intention to increase it.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—THE LATE RIOT AT KILROSS—SENTENCES UPON THE PRISONERS.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether the prisoners convicted of riot at Kilross, at the last Winter Assizes in Kilkenny, and sentenced to four months imprisonment and a fine of £10, or, in default of such payment, two months additional imprisonment, will, if unable to pay this fine, have to commence the additional term of imprisonment, as if it were an entirely different sentence, for a different offence; whether, in fact, they will have to sleep for another month on the plank bed; whether, in the opinion of the Law advisers of the Crown, the sentence passed on these prisoners ought to be treated as one sentence, and not as two consecutive sentences; and, whether several of these prisoners are quite unable to pay this fine; and if, under the circumstances, the Government would consider the propriety of remitting it?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER) said, in the absence of his right hon. and learned Colleague, that these prisoners would not have to commence an additional term of imprisonment, and, therefore, would not have to sleep another month on plank beds. If they did not pay the fine, there was no reason for interfering with the sentence of the Judge.

ATTEMPT UPON THE LIFE OF HER MAJESTY—THE PRISONER M'LEAN.

MR. HEALY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that the person who recently fired at the Queen has been persistently described in the "Scotsman" and the "Glasgow Mail" as an Irishman, and is called "Patrick M'Lean;" and, if he can state what is the correct name and nationality of the accused?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I do not know whether the hon. Member observed that on the night when I first stated to the House the fact of the outrage attempted on the Queen I was very careful to state the name and place of birth of the prisoner, for the express purpose of preventing any misapprehension or prejudice on this subject. I can give no other information than I gave then on the subject—namely, that the man's name, as far as I know, is Roderick M'Lean, and that he was born in London. As far as I know, there is no reason at all for supposing that he is of Irish extraction. I have a letter from the editor of *The Scotsman* in reference to the hon. Member's Question. He states that the first day after the news arrived some remarks appeared in that paper, indicating that the prisoner was of Irish parentage; but they were careful to contradict this the next day, and to put the matter straight; and that, consequently, they are not liable to the charge of having persistently represented that the prisoner is an Irishman.

MR. CALLAN: I should like to know from the right hon. and learned Gentleman whether a similar contradiction has been given by the proprietor or responsible owner of *The North British Mail,* which published the following in double-leaded type:—

> "Attempt to assassinate the Queen—The prisoner an Irishman—The would-be Assassin sane and sober?"

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I really cannot state anything on that subject, for I have no knowledge of it.

POST OFFICE—THE PARCEL POST.

MR. O'SULLIVAN asked the Postmaster General, Whether he intends adding to the present monthly payments made to mail cart contractors and other carriers, or otherwise compensating them, for the additional labour which will be entailed on them by the new parcel post arrangement, as well as interfering directly with them in their business as carriers of parcels?

MR. FAWCETT: Sir, in reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that the sum which is paid for mail cart services is arrived at either by agreement or by public competition. When a parcel post is introduced the terms of existing contracts may, in many instances, have to be revised. With regard to the latter part of the hon. Member's Question, I may repeat what was stated the other day—that as the Post Office, in establishing a parcel post, would not ask for any monopoly, or for any new exclusive powers, it has been concluded that no claim for compensation can arise.

POST OFFICE (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT)—TELEGRAPH EXTENSION.

MR. ROUND asked the Postmaster General, If he is able to make any announcement with reference to the reduction of the amount of guarantee now required by the Treasury in cases of telegraph extensions in rural districts?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, in reply to the hon. Member, I have to state with regard to future telegraph extensions under guarantee that, by an arrangement lately sanctioned by the Treasury, the amount of the guarantee need not be lodged in advance with the Post Office; but guarantors will merely be called upon at the end of each year to make up the deficiency of revenue if any. This, I think, will be found to be a substantial concession. On the other hand, the Treasury have somewhat altered the principle upon which the amount of the guarantee is to be calculated; and the effect of this will, in some cases, be that the amount will be slightly larger than it would have been under the old system.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCIENCE AND ART)—"HALL OF SCIENCE."

Sir HENRY TYLER asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether his attention has been called to a statement in the public press on the subject of the employment of Mrs. Besant in the Hall of Science Classes, and their connection with the Science and Art Department of the Government; whether any letter has been addressed to him by the Committee of those classes; and, if so, whether he will lay it upon the Table; and, whether the daughters of Mr. Bradlaugh are employed in those classes, or in any way in connection with the Science and Art Department of Government?

Mr. MUNDELLA: Sir, I have seen the statement to which the hon. Member refers, and I will read the letter addressed to me by the Committee—

> "Science Classes, Hall of Science, Minor Hall, 142, Old Street, London, E.C.
>
> "Sir,—Referring to so much of the answer given by you to Sir Henry Tyler on Tuesday, March 21, as relates to Mrs. Besant, the Committee of the above classes desire me to state that there has been no withdrawal by them of Mrs. Besant's name as teacher; and as some misconception may arise from your answer as reported, the Committee would feel obliged if you would take such early occasion as may be convenient to yourself to make the necessary correction.
>
> "I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,
>
> "Robert Forder, Secretary."

I certainly understood from two Members of the Committee that Mrs. Besant had withdrawn her name as teacher for this session, with the intention of subsequently renewing her application. The Misses Bradlaugh are teaching chemistry and botany, I believe, to the adult classes of the Hall of Science. I understand they are well qualified, and hold certificates from the Science and Art Department to that effect. I may say we do not inquire into the theological opinions of teachers of art and science.

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (SCOTLAND)—LEGISLATION.

Mr. BUCHANAN asked the Vice President of the Council, When the Government intends to introduce the Educational Endowments Bill for Scotland?

Mr. MUNDELLA, in reply, said, that he hoped soon after Easter to introduce an Educational Endowments Bill for Scotland, and to give ample time for its consideration before the second reading.

LAW AND POLICE—THE SALVATION ARMY.

Mr. CAINE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to the action of the magistrates of the Crediton Petty Sessions, 29th March, who committed to prison for seven days Susan Emily Saville, Charlotte Hartnall, William James Dunn, and James Norman, members of the Salvation Army, for holding a religious service in the open air on Sunday morning, 26th February; if his attention has been called to the action of the magistrates at Weston-super-Mare, 29th March, who sentenced William Beatty, Thomas Bowden, and William Henry Mullins to three months imprisonment, in default of sureties to keep the peace for twelve months, their only offence being that of walking through the streets peaceably, and without annoyance to the law-abiding population; and, if he will order their immediate and unconditional release?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that he had received no communication on this subject, and was unable, therefore, to give the hon. Member the information he desired.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—PHONETIC SYSTEM IN BOARD SCHOOLS.

Mr. HEALY asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether he has any objection to the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the comparative number of years occupied in teaching children to read in English Board and other schools, as compared with Continental schools, and the advantages which would arise from employing a graduated phonetic system in teaching reading; and, if he will state the number of School Boards which have petitioned in favour of a phonetic course for teaching children to read?

MR. MUNDELLA: Sir, three or four years ago several School Boards petitioned in favour of a phonetic course of teaching children to read, and the London School Board was allowed to try the experiment in two of its schools. It was not found to be successful, and was consequently discontinued. I am told it was tried under very favourable conditions by a competent and enthusiastic teacher. Under the circumstances, I could not ask the House to appoint a Committee to investigate the subject.

POST OFFICE—BANK HOLIDAYS.

MR. SCHREIBER asked the Postmaster General, Whether the approaching Bank Holiday on Easter Monday will be observed as a Sunday in the Post Offices of the United Kingdom?

MR. FAWCETT: Sir, in reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that, following the rule which has been hitherto adopted with regard to Bank holidays, Easter Monday will not be observed as a Sunday in the post offices of the United Kingdom. With the view, however, of meeting the case as far as public convenience admits, orders have already been issued that the staff shall be given as much relief as may be found practicable.

POST OFFICE (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT) — DIVULGATION OF TELEGRAMS.

MR. MONTAGU SCOTT asked the Postmaster General, Whether, having regard to the correspondence which has appeared in the public press as to the contents of a telegram addressed to Mr. T. Wright, the aeronaut, by Colonel Fred Burnaby, having been divulged by an official of the Submarine Telegraph Company to the President of the Balloon Society, if such a course of proceeding is one which meets the approval of the Postmaster General; and, if not, whether any steps will be taken by the Postmaster General's department, with a view of preventing the contents of private messages being divulged to others not being the persons to whom they were originally addressed; and, whether the Submarine Telegraph Company, which receives and delivers telegrams in London, and has specific powers conferred upon it by the Government, and is worked in connection with the Postal Telegraph system, can be compelled to respect messages sent over its wires?

MR. FAWCETT: Sir, as far as my individual opinion is concerned, I certainly think that the contents of the telegram to which the hon. Member refers ought not to have been divulged; but the Post Office has no power in the matter, because the Telegraph Acts of 1863 and 1868, which secure the secrecy of inland telegrams, do not inforce secrecy on foreign telegrams transmitted by the Submarine and other foreign telegraph companies.

INDIA—TEA LABOURERS' ACT.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether he has yet decided what course to pursue in regard to the Act of the Indian Legislature extending the term for tea labourers under the special and penal Law from three to five years?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, as I have already stated in reply to a Question from my hon. Friend, this Act and the documents relating to it have received very careful consideration in the Council of India. The Bill attracted my attention while it was under discussion in the Legislative Council, and I informed the Government of India in the autumn of last year, that, considering the unhealthiness of some parts of Assam, and the high rate of mortality which prevailed among the Coolies in that Province, it appeared to me that great caution was necessary in legislating on the subject, and that, unless the Governor General entertained a very strong opinion in favour of extending the maximum period for which a contract of labour enforced by penalties might be entered into, I was inclined to think that it would not be expedient to enlarge the period from three to five years. The Act has, however, been passed in its original form. Although I am assured by the Government of India that the death rate in Assam has fallen, and that the healthiness of the Province has improved, and is likely to improve, I cannot say that my doubts as to this clause have been altogether removed. As the measure, however, contains many provisions likely to be beneficial to the Native labourer, as well as to the planter, and as it is already in operation, I am, on the whole, unwilling to advise Her Majesty to disallow it, and my hon. Friend is aware that I have no power to alter the Act or to disallow a particular clause. I have, however, thought it necessary to direct the Government of India to furnish me, at the close of every year from the time of its coming into operation, with a Return of the number of persons suffering criminal punishment for breach of contract under this law; and that, at the end of three years, the Secretary of State may receive a special Report on the working of the Act, with a view to considering the possibility of abandoning all exceptional legislation respecting contracts of labour in the Indian tea districts.

SCIENCE AND ART—H. B.'S CARICATURES.

Mr. GEORGE HOWARD asked the Right honourable the Member for the University of Cambridge, Whether a complete collection of the original drawings for H. B.'s Caricatures has been offered to the Trustees of the British Museum for a sum probably much less than the amount which would be realised by the sale of the collection if it were broken up; and, whether, considering the great historical interest of this series, the Trustees will be in a position to accept this offer?

Mr. WALPOLE, in reply, said, an offer had been made to the Trustees of the British Museum of the original drawings for H. B.'s Caricatures for a sum probably not much less than the amount which would be realized by the sale of the collection if it were broken up; and the Trustees had determined to sanction the purchase, and had applied to the Treasury for a special grant to effect it. He was informed that the Treasury had replied that they were willing to sanction the purchase, provided that the amount was met by other savings, so that the Estimates for 1882-3 were not increased. Of course, the hon. Member would see that it would be premature for him to state whether such a saving could be affected or not. The sum asked for was £2,000.

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS ACT—COFFEE AND CHICORY.

Sir EDMUND LECHMERE asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the Treasury Minute of the 20th of January 1882, by which the importation, under a Duty of twopence a pound, of

> "Coffee or chicory, roasted and ground, mixed, without reference to the proportion of the mixture, and the permission to extend to any other vegetable matter applicable to the uses of chicory or coffee,"

was made, upon the recommendation of the Board of Trade, as stated in the reply to a Memorial lately presented to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury on the subject; and, if so, if he will explain the reasons for such a recommendation, which appears to be in contradiction to the Adulteration of Food Acts?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, as the subject of this Question has excited a good deal of interest, I am much obliged to the hon. Baronet for giving me an opportunity of making an explanation. I should say, in the first place, that the change in the Treasury regulations does not make any alteration whatever in the law with regard to adulteration; nor does it, in my opinion, tend to increase the practice of adulteration. The matter was brought to my knowledge in the first instance by a number of tradesmen of Leeds and elsewhere, who complained of what they considered to be the anomaly in the Custom regulations. They informed me that while coffee which was pure could be imported and that chicory and other vegetable substances applicable to the use of coffee could also be imported, and having been imported could be legally mixed in this country and legally sold, the same articles could not be imported if they were mixed abroad. When I came to inquire into the matter I found that the anomaly had arisen from the fact that at one time the duty on chicory differed from the duty on coffee, and that it was necessary that it should be imported separately, and not be allowed to come in mixed. The regulation was purely one relating to revenue, and was not passed to prevent adulteration. The change which has been made amounts to this only, that whereas previously coffee and chicory could only be imported separately and mixed afterwards, they can now be imported ready mixed. I should say that the interests of the consumer are protected, not by any regulations of the Customs, but by the provisions of the Adulteration Act. The Sale of Food and Drugs Act provides that no article of food, or drug, shall be mixed with any ingredient injurious to health and sold under a penalty of £50, and that no article shall be sold to the prejudice of the purchaser mixed with any ingredient unless at the time of the sale the article so sold is described as mixed under a penalty of £20. Under these circumstances, the interests of the consumer will, I think, be protected.

REVENUE ACT, 1880—BEER LICENCES (IRELAND).

MR. BIGGAR asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he is aware that persons in Ireland who sell beer merely by retail have, in addition to the ordinary retail licence (£1 5*s*.), to take out a wholesale dealer's licence, at a cost of £3 6*s*. 1¾*d*., while this latter Duty is not imposed on retailers of beer in England; and, whether he intends, in his next Revenue Bill, to remove this manifest injustice?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GLADSTONE): Sir, I think the hon. Member will recollect that the hon. Member for the City of Waterford (Mr. R. Power) asked me this Question so lately as the 28th of March.

REVENUE ACT, 1880—GROCERS' LICENCES, IRELAND.

MR. BIGGAR asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, having regard to the fact that grocers in Ireland, whose premises are rated under £20, have to pay for licences to sell spirits, beer, and wine, not to be consumed on the premises, in total the sum of £16 4*s*. 7*d*. while a publican's licence for premises of the same rateable value can be obtained for the sum of £8, he will provide in the forthcoming Budget Bill a scale of Duties for the first mentioned licences, same as set forth in section forty-three, sub-sections one, two, and seven, of "The Revenue Act, 1880?"

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GLADSTONE), in reply, said, that these licences, as the House knew, were a class peculiar to Ireland, and the reduction to which the hon. Member pointed was a reduction to which the Treasury would have no objection on account of revenue. The spirit grocers were not placed under the jurisdiction of the magistrates in the same way as the publicans, and on that account, as a matter of magisterial authority, it would not be a matter with which he could deal.

INLAND REVENUE—INCOME TAX AND BREWERY LICENCES.

SIR BALDWYN LEIGHTON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in the financial arrangements of the coming year, he will take into his consideration the possibility of affording some relief in payment of income tax to tithe-owning incumbents who (being assessed under Schedule A without deduction for poor rates or collection) are paying generally on one-fifth or one-fourth more than their income, either by allowing such deductions as would be allowed in other Schedules, or by removing them from Schedule A to Schedule E, a precedent for which might be found in the transfer of railways from Schedule A to Schedule D; and, after the experience of the last financial year, he will at the same time consider the expediency of making some modifications in brewing licences, so as to extend the facilities granted to houses of £10 value to houses of £20 value, being bonâ fide farmhouses, seeing that the conditions of such employers is different to the same in towns, that the present arrangement has been found inconvenient, and has added 25 per cent to the cost of a necessary article of consumption and wages?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GLADSTONE): Sir, with respect to so much of the Question as refers to tithe-owning, I think the case is one which ought to be dealt with as a tithe-owner's question, and not as a matter of detail under a Revenue Bill. The tithe-owner at present is authorized to obtain a refund of income tax for sums paid with respect to parochial rates and rent-charge. As regards collection, that is a general question, and it cannot be allowed in that case any more than in the case of other income derived from real property. With respect to Schedule E, I do not think that that could be entertained, because the property subject to tithe-rent charge has always been treated as realty. With regard to the latter part of the Question, our experience under the Beer Act is not such as would lead us to entertain any proposal for altering the rating with regard to private brewers.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSKEI WAR EXPENSES.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whethe the moneys advanced to the Cape Government, from the British Military Chest, for the expenses of Colonial Troops in the Trans-kei War, have yet been recovered?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GLADSTONE) said, the Cape Government had invited the Colonial Department to provide the sum of £150,000 in respect of the claims of Her Majesty's Government on account of the sums advanced for the expenses of the Colony in the Transkei War; and that Correspondence relating to the subject was now being printed, and would be in the hands of Members shortly.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Has Her Majesty's Government agreed to accept the sum of £150,000?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GLADSTONE): What the Government would accept must sometimes depend on the merits of the case, and sometimes on what could be obtained. The hon. Member will, however, learn all the facts when he sees the Correspondence.

CRIMINAL LAW—THE CONDEMNED PRISONER LAMSON.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the statement, apparently semi-official, which appeared in the papers this morning as to a respite of the convict Lamson is true; and, if so, whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman would be good enough to state the reasons which induced him to grant the respite?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I am much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for giving me an opportunity of making a statement on the subject. I received through the Foreign Office a letter from the Minister of the United States, dated the 31st of March, stating that it was the personal request of the President of the United States that the execution of Lamson should be suspended until certain evidence which had been collected and transmitted to the Attorney General of the United States should be forwarded for my consideration. In my opinion, it is the duty of the Secretary of State in such a case carefully to consider anything that may be adduced by any trustworthy authority from whatever quarter it may come, not with a view to revising the sentence or verdict, the responsibility for which rests solely with the Judge and jury, but in order to determine whether there are any grounds for recommending the exercise of the Prerogative of mercy by the Crown. When there has been any reliable evidence to that effect it has been the practice of the Secretary of State to order a respite until that evidence was duly examined. In the case of Mansell, in 1857, four successive respites, extending over a period of six months, were granted by Sir George Grey, at the end of which time the prisoner was executed. In the case of Michael Barrett, two successive respites were granted by Mr. Gathorne Hardy before the execution, in order that further inquiry might be made as to the facts. Acting, therefore, upon the principle of the precedents established in this grave matter—precedents which apply to evidence whether proceeding from abroad or obtained in this country—I have acceded to the request and directed a respite for a fortnight, until the 18th of April. This case has been and will be dealt with exactly as if a similar representation had been made upon reliable authority in England. In my opinion, it is a sound principle, which ought not to be departed from, that before the capital sentence is carried into execution all the evidence advanced subsequent to the trial should be duly considered. But the prisoner has been fully warned that the respite in these circumstances carries with it no implied presumption of a reprieve or commutation of the sentence. I will also, with the leave of the House, answer now the Question which the hon. Baronet (Sir Eardly Wilmot) gave Notice that he would put to-morrow. I have not received the document to which he refers; but in any case to lay on the Table Papers with respect to the exercise of mercy by the Crown would make it absolutely impossible that that Prerogative should be exercised.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE "COUNT OUT" ON FRIDAY.

SIR JOHN HAY: I desire to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister a Question, of which I have given him private Notice, with reference to the "count out" on Friday night. The House must be aware that on Friday night at half-past 9 o'clock, after three attempts, the House was counted out by an hon. Gentleman, an Irish Member. The subject under discussion was a subject very interesting to Scotch Members, of whom nearly half of the total were present, and attending to the discussion. The Question was being answered by the Lord Advocate for Scotland at the time in a very interesting statement, and I am sure if it had been the Home Secretary answering a Question raised by an English Member, or the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant answering an Irish Question, the House would not have been counted out under such circumstances. Therefore, I have to ask the Prime Minister, If his attention has been called to the "count out" on Friday night, while the Lord Advocate was making a statement on important Scotch Business; and whether he will endeavour to arrange in the future that, as Scotch Members are not very numerous, a House will be kept with Government assistance when Scotch Business is under discussion?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, perhaps I ought to say, at the outset, that I was not in the House on Friday night, not from pleasure or ceremony, but from a serious cause. The state of the case is this—that my noble Friend near me (Lord Richard Grosvenor) really exerted himself to the best of his ability, and did contrive to keep 33 Members out of those over whom alone he can be supposed to exercise any influence. I ought also to say that it was not very wonderful that a thing of this kind should happen, because it should be observed that the House had been sitting for six hours before this "count out." I regret it extremely, and I can only say that we shall continue to do our best to carry out what is an understanding—namely, that on Friday night the Government shall do its best to keep a House.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—CORRUPT PRACTICES (DISFRANCHISEMENT) BILL.

MR. LEWIS asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether the Corrupt Practices (Disfranchisement) Bill, which had only been delivered this morning, and which was on the Orders for the Day, would be proceeded with to-night?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, there was no intention of doing so.

MR. LEWIS gave Notice that, on the second reading of the Bill, he would move as an Amendment—

> "That, having regard to the evidence given before the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the existence of corrupt practices at the recent elections for the cities of Chester and Oxford, as to the proceedings of the President of the Local Government Board and the Secretary of State for the Home Department at such elections, this House declines to impose any penalties upon the constituencies or electors named in the Bill at the instance of Her Majesty's Government."

CRIME (IRELAND)—MURDER OF MRS. H. M. SMYTHE.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT: In the absence of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, I wish to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether there is any truth in the statement in to-day's *Morning Post* that Mr. P. B. Smythe, who is known to and greatly esteemed by many in this House, was shot at yesterday in County Westmeath while returning from church, and that, although the shot did not take effect on himself, a lady in the carriage was seriously wounded?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER): Sir, I regret very much to state that the report is to a great extent true—that the facts are even worse than stated in the papers. A shot was fired at Mr. Smythe's carriage; and I am sorry to add that the lady who was stated to have been wounded was unfortunately shot dead upon the spot.

INDIA—BENGAL STAFF CORPS—CAPTAIN J. B. CHATTERTON.

Mr. GRANTHAM asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether, as he cannot grant any compensation to Captain Chatterton for the suffering caused by the delay in the treatment of his ankle joint owing to his being improperly ejected from hospital in India, he will advance to Captain Chatterton a further sum of £250, on security of his pay, to enable him to have proper surgical treatment, the former advance of a like sum having been duly repaid to the Government?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Without admitting the accuracy of the preamble of the hon. Member's inquiry, I may state that Captain Chatterton's request for a further advance nearly equivalent to two years' pay has been not long since under the consideration of my Council, and it was decided not to comply with his application. I do not propose to reverse that decision.

GIBRALTAR (RELIGIOUS DISSENSIONS) —DR. CANILLA—THE PAPERS.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Prime Minister, Whether he was aware that Papers with regard to Gibraltar were promised three weeks ago by the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs; that they had not yet been produced; that Questions regarding them had been constantly asked, and that hon. Members asking them had always met with evasive answers? [" Order!"] Such conduct was disrespectful to the House, and almost amounted to a breach of faith. He wished to ask——

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is entering into controversial matter, and he must know that ought never to be done in asking a Question.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I only wish to ask the Prime Minister whether he will exert himself to obtain these Papers as quickly as possible?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have no information on the subject, nor upon any other Departmental matter. I regret that the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs is not now in the House, as, no doubt, he would have been able to answer the Question.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF gave Notice that he would call attention to the matter on going into Committee of Supply.

PARLIAMENT (ORDER) — THE PRECINTS OF THE HOUSE—THE HOME SECRETARY AND MR. ANDERSON.

Mr. CALLAN: Sir, I beg to give Notice that to-morrow I will ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the statement which appeared in *The Daily Express*, a leading journal of Ireland, on Saturday last, to the effect that, after Mr. Anderson made his famous speech against the *clôture*, he (Sir William Harcourt) met him in the Lobby, and instantly attacked him, using words substantially to this effect —" You call yourself a Liberal Member for a Scotch constituency. We shall see. I have some friends in Glasgow. I shall write to them and let them know how you support the Government. I shall ask them whether they approve your conduct;" and, further, I shall ask the Home Secretary whether that account of the conversation is correct? And, Mr. Speaker, as this is a matter affecting freedom of speech and the Privileges of hon. Members——[*Cries of* " Order!"]

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: I rise to Order. I wish to know, Sir, whether it is in Order to give Notice of a Question concerning a private conversation?

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member is founding a Question upon conversation which took place in the Lobby of the House, or in the Division Lobby within the precincts of the House, and not upon a matter in the House itself, he is not in Order in taking notice of it.

Mr. CALLAN: I should be sorry to found a Question on a conversation. I am founding it upon a report published in one of the leading journals in Ireland —*The Daily Express*—and I may ask, as this is a matter affecting the freedom of speech——

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is indirectly founding himself upon a conversation within the precincts of the House.

Mr. HEALY: Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask you, upon a matter touching the Privileges of Members of this House, whether an hon. Member is not in Order in calling attention to language of a threatening character used by one hon. Member towards another while in the exercise of his Privileges as a Member of this House?

MR. SPEAKER: As I understand the observations of the hon. Member for Louth, that is not the point raised by him.

MR. CALLAN: Virtually and substantially it is the same.

MR. ANDERSON: Sir, as this is a Question referring to me, perhaps the House will allow me to say that it is not asked at my instance nor on my behalf. I consider myself quite able to defend myself against the right hon. and learned Gentleman—to maintain my own position and my own independence against the right hon. and learned Gentleman or anyone else, and I do not want any other Members to interfere on my behalf at any time. I have not the slightest idea how this matter got into the Press. I never was aware that it was published till five minutes ago, when the hon. Member brought me a cutting from a newspaper, and asked me about it. I do not know how it got there. I begged the hon. Member not to ask any Question about it, because, as I said, very likely the right hon. and learned Gentleman thought he was only giving me a little friendly advice.

MR. CALLAN: Now, Sir——

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Perhaps I may——

MR. CALLAN: I beg the right hon. and learned Gentleman's pardon. I have not finished my Question. This is a matter affecting freedom of speech and the liberty of action of Members of this House. It, therefore, concerns our Privileges generally as Members. As the facts are within his own knowledge, perhaps the right hon. and learned Gentleman will at once answer the Question without consultation with his Colleagues.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY: I beg to give Notice that if this system of eavesdropping and making communications to the newspapers of matters which have occurred in private conversation between hon. Members in different parts of the House is continued, especially by the Members of the House who themselves communicate with the newspapers, I shall move that the Lobby be entirely cleared of strangers during the Sitting of the House.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I may, perhaps, be allowed to say a word upon this subject. If it is the pleasure of the House that this matter should be entered into, I have not the slightest objection to state what occurred, so far as I recollect. I met my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow in the Lobby. I had, as I thought, a very friendly conversation with him. That was in the Lobby. I was perfectly aware that he did not agree with me upon the subject of the *clôture*, and I said to him—"Well, it seems odd. That is quite a different impression from the one I derived when I was at Glasgow with you last October." I expressed my views as to the opinion of the people in Glasgow. As to the use of any language that can be by any perversion described as threatening the hon. Member for Glasgow, that I deny.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARREST OF MISS O'CONNOR.

MR. O'DONNELL: I desire to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the report that a lady in delicate health—the sister of the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor)—has been sentenced to six months' imprisonment in the common gaol in default of finding bail for an offence which she denied having committed, and in connection with which she received no proper trial? In explanation of the urgency which induces me to put the Question without Notice, I shall read the following telegram just received by the hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond), from San Francisco, where this matter is attracting deep attention. The telegram is from Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P., who says—

> "Sister ought to be sent to infirmary. Suffering last two years from ill-health, which cold of cell would make torture, and perhaps incurable."

I hope the political views of the hon. and learned Gentleman will not prevent him giving this matter attention.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER) desired that Notice should be given of the Question. He had no information of the state of the lady referred to.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—OUTBREAK OF FEVER IN CLONMEL PRISON.

MR. HEALY asked the Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether he could give any information relating to the outbreak of typhoid fever among the "suspects" in Clonmel Gaol?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter) said, the Chief Secretary for Ireland was unavoidably absent from the House, and he himself could not give the hon. Member any information on the subject.

Mr. HEALY intimated that, as the matter was of so much importance, he should repeat the Question on the adjournment of the House.

GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT OF ROADS (SOUTH WALES).

In reply to Viscount Emlyn,

Mr. DODSON said, that the salary of the Superintendent of Roads in South Wales had stopped since the 25th of March, and he presumed he had suspended the performance of his duties.

Viscount EMLYN gave Notice that he should raise the question on going into Supply.

INDIA—THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE —SALARIES OF THE JUDGES.

Mr. PUGH asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether he had had an opportunity of considering the many representations that had been made to him from India with reference to the reduction of the salaries of the High Court Judges in Bengal, proposed by his Predecessor in Office; and, whether he had arrived at any decision as to the expediency or otherwise of enforcing such reduction?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, I have very carefully considered in Council such representations as I have received on the subject, and have arrived at the decision that the resolution referred to, so far as it equalizes the salaries of the Puisne Judges of all the High Courts, should be enforced—that is to say, that the Puisne Judges hereafter appointed to the Calcutta High Court shall not in future receive larger salaries than the Puisne Judges of the Bombay and other High Courts. There is, however, a small question still unsettled as to the precise amount at which the salaries of all Puisne Judges are to be fixed.

Mr. Healy

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.—[Bill 105.]

(*Mr. Secretary Childers, The Judge Advocate General, Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

The JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. Osborne Morgan), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he rose for the purpose of explaining certain of its provisions which were necessary to correct some clerical errors which had crept into the Army Act of last Session, owing to the fact that one of two Acts, which it consolidated, not having left that House—in consequence of the system of "blocking" persistently applied to it—until within a very few days of the Prorogation; so that only three days were left for the printing and circulating of the Bill, and passing it through all its stages. That Act was a Consolidating Act, and the most important of the Amendments now proposed was contained in Clause 5 of this Bill. By the 86th section of the Army Discipline Act, following the old Mutiny Act, it was provided that where a soldier of the Regular Forces was discharged or transferred to the Reserve in the United Kingdom, he should be entitled to be sent at the public expense to the place where he was attested. A question had been raised as to the operation of that section, and, in order to remove all doubt on the point, it was proposed by the clause to confine the right of a Regular soldier, on his discharge, to be sent to the place of his attestation, provided that place were in the United Kingdom. Such a right could not fairly be claimed where the place of attestation was, say, India or Canada. If the opposition to the Bill, of which the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had given Notice, were successful, the Army would be disbanded altogether, a result that would hardly commend itself to the House, however much hon. Members from Ireland desired it. The right hon. and learned Member concluded by moving the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*The Judge Advocate General.*)

Mr. SEXTON (who had given Notice that he would move that the Bill be read a second time that day six months) said, he thought it almost unnecessary to explain that his object was not the disbanding of the British Army; and the observation of the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Osborne Morgan), that the Irish Members might desire such an event, was altogether uncalled for. He (Mr. Sexton) put down the formal Motion of opposition to the second reading, solely in order that he might protest against the uses to which the Regular Army was now being applied in Ireland. The statement lately made to the House by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War disclosed the fact that more than one quarter of the 132,000 men whom it was proposed to retain for the service of Her Majesty were being employed in Ireland for the purpose of striking terror into the people. It was a remarkable fact, calling for the best attention of the House, that the Army now maintained in Ireland for stimulating the carrying out of evictions, was almost as large as the whole Army they maintained in India for safeguarding that great Empire. The reason why they had to keep so great a force in Ireland was the want of intelligence displayed by the Administration in dealing with that country. Instead of pursuing the intelligible course of placing reliance on the passing of remedial measures, and on a readiness to supplement those remedial measures already passed, as the people required, the Government had deluged Ireland with soldiers, pouring them in by battalions. And what was the result? The first effect was to stimulate the landlords to execute cruel and unjust evictions; and another effect was to strike terror into the hearts of the tenants, so that, even where they had a just claim to get their rent reduced, when they saw flying columns of troops moving about all over the country, their spirits were damped and their courage was destroyed. The consequence was that, by the use to which the Government was putting the Army in Ireland, hundreds and thousands of tenants were deterred from asserting their rights, and were shut out of the Courts of the country. He trusted they would receive some indication from the Government that they were approaching the time when the Regular Army would be withdrawn from its present scandalous occupation of enforcing contracts which their own Courts admitted were impossible to carry out, because they were unfair and unjust. Again, with regard to these evictions, he had to complain that the military officials and the magistrates who were acting in connection with them had lately taken upon themselves to seize cars and horses against the will of the owners. In many instances he had known those horses to have been overdriven and cruelly used by the soldiers, and to have been returned to their owners almost useless. He should be disposed to ask, when the Bill was in Committee, that provision should be made against the injustice done to the owners of cars and horses, whose property was seized against their will, and who had violated no law. Further, he understood that the police engaged in evictions received a special allowance of 2*s.* 6*d.* a-day, and he was informed that soldiers in the Regular Army, employed in similar work, received no such extra allowance. He did not desire to see soldiers treated less liberally than police, and if soldiers must be employed at evictions, he was at a loss to understand why they should not also receive an extra allowance, or why policemen were paid an extra 2*s.* 6*d.* a-day for performing work which soldiers were obliged to do for nothing. In Committee he would, therefore, move an Amendment to the effect that, as long as it was thought necessary to employ English soldiers in that sort of fatigue service, they should receive as large an extra allowance as policemen now obtained. It was a very peculiar fact that the whole military service in Ireland rested with Englishmen, for all the Irish regiments, and those regiments having a considerable proportion of Irishmen in their ranks, except one, had been removed from Ireland, and the Government did not propose to call out the Irish Militia this year. With respect to billeting and the diet of soldiers, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War ought to consider whether it might not be possible to increase the scale of payment. The scale of 4*d.* a-day for the providing of such furniture as was necessary for the lodging of the man, and such articles as candles, salt, pepper, and vinegar, was absurdly inadequate; and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it would not be possible to pay for domestic services to the soldiery on a more liberal scale? He had further to complain of the immunity given to soldiers from liability to maintain their wives and children. A clause, creating that immunity from a natural obligation, was in 1837 smuggled into the Mutiny Act, where it remained for 40 years to the disgrace of British legislation. The hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. P. A. Taylor) more than once had called the attention of the House to the license given to the British soldier to evade his natural and social obligations in respect of wife and children; and in the Mutiny Bill of 1873 a change was made, with the professed object of placing soldiers and marines on the same footing as civilians; but the clause was accompanied by restrictions which made it practically inoperative. For example, a soldier or marine who deserted his wife and children was not liable at present to any such punishment as a civilian received. He contended that if it was necessary to maintain a Standing Army in this country, that Standing Army should be maintained on a basis consistent with the principles of public morality and public right, and with justice to all subjects, and particularly women and children. They should not indicate to members of the humbler classes that if they deserted those whom they deceived, if they evaded their natural obligations, they would find in Her Majesty's Service a *refugium peccatorum.* Military interests ought not to be conclusive in a matter of this kind. Soldiers should be liable, either civilly or criminally, to make good the wrong they had done. He defied the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, or anybody else, to show any good moral reason why this system should be continued. Of course, he might give a military reason, but justice should be equally done between all subjects of Her Majesty, whether civilians or soldiers; and he must say that if a Standing Army could only be maintained upon principles of injustice to women and others, he thought it would be much more civilized and honest to resort to conscription, which could be administered with a fair regard to morality and the rights of individuals. As the law now stood, the right of a master over an apprentice was more sacred than that of a soldier's wife in relation to her husband. If a soldier had been legally ordered to make contributions to the support of child or family, the order could not be enforced without the sanction of the Secretary of State for War. The provision for the maintenance of women and children in the Act of 1873 was a scandalous one. In 1874 the payments so sanctioned amounted to only £1,500, which was as a drop in the ocean compared with the obligations that were evaded; and he believed that if the moral sense of England was once directed to this subject, he thought the system would presently have to go by the board. There was another scandalous provision with regard to the present system of maintaining the wives and children of soldiers. A wife had to go to the nearest workhouse with her children and become an inmate. If such a woman issued a summons against a soldier, it had to be served on the commanding officer, and a sum of money given to the officer to defray the travelling expenses of the soldier from where he was quartered to the place where the summons was to be heard. This protection made the law a bitter and contemptible mockery, and amounted to a denial of justice to all those women and children. If there was a proper complaint against a soldier, why should he not pay his own expenses, or why should they not be paid for him in some other way? If a soldier was under orders for foreign service, he could snap his fingers at any woman who had a claim upon him. That should not be. Nothing could be easier than to postpone his departure until he had answered his legal liabilities. The only reason he had for putting his Motion in this form was to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War to the points he previously mentioned, and to this point in reference to the maintenance of wives and children, which concerned England more than Ireland, because the Irish did not desert their wives. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give the subject his attention. For his own part, in view of the Bill going into Committee, he should place upon the Paper Amendments which, he trusted, would put the law of England on a basis of justice, morality, and common sense as regarded the responsibility of a soldier towards his wife.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he did not rise to second the Motion of the hon. Member who had last spoken (Mr. Sexton), but to make two or three remarks upon the Bill. The hon. Member, he felt sure, really put down the Bill to be read a second time that day six months. [Mr. CHILDERS: The hon. Member has not moved that Resolution.] He was not aware of the fact. Many of the remarks of the hon. Member were quite pertinent to the Bill under discussion, and, hardships having arisen, it was right that the matters should be considered and dealt with. He rose to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War whether there had been any diminution in the practice of desertion and fraudulent re-enlistment in the Army? It was well-known that something not unlike an actual trade in fraudulent enlistment was going on in the Army, and that many men thus enlisting were well known, but were not punished because they were doing their duty well in the regiments into which they had fraudulently re-enlisted as soldiers, and their officers did not like to part with them. As the practice was so extensive and so culpable, he wished to know whether the Secretary of State for War, on thinking over the question of punishment, had thought of any method of dealing with these offenders, for they ought to be punished severely. He held in his hand a Return of Desertions from the Army, which showed that in 1880 there were no less than 3,284 cases of absolute loss to the Army. It was a considerable increase upon 1876, 1877, 1878, and 1879. He should also be glad to learn from the right hon. Gentleman as to certain punishments introduced into the Army last year. When the question of military punishment was raised last year, new punishments were devised, and the House would now be glad to hear what had been the effect of these punishments, which were a greater degradation than even flogging. Would the right hon Gentleman state how many men had been subjected to these punishments, and whether any such punishment had been administered in South Africa? He should like to know whether the men had been tied to horses or to cart tails, and also what was exactly the code of punishment for very grave offences in the field and before the enemy? He thought he had a right to ask the right hon. Gentleman what these punishments really were, and on what occasions they could be used? They ought to know how drunkenness and other grave crimes in the face of the enemy had been dealt with by the officers in command? He thought the present a fair opportunity for raising the question, and he felt quite sure that the right hon. Gentleman would give them all the information in his power. It was in that House that information of that kind should be given, for he felt sure that the country would be glad to know what was the exact state of discipline in the Army.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR said, there was one point upon which he would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War to give them some information. After a great deal of attention given to the subject by Members of the House, they had at last obtained an Army Act consolidated in one Code, so that officers and men could easily understand the Regulations under which they served. They had since had Amendments made to the Act, and in the Bill before them there was an additional Amendment proposed to be made; and, looking as he did with some suspicion lest that proceeding should lead to the confusing state in which the Army was placed by having many Acts instead of only one Code, he was anxious to know whether measures could not be taken to prevent a yearly amendment of this important Act? He was afraid if the present course were continued, of Amendments year by year, they would fall into the same confusion they got into in former years, and they might never have a complete Code. He wished the right hon. Gentleman would devise some means by which the Army Act could be amended and annually brought into a consolidated state. The Annual Act should be kept confined to one subject—namely, the number of men; and the changes that might be needed in the General Code should be put forward in a separate Bill, stating the Amendments and the Clauses of the Code as they would read when so amended. In this way the Army would annually be informed as to the Law under which it served. With respect to the observations that had been made on the necessity for an annual Report as to the working of the Army Act, he fully agreed with them.

An annual Report could be presented on all branches of the Army, the Judge Advocate General reporting on all points connected with courts martial and the action of the Military Code; and in that way many defects would be brought to light, and Members of Parliament would have the opportunity of giving advice and endeavouring to remedy these defects. If it were not possible to present a Report, the Secretary of State or the Judge Advocate General could explain the state of the Army in a speech to the House. The subject was a very large one, and well deserved the attention of the Secretary of State for War.

Sir HARRY VERNEY hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War would be able to give the House some information with respect to the working of the present Army Hospital system. No subject demanded the more careful consideration of the House than the welfare of their soldiers who were sick. Invalid soldiers were now entirely under the care of the Army Hospital Corps, and he trusted full information would be given with regard to that body. He should like to know the number of the Corps, its distribution, and its relation to the Army Medical Department, the mode of selection of men in the Army Hospital Corps, and of their promotion, what training they received, and their length of service. And the House ought to be informed how the present plan of attaching medical officers to the station, instead of, as formerly, to the regiment, was found to answer. On these points, and on other measures taken for the welfare of sick soldiers, he thought the House was entitled to information.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER contended that the new Rules of Punishment were not sufficiently explicit, and asked for some information upon the point. For instance, one of the Rules provided that a soldier might be attached to a fixed object for certain limited periods; but it did not state whether his hands were to be tied behind his back, or whether they were to be placed in an upright position in front of him. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman would not inflict any punishment which would amount to torture; but the House ought to have more information as to the exact character of these punishments, and the occasions on which they were applied.

Mr. CHILDERS said, he did not at all complain of the observations of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), and he had to thank the hon. Member for not having moved the rejection of the Bill; because, if the Bill were much longer delayed, it would have involved the disbandment of the Army. Unless the Mutiny Bill were passed within a few days the Army must disappear, and he was sure that it was not the intention of the hon. Member that that should take place. He would answer in order the suggestions that had been made upon the details of the Bill, although he was bound to say that some of them would be better discussed in Committee. The hon. Member for Sligo had, in the first instance, spoken of the impressment of cars in Ireland under the authority of the Statute for the use of the military. The law upon the point, which was perfectly plain, was passed after a good deal of consideration and discussion; and all he could say was that to the best of his knowledge it had not been in any way strained. The Act provided that every magistrate, on the demand of a commanding officer, was bound to issue his warrant requiring a constable to provide, in a fit condition and within a required time, such carriages, animals, and drivers as were required for the purpose of removing military baggage and stores from place to place, and the necessary provisions for obtaining them followed. These provisions were absolutely necessary for an Army under all circumstances, not only in Ireland, but in every country in the removal of troops. So far as he was aware, there had been no well-founded complaint of any injustice having been done under that clause. The hon. Gentleman then asked whether he thought the present state of things satisfactory, under which they had a large increase of troops in Ireland, and whether he hoped the time would soon come when it would be possible not to employ so large a number of soldiers in aiding the civil power in respect of the differences between landlord and tenant? All he could say was, that no one would rejoice more than he would do when it was possible to diminish the forces in Ireland. It was, of course, most inconvenient, from a military point of view, to employ Her Majesty's troops, as they were now largely employed, in aid of the civil power. It was difficult for them to get that amount of drill which it was imperative they should have, and they were kept at places where there was not the same barrack accommodation as in other parts of the United Kingdom. At the same time, the impressions which had got abroad as to the force in Ireland were altogether exaggerated, one hon. Member at the early part of the Session having stated the number at 50,000, and another at 60,000; whereas the total number was just 30,000, the normal number being 23,000. Still, he would not wish to employ the additional number, and he should be glad when they were able to withdraw them. The Department which had to advise in this matter was, of course, primarily the Irish Executive, and they had conferred with him and explained what they thought would meet the requirements of the case, and it was for him (Mr. Childers) to supply what the responsible authorities thought necessary. That was a course he had followed consistently, and he believed that the force in Ireland was neither more nor less than was requisite. In regard to the hon. Gentleman's observations on billeting, he thought it would be better to discuss that subject in Committee. He had heard no serious complaints as to the rates for billeting soldiers; at the same time he would gladly consider the point, if the hon. Member had any evidence bearing upon it. The rates had been increased of late years, and if he should be satisfied that they were insufficient he should be prepared to have them amended next year. With respect to the respective allowances for special work by soldiers and police in Ireland, he (Mr. Childers) was naturally jealous as to soldiers being properly treated and paid; but, having consulted the Commander of the Forces at Dublin, and other military authorities, he did not think there was any ground for saying that the allowances to the soldiers, in comparison with those to the police, were insufficient. The hon. Gentleman had also asked him a question with regard to the liability of a soldier for the maintenance of his wife and children, and had said that only £1,500 had been paid on that account under the present Army Act. On this point he (Mr. Childers) had no information before him. The hon. Gentleman had complained that it rested with the Secretary of State to decide how much deduction should be made from the pay of a soldier for the maintenance of his wife and children. He (Mr. Childers) thought it was not unreasonable that the Secretary of State should have some voice in the deductions made by magistrates from soldiers' pay, because, otherwise, such orders might be made as would make it impossible for a soldier to maintain himself. The question was not a simple one, and the hon. Member must remember that they had not only to consider what should be done as between the father and the Union to which his family were chargeable; they must also consider what was right as between the Crown and the soldier, considering the circumstances of a soldier's engagement and enlistment. He did not think they could treat a soldier in the same way as an ordinary citizen. He was subject to a particular engagement, absence from which might seriously prejudice Her Majesty's Service, and that Service was to be regarded as well as the interests of the other persons concerned. He was not aware of any case in which the Secretary of State had exercised his discretion unfairly. The hon. Gentleman had said that, practically, there was no remedy against a soldier who went on foreign service. It would be impossible to issue a *ne exeat regno* against a soldier in such cases; and, in point of fact, the claim might be altogether unfounded. All these points, however, should be carefully considered; and if, next year, he thought Amendments were required he should not hesitate to propose them. With reference to the Question of the hon. and gallant Member (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) respecting fraudulent enlistments and their remedy, he only knew of two remedies for that evil—one was branding; and the other was the improvement in the general character of the men who entered the Army, and the treatment of soldiers with consideration during the first few months of their service. In both these respects much had been done; and he believed that, while in 1881 there was less fraudulent enlistment than there was in 1880, this improvement would continue. He had considered the proposal that some method should be devised of marking men, They could not be branded, for Parliament would never sanction—and, indeed, he hoped no Government would propose—such an expedient; and he was satisfied that the plan of distinctively marking men by vaccination would not be practicable or successful if adopted, according to the best medical and professional opinion. He could not, therefore, propose such a course for the adoption of Parliament. The country would have to trust to the exercise of increased vigilance, and to an improved system of enlistment, under which greater care would be taken not to enlist men who had already served. The great majority of recruiting officers ought to know whether a man had served as a soldier or not. He hoped that by the means which he had indicated fraudulent enlistment would be minimized in the future. He had also been asked by the hon. and gallant Member what the Code was with respect to the Rules for summary punishment? The Code was laid on the Table on the 5th August last; but, in point of fact, its provisions had not been applied, because they would only be carried into execution on active service, and, happily, there had been no such service of late. Nobody, therefore, could tell whether the change from flogging was a wise change or not, for no one had yet had an opportunity of judging its effects. The manner in which a soldier undergoing punishment would be attached had been intentionally left to the discretion of commanding officers, and, subject to the instructions framed under the law, those whose duty it would be to put the law into operation must be trusted. The object of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Kincardineshire (Sir George Balfour), who had asked a question about the consolidation of Acts of Parliament, and who had complained of its not being done, was being carried out fully. The complaint would have been true the year before last; but it was not true last year, because all the Army Acts were consolidated last year, and, as far as the present Bill was concerned, express power was given to the printer to reprint the former Act with the verbal Amendments now enacted. He was shortly about to bring forward one Bill consolidating the Laws relating to the Militia, and another consolidating the Laws relating to the Reserve Forces. He hoped hon. Members from Ireland would not block these Bills, as they did the Consolidating Bill of last year, for the present measures would be a great public advantage, and it would be much better that their stages should be taken in the middle rather than the end of a Session. With regard to the suggestion that there should be an annual Report on the working of the Army Discipline Act, he doubted whether such a Report would conduce to the public advantage. Very voluminous annual Returns were published at the present time. He would, however, give consideration to the suggestion. A question had been put by the hon. Baronet the Member for Buckingham (Sir Harry Verney) on the subject of Army Hospitals and the staff of men employed in them. When the Estimates were being considered, he would endeavour to satisfy his hon. Friend. In conclusion, he expressed a hope that the Motion he had made that the Bill be read a second time would be now agreed to.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, there was one remarkable ground for passing this Bill alleged in the Preamble, which he thought required abolition. It occurred in that paragraph which commenced—

> "Whereas, no man can be forejudged of in life or limb, or subjected in time of peace to any kind of punishment within this Realm, by martial law or any other manner than by the judgment of his Peers, therefore it is necessary to pass this Bill for the maintenance of the standing Army."

It was quite clear that in a part of this Realm—namely, that part of Her Majesty's Dominions called Ireland, the statement in this Preamble to the effect that no man could be subjected to any kind of punishment in any manner than by the judgment of his peers, did not apply; and consequently, if the Preamble of this Bill which they were asked to pass was to be brought up to the most recent developments of the Constitution under the administration of the Liberal Party, it would be necessary to strike out of the Preamble the words declaring that no man within the Realm of Great Britain and Ireland could be subjected to punishment in any other manner than by the judgment of his peers. The English Army was the most expensive and least effective in the world; and if some of the money spent upon ornaments or sinecures were made available for the legitimate, just, and more natural wants of soldiers, much would be done to raise the *morale* of our Army and its popularity. He thought some of the grievances of which the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had complained might be redressed without delay. He referred principally to the question of the cruel, monstrous, and immoral immunity from punishment which a man who had deserted his wife and family enjoyed if he enlisted in the Army, and to the question of the expense which was thrown on a deserted wife or the mother of an illegitimate child who sought redress from a soldier who was not quartered in the town where the trial would be heard. A couple of years ago, when he referred to these matters under the late Administration, he was told that no small amount of the infanticide which took place in garrison towns was due to the utterly miserable condition of the women seduced by soldiers, and who had no earthly means of obtaining any help or assistance from them. With regard to the forcible seizure of cars by the military, he was not satisfied with the answer of the right hon. Gentleman on the point. A mere passing expression of goodwill and sympathy, he contended, was insufficient to compensate for the wholesale seizure of cars in Ireland for military purposes. In its connection with evictions, this system involved the greatest amount of loss and suffering in Ireland. Of course, he was ready to admit that when the Government were determined to have the cars, the cars must be had. But he suggested that they should be so used and so paid for as not to cause any loss to their owners. Cars might be paid for at the rate of £1 a-day, with 5*s*. a-day for the driver, while not more than four soldiers should be allowed on each. Four heavily-accoutred soldiers, with the driver, were a sufficient load for any horse. On the ground of the prevention of cruelty to animals alone, no car-owner should be compelled to grant his vehicle for a journey of more than four miles each way, and there should be an engagement that the horse should not be driven at a higher rate of speed than six miles an hour. He had known of cases in which they had been driven for as many as 35 miles.

MR. SPEAKER reminded the hon. Member that he was alluding to matters which would be more properly discussed in Committee.

MR. O'DONNELL said, his reason for referring to matters of that kind was to save time, as he did not wish to move absolute Amendments in Committee, but rather to make suggestions for the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War. As regarded the question of billeting, he believed that the present system entailed wholesale plunder on a portion of the public. The scale of charges was totally inadequate. He hoped that the Secretary of State for War, in consideration of the large number of Catholic recruits that entered the Army, would take some efficient steps to provide that when these Catholic soldiers in the regular stations of the Service, went out to the foreign Dependencies of the Crown, they should enjoy the same advantages for the exercise of their religion which were secured to their Protestant fellow-subjects in Her Majesty's ranks? In India, especially, Catholic soldiers were placed at a great disadvantage in that respect, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would impress upon the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India the necessity of causing the Indian Government to meet the requirements of the Catholics upon this point. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would take every step which lay in his power to raise the moral tone of the Army generally.

COLONEL STANLEY said, he only rose in consequence of the answer given by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, he believed, to the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). He understood the Secretary of State to say that there was no power to increase the prices for billeting. Of course, it was not open to anyone to propose any increase of cost without the usual forms being observed; but he wished to observe that the object of placing the prices in the Schedule and of removing them from the body of the Act where they formerly stood was that Parliament should be able to revise them from time to time, according to circumstances. He wished to remind the House that formerly the Billeting Law in Ireland was much more severe than it was at the present time. Previous to the Act of 1879, which assimilated the English and Irish Law of Billeting, billets were made on private houses, while innkeepers were allowed no remuneration for occupancy. He had no doubt the Schedule would be from time to time revised, and trusted the Government would take steps to do so, if it should appear necessary.

Mr. CHILDERS said, that with regard to the hiring of cars, the rates were fixed by Statute; but he would inquire into the matter, so that if any hardship did occur it might, if possible, be remedied. He believed that far more than the statutory rates were usually paid. With regard to the revision of the scale for billeting, he would consider it before next year. He never intended to say that it was not within the competence of the House to alter the Schedule, provided a Committee for that purpose was set up by a Minister of the Crown. He would also take care that the complaint made by the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) should be inquired into. The question of chaplains in India was quite out of his jurisdiction, and was under the control of the Governor General in Council and the Secretary of State in Council. As to the Contagious Diseases Acts, the inquiry by a Committee of the House of Commons, instituted by the late Government, was still proceeding, and until it was completed he could not do anything in regard to the matter.

Mr. BIGGAR said, he felt bound to protest against the injustice done to Irish car-owners by the military demands upon them. The simplest way to provide for the children of soldiers who had deserted their wives would be to require affidavit evidence on the subject from the wives, and to deduct a competent part of the soldiers' pay for the maintenance of the deserted wives and children.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Colonel Stanley

PROVINCIAL ART GALLERIES AND MUSEUMS.—RESOLUTION.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS, in rising to move—

"That, in the opinion of this House, grants in aid of Art and Industrial Museums should not be confined to London, Edinburgh, and Dublin, but that a special grant should be made to the Science and Art Department, South Kensington, to enable them to supply Provincial Art Galleries and Museums with original examples and reproductions of Industrial Art adapted to their special local acquirements, and also to maintain and to still further develop the circulation system now administered by the Department; that gifts or loans of such articles and works as may be available from the National Art Collections, and from the British Museum, should be made to Provincial Art Galleries and Museums; and that such aid be confined to those towns or localities which are rated under the Free Libraries and Museums Act, and that the amount of such aid be proportioned to the sum raised and spent in each locality; and that, in order to give due effect to these proposals, it is desirable to place the whole of the National Art and other Collections, including the National Gallery and British Museum, under the direct control and administration of a Department of the Government,"

said, that he did not intend to take up much of the time of the House, as the subject of his Motion had already been debated. Nearly all the leading towns were forming themselves together in order to bring the question to a practical issue. It was one of the highest moment, involving the national prosperity in no small degree. This country had the finest workmen in the world, and it was only right they should be well educated; but we did less in that respect for them than any other country in Europe did for its workmen. In the face of the increasing competition in all our manufacturing industries on the part of foriegn nations, and when they saw those nations using great efforts to bring before their people everything relating to Science and Art, it was most important that we should do all we could to improve the artistic and industrial education of our workmen. Nothing could be further from his intention than to oppose the grants that were made to similar Institutions in London for these and other purposes, or to interfere in any way with the South Kensington Museum. On the contrary, his Motion pointed rather to an increase of the grant and to generalize its application, so that the various localities in the country might be benefited thereby.

He did not wish to imply that there was any jealousy in the large Provincial towns of the South Kensington and British Museums, and the other Collections in London. On the contrary, they were thoroughly satisfied with those institutions, and with their management under gentlemen like Sir Philip Cunliffe Owen and Mr. Wallis. They were quite aware that South Kensington was doing all the good it could, and as well as it could, considering the means at its disposal. What they wished was that the advantages conferred by such institutions should be extended to the large towns in the Provinces. The authorities at South Kensington referred in their Report to the manner in which they were carrying on the circulation system by loans, and to the way in which they were endeavouring to get reproductions by electrotype and other processes. They went on to state that the system of loans was better than any permanent and unchangeable exhibition could possibly be. That might be true to a certain extent; but the large central industrial towns wanted exhibitions of works of Art, not for a short period of time, but continually, so that working men might have opportunities of examining the articles, whether they were pictures, jewellery, or other things, which illustrated the manufactures of their particular localities. The splendid and unique collection of jewels in the British Museum, for instance, was comparatively unknown, there being, on the last occasion he (Mr. Collings) visited it, only seven persons present, three of whom were ladies; while in the town of Birmingham there were said to be from 10,000 to 20,000 working jewellers, who had but a small chance of seeing such splendid examples of their art. The loans which were made were not at all sufficient to meet the requirements of the time, though, no doubt, the loans and the extension of them to corporation museums had done a great deal of good. The people of the country would not now submit to be governed by the mechanical plans of London coteries in this respect. Indeed, the country governed London by its riper and more generous ideas, and well for London that this was so, as the events of recent years had demonstrated. Again, there ought to be a circulating department, by which what was known as high art might pass through the land and vivify the national life. A small Museum of Casts from the Antique was being formed at South Kensington; and why, he asked, should not Mr. Perry, instead of providing one reproduction or set, provide, say, a dozen, and let each of our principal towns have one of them? He wished to urge on the Treasury that grants for what he would call the higher life of the nation should be considered in a very liberal spirit. The authorities at South Kensington must not be content with offering their reproductions at half price to the country museums. He would suggest that when a reproduction was made, copies should be sent free of cost to such towns and localities as were rated under the Libraries and Museums Act. It was said—"Where would you draw the line to all these expenses?" Well, his Resolution, by limiting the grant to towns which rated themselves, provided for that. It would be a self-acting scheme, and he could see no objection to it, seeing that it meant that the locality which raised £1,000 should have twice as much as one that raised £500, and that would work fairly all round. It had been alleged that the Provinces wished to break up the National Collections; but he was unable to discover how the apportionment of selected specimens to localities appropriate to their exhibition was less national than confining them to one place in London, where, comparatively speaking, they were unvisited and unknown. The Turner drawings, for instance, were kept, as Mr. Ruskin had said, in a cellar in London. At all events, there were, doubtless, many duplicates, and many examples as nearly duplicate as possible, which might be spared for the Provinces, without injuring the unity of the Collections in the Metropolis. His Resolution recommended that all these institutions ought to be under one Department of the State. That seemed to him to be merely a matter of common sense. Where three or four managements existed, they, as every business man knew, must clash with one another. The results he desired could not be obtained without some such change as that indicated by his Resolution, the real intention of which was, of course, to put pressure on the Treasury, and, if possible, to induce the authorities to spend more money on the national education.

It seemed strange that there should be national pictures at the British Museum, when they had a large National Gallery. They wanted a more active management of these institutions. Instead of being a vital organizing body, the Trustees of the British Museum were mainly ornamental. They included such personages as the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Speaker of the House of Commons, the First Lord of the Admiralty, and the Law Officers of the Crown, as if those Gentlemen had not enough to do in other directions. The management ought to be, as South Kensington was, more responsible to Parliament. Then, again, the managers of the National Gallery were elected for life. These facts showed that there was a want of unity between the national institutions of the country. The management of them did not secure the highest results. The Trustees, knowing the new requirements of the country, must exert themselves. As he had said, he hoped that the time would come when all the educational institutions of the country would be under one management. The sooner they got hold of the idea that expenditure for education was in its infancy the better. They should not hold their hands in the matter, for many persons in the country, who took great interest in education, would not complain of grants for education generally until they found the sum exceeded that for military purposes; and he believed the working classes especially were in favour of that. There was nothing which the taxpaying people were so ready for as a large increase for educational expenses, always provided the moneys were well spent. Now, it was sometimes suggested by the opponents of his scheme that the Provinces might help themselves. But that was precisely what they had done already, and were still doing, and that to an extent that would astonish Londoners. But there was a limit beyond which they could not go. He had a table showing that 42 towns, with a gross population of 5,500,000, had provided a capital for fittings and other things for free libraries and museums to the extent of £1,000,000; and the 1*d*. rate, representing the sum for their maintenance, was about £100,000. But those amounts did not represent the whole of the amounts that had been spent in these localities. Birmingham, for instance, had in the past 10 years spent over £750,000; and, no doubt, Manchester, Leeds, and Liverpool had been equally liberal, and had shown an equal public spirit. But the inequality of rating made it difficult to obtain all that was wanted out of the rates. The complaint that the Provinces did nothing for themselves might rather be retorted on Londoners, whose parks and museums were provided out of the whole taxation of the country. He found that £106,000 was spent by the Government on the parks in and around London, and on the London museums and public buildings £304,000, of which the British Museum got £116,000. He did not object to that; but he wanted an extension of the principle. It might mean an increase of taxation, but not necessarily, as the country thought there were many ways in which the current expenditure might be reduced. For instance, the Government might spend less upon the Army, or upon some other Department of the State. An increased education expenditure would be cheap; it would, in the end, be an economical policy, to say nothing else, to secure the civilizing and elevating influences which would follow the increased Art culture of the nation. At any rate, the people would not object to a larger expenditure for good results. He hoped the Government would be alive to the manner in which the Provinces regarded this subject, and would consider whether it would not be well that the Provinces, which were taxed for London and rated for themselves, should, after they had done all that they could for themselves, have their needs considered by the Government in no mean spirit. To show how the people in the Provinces valued these institutions, he might state that in Birmingham, in 1877, the number of visitors to the Art Gallery was 394,645, while the number of visitors to the British Museum in the same year was only about 30 per cent more. The hon. Member concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, grants in aid of Art and Industrial Museums should not be confined to London, Edinburgh, and Dublin, but that a special grant should be made to the Science and Art Department, South Kensington, to enable them to supply Provincial Art

Galleries and Museums with original examples and reproductions of Industrial Art adapted to their special local acquirements, and also to maintain and to still further develop the circulation system now administered by the Department; that gifts or loans of such articles and works as may be available from the National Art Collections, and from the British Museum, should be made to Provincial Art Galleries and Museums; and that such aid be confined to those towns or localities which are rated under the Free Libraries and Museums Act, and that the amount of such aid be proportioned to the sum raised and spent in each locality; and that, in order to give due effect to these proposals, it is desirable to place the whole of the National Art and other Collections, including the National Gallery and British Museum, under the direct control and administration of a Department of the Government,"—(*Mr. Jesse Collings,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. GLADSTONE said, there were certain portions of this comprehensive Motion on which his right hon. Friend near him (Mr. Mundella) would answer his hon. Friend the Member for Ipswich (Mr. Collings) in more detail, and more to his satisfaction; but he (Mr. Gladstone) wished to take a general view of its wide scope, and especially to refer to the closing portion of the Motion, which determined the course the Government must take on this occasion. The Motion began by affirming that grants in aid to industrial museums should not be confined to London, Edinburgh, and Dublin; but the fact was they were not, at that moment, confined to London, Edinburgh, and Dublin. His hon. Friend would say that was done in an insufficient degree; but, in practice and in a form not thought objectionable, they did go beyond these cities; and independent loans formed a very important part of the system. The Motion of his hon. Friend, however, would seem to suggest the interpretation that there should be an indeterminate extension of the grants. As to the second part of the Motion, that a special grant should be made to the Science and Art Department, South Kensington, to enable it to supply Provincial Art Galleries and Museums with original examples and reproductions of industrial art, he might observe that, as far as reproductions went, something was already done. But, as far as regards original examples, he must own he thought the House would do unwisely to pledge itself to that subject until it had considered and adjusted, in very carefully weighed terms, the manner in which a system of purchasing original examples for those Provincial Museums was to be worked. It would, undoubtedly, be a matter of very great difficulty. These subjects and others connected with them were necessarily unending. Let not his hon. Friend, however, think that he (Mr. Gladstone) complained of his making this Motion. It was the result of a healthy appetite; but there was no end to its extension. His hon. Friend dealt with the centres. He had got into his head the cases of those enormous communities of 300,000 or 400,000 people; but after the central authority had settled its account with those large towns, which by that time would probably have swollen to 700,000 or 800,000, there would be a different set of candidates, and, instead of this amicable controversy taking end, they would have to hand it down from generation to generation. His hon. Friend would derive some consolation from observing that they had been travelling at no inconsiderable rate already. If he understood the speech of his hon. Friend aright, they ought to expend £25,000,000 a-year on these branches—that was to say, it ought not to be less than the expenditure on the Army and Navy. [MR. COLLINGS: No, no; the Army only.] Well, his hon. Friend certainly held out some hopes of economy to be effected in a marvellous manner; but he (Mr. Gladstone) would like to see some examples of that kind from him in a practical shape before he could commit himself even to the reduced estimate of £15,000,000. He would point out, however, that they were, as he had said, travelling at a considerable rate already in this direction, though it might not satisfy the sanguine mind of the Parliamentary youth of the hon. Member for Ipswich. If they took the summary of expenditure as it stood in the Estimates presented to the House, it would be seen that a sum of £4,538,000 was taken for Science, Art, and Education. His hon. Friend might say that was not an adequate sum; but he (Mr. Gladstone) had known in his Parliamentary life when the sum given was little more than a fiftieth part of what it was now; and if that were so, it was now growing at the rate of between £100,000 and £200,000 a-year; and probably his hon. Friend, in the course of his Parliamentary career, might see it reach what he would admit to be a very respectable figure. The administrative Department at South Kensington had actually initiated and greatly extended a system wholly new, highly beneficial, undreamt of 30, or even 20 years ago, and undergoing a great and progressive extension; so that in principle, as far as regarded the administrative part of his Motion, there was no quarrel between him and his right hon. Friend (Mr. Mundella). In the last clause of his Motion, the hon. Member had ventured on a matter quite distinct from the earlier part of his proposition, as to the extension of the present administrative operations; and he had proposed what would, in effect, be a very difficult subject of actual legislation, when he said that all these Departments ought to be brought together, and placed under the direct control and administration of a Department of the Government. He (Mr. Gladstone) would not affirm absolutely the negative of that proposition; but yet he was inclined to affirm very decidedly these two things—first, that it was open in certain branches to doubt and qualification; and, secondly, that it involved a work of very considerable difficulty, and one to which it would be most unwise for the Government, on whom the whole responsibility would lie, to pledge themselves to at this moment. First, as to the qualification; looking at an institution like the National Portrait Gallery, that institution appeared in the Estimate for one of the most modest sums inscribed in it. £2,585 was the sum at the disposal of the National Portrait Gallery. That Gallery had been satisfactorily managed for a long series of years, owing to the very enlightened representation of the late Lord Stanhope, with results very remarkable indeed. And though it had been worked by an independent Body, yet its relations to the Government had been uniformly satisfactory; and he owned he should be very loth, on the mere ground of administrative symmetry, to interfere with an arrangement of that kind, unless he were well satisfied he could well mend it. Take the case, again, of the National Gallery. That Gallery, at a period not very remote, was the subject of incessant controversy and contest. At present, with a certain control through the Treasury, not involving interference in detail, they had made a harmonious combination of the two elements—firstly, that which was strictly professional, and which predominated in the person of the Director; secondly, that friendly aid which the Director now had it in his power to obtain from the Trustees, who were always chosen as among the best instructed, most enlightened, and best disposed of those gentlemen who were willing to give their services. He was exceedingly struck with the fact that whereas, a certain number of years ago, the columns of the newspapers were filled with controversy about the price that had been given for this picture, the manner in which that picture had been cleaned, scoured, and scarified—for that was the sort of accusation then constantly made—they appeared to have reached the time when public opinion was, on the whole, very well satisfied. Then there was the larger and more difficult question as to the British Museum. About that, all he could say was that he thought there was very much to be said in favour of a change of the present system; for he was by no means prepared to say there was nothing to say against it. It was a matter in which men of great acuteness and competency had found the greatest difficulty in arriving at a conclusion, and, even after seeming to have arrived at a conclusion, had been shaken in it. But the point he wished to raise was that the British Museum had in it certain elements of its old character of a private or semi-private foundation; and his hon. Friend would find very great difficulty indeed when he came to sweep away the old Trustees and their present complicated constitution. He (Mr. Gladstone) did not wonder that the hon. Gentleman was struck with the fact that the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Prime Minister, and the First Lord of the Admiralty were among the Trustees. At the same time, the anomaly was not so great as it appeared, because, while they were official Trustees, yet, in point of fact, they were not the managers. The Trustees, from amongst themselves, chose a standing Committee, and that was the Body which really managed, except as to the matter of election of new Trustees and the matter of patronage in the Museum, which was regulated entirely by a small body of three persons, called the Principal Trustees. The question of sweeping away that Body required really, before it was adopted, much more searching investigation than they could give it now; and it was not a very easy thing to say, in his opinion, how far the State, not having the gift of prophecy, and never foreseeing in the slightest degree to what vast dimensions that little institution would extend itself—how far the State, having recognized private rights in the appointment of Family Trustees, was in a condition, at a moment's notice, to sweep them all away for the purpose of bringing them under a Department. It was a question not altogether easy to dispose of, and would require more close examination before the House could be called upon to decide upon it. He quite admitted with his hon. Friend that such arrangements ought to be made as would obviate entirely the serious evils and inconveniences that had arisen in former times, and that might arise now, to a certain extent, from the competition of one Department with another in the same field of purchase. That was a thing which ought not in any well-regulated system to prevail; but as to the matter of unification, and bringing these institutions under the direct sway of a Department of the Government, that, he thought, was a matter which they were not ready to determine. He recognized the vast importance of the work; but it was not yet ripe for decision. Perhaps they were not able to travel so fast as his hon. Friend; and he hoped his hon. Friend would not ask them to give a legislative pledge, which would certainly be premature, and which might involve them in difficulties it would not be easy to extricate themselves from.

MR. BERESFORD HOPE said, he heartily sympathized with much of the general intention of the Motion of the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Collings), as he believed every right-minded man would, in so far as it recognized the elevating influence of Art upon the human mind. He had great pleasure in seeing all over the country a general agreement that it was not mere grind and greed that elevated a people, but that the mind must be fed by feeding the eye. He could not, however, regard with an equally favourable view the manner in which the details of the Motion were worked out; and he regretted that the hon. Member for Ipswich should have loaded it with so much debatable and, in some respects, not strictly accurate matter. For his own part, he would not traverse the whole field opened up by the Motion, but would deal with the subject from the point of view of the particular institution with which he happened to be administratively connected—namely, the British Museum—which the hon. Gentleman had only referred to in a sort of offhand postscript to his speech. He could quite understand the idea of a hard, merciless concentration of Art treasures under State administration. That was the idea of France and other countries. But a National Collection, presided over by a body of Trustees chosen for their capacities and station, who possessed something of individual independence, and who took a disinterested personal interest in the objects of Art under their care, was a thing peculiarly English; and he was a little sorry and jealous to see that its advantages had been somewhat overlooked. The British Museum, in seeking the advancement of Art in its historical aspect—Art which illustrated ages long gone by, which was the key of history—nay, which was an embodiment of history itself—had its own special mission to fulfil, a mission at least as important as its other function of the education of the eye, however important that might be, of the individual workman or student. People talked of the British Museum as a mere collection. They did not realize it as a Body which extended its long tendrils all over the world, and which, through the medium of men like Smith or Rassam, laid bare the wonders of a long-buried civilization. It was not merely that the British Museum sat at the seat of custom buying articles tendered by dealers. To give one instance of its work, it quite recently secured an invaluable prize in the shape of 5,000 Assyrian tablets from Sipporah, or Sepharvaim, and it was assiduously exploring the secrets of that fateful city of Babylonia, which was so much older than the days of what used to be the limit of authentic history, and in which, according to the quaint legend of Berosus, the Chaldean Noah had deposited the antediluvian records. It might be said that this was a fantastic legend; but certainly in the Sipporah records which had been dug up they possessed memorials of the very greatest antiquity. In the diffusion of a knowledge of Art, as well as in the region of discovery, the British Museum, too, was doing a great and earnest work. If it did not do quite so much as the hon. Member for Ipswich might expect, it was not the Trustees, but the Treasury who were to blame; and, though he had no desire to see the expenditure of the British Museum equal that of the Army or Navy, he could assure hon. Members that it could very well do with a little more. If the hon. Member for Ipswich could descend from his high, exalted, and wide scheme, and squeeze a little more money from the Treasury, he (Mr. Beresford Hope) was sure the Trustees would be most thankful to get all they could, and would spend it in the best possible way. They were not to be blamed for selling their duplicates; but the Treasury was for making it necessary. The system of management of the British Museum had been criticized. What, it was said, did the First Lord of the Admiralty, or the Archbishop of Canterbury, or the Prime Minister, know about Art? Well, assuming, which it was surely fair to do, that no man could become First Lord of the Admiralty, or Archbishop of Canterbury, or Prime Minister, without having a greater share of brains than fell to the lot of most mortals, he should certainly prefer the opinion of those three personages on questions of Art to that of the first Brown, Jones, or Robinson one met in the street. But, as he should show, these high personages had not, in fact, much to do with the internal regulations of the Museum. Then, as to Family Trustees, it ought not to be forgotten that their position was not only an acknowledgment of great gifts made to the nation by the self-sacrifice of individuals, but possibly tended to encourage contributions of that kind. If so, it was a cheap price to pay for advantages so considerable. But, above all, it was well to have the general body of Trustees large and varied, seeing that out of them were elected the Standing Committee upon whose shoulders the practical work of administration fell. The extent of the powers of the Trustees who were not upon the Standing Committee was, besides the election of that Committee, pretty well limited to meeting four times a-year, and receiving a Report which, as a general thing, was accepted as it stood. If he were asked to state a practical advantage due to their having Family Trustees, he would mention the presence on the Standing Committee of that Family Trustee, Lord Derby, with whose great common sense and administrative capacity the country was familiar. They had also as Trustees such men as Lord Sherbrooke, the Duke of Somerset—although he must confess that most able administrator laboured under the disadvantage of having been a First Lord of the Admiralty—the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), Sir Henry Rawlinson, and the Presidents of the Royal Society, the Society of Antiquaries, and the Royal Academy, while their great network of officers included men of European reputation. Need he name Owen, Newton, Günther, Birch, Franks, and the Principal Librarian, Mr. Bond, all of whom met and discussed the common weal with their official Professors on a footing of manly independence, which might not be so easy with a Minister of Museums, holding Office on a tenure of from six months to five years. No doubt, there was a large and an intelligent body of workmen employed at Birmingham, Sheffield, and the other great centres of trade, in the development of which a knowledge of the Fine Arts was of the utmost importance; but still it would be impossible to cut up the National Collections piecemeal and send them in a fragmentary condition into the Provinces. They were told of the great number of "almost duplicates." Now, an "almost duplicate" was just the last thing which ought to be sent away, for the diagnosis of historical Art so much depended on the comparison of the differences, or the details of objects generally resembling each other. It was said that if the masterpieces of Art were retained in London, the manufacturers of Birmingham and Sheffield could not come to London to visit them. Well, that was true; but so was the proposition that if these specimens of the Fine Arts were sent down to Birmingham and Sheffield, much fewer of the Londoners would be induced to go down to visit them. From that it was apparent the Museums should be kept where they were most accessible, and where visitors from all parts of the

Kingdom might obtain as much enjoyment from them as did the Londoners themselves. When Birmingham became the capital of the Empire, by all means let them send the British Museum and the National Gallery there; but while London, with its millions of inhabitants against Birmingham's hundreds of thousands, continued to be the capital, on the principle of the greatest happiness of the greatest number their National Collection ought to remain there. They should be chary, indeed, in dispersing and breaking up those Collections. If there was zeal in Birmingham, in Manchester, in Liverpool, or in Sheffield, so much the better. He was a very warm friend to the system of reproduction, by which all the Art Schools throughout the country might be furnished with the most perfect copies of valuable originals, and be stimulated to the production of the elegant, elevated, and pure. That system had begun with spirit within the British Museum, and he trusted that it would go on with increasing liberality; and if the hon. Member for Ipswich would withdraw his somewhat crude and visionary idea of boiling up all these institutions in a cauldron, and would propose a practical method of securing the most complete system of reproduction, he would have the support of those who now felt themselves compelled to oppose his Resolution in its present shape.

Mr. SLAGG said, he felt bound to say a few words in support of the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Ipswich (Mr. Collings), because he thought there had been no reasonable or sufficient answer made to his request that larger support and greater facilities should be given in the way of encouraging the Arts throughout the country. He (Mr. Slagg) had the honour of seconding a similar Motion to that of his hon. Friend last Session; and also in the Session of 1880 he brought under the consideration of the House a scheme for the reproduction of National Art treasures. He was therefore encouraged still further to press on the Department the propriety of supporting this proposal. However much the Resolution might be deprecated as being unnecessary or impracticable, it was only by bringing such propositions before the House, and pressing them upon the attention of the Government, that any steps would be taken in a matter which was so essential to the welfare of the commerce of this country. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University (Mr. Beresford Hope) argued in favour of keeping the National Art treasures under the control of a cultivated group in London, with whose administration the right hon. Gentleman and his friends were very well satisfied, although, in its practical working, there was no result produced on the vast populations of the manufacturing towns, who were more in need of artistic influences than the cultivated people who lived in this Metropolis, and who had large means of gratifying their refined tastes. The Prime Minister also appeared to be satisfied with the present state of affairs, so well satisfied, indeed, that he deprecated every proposition of the hon. Member for Ipswich. He (Mr. Slagg) could, however, ask the House to compare the results with those achieved by foreign countries. For example, when they compared their position artistically with that of France, there was not only very much to wish for, but also very much to be ashamed of, in relation to their present position. It was said that vast and yearly increasing sums were now expended on education and artistic objects; but these sums would appear very paltry compared with the sums and efforts which were willingly made by their French neighbours in regard to all that related to artistic culture. It seemed to him that in that country no expenditure was too large, no legislative effort too great, no administrative power too perfect, in order to supply, not only Paris, not only the cultivated few, but to extend the influence of Art to every town and province, and every centre of industry, throughout the whole country. When satisfaction was expressed with England, he thought they could not have their attention sufficiently called to the state of things in France, where the Ministry of Fine Arts spent no less than £2,000,000 annually upon Art purposes alone, not only to supply the great museums of Paris, but to present treasures to all the museums in France, and to give grants directly subserving the Art industry of every district. The result was to place the Art products of France in a position of very great and deserved preeminence. Were they, however, on that account, to despair of the Art culture, industrially speaking, of this country? He claimed that, at the present time, they must bestir themselves in the matter. The foreigner was encroaching upon their industries in every direction, and though they could still claim a complete supremacy in the power of mechanical production, when they compared their artistic powers and measured their artistic manufactures with their Continental neighbours they were very much in arrear. He had recently had the opportunity of making inquiries on the Continent in connection with the French Treaty negotiations, and he had never been more convinced of the necessity of bestirring themselves in that matter than by seeing the assistance which was afforded in France to the great industrial classes in the culture of Art as applied to manufactures. When we looked at our large industrial towns we had certainly reason almost to despair; but still he thought the English nation should never entertain the idea that they were not capable of becoming equal to the French and the Continental nations in artistic manufactures, and if they only encouraged the development of the natural gifts of their people, they might still hold their own in competition and excel their rivals. But what encouragement was given? What assistance was afforded to their industrial classes in such a way that they could apply it to the improvement of their industry? They were depressed by the miserable surroundings of their dwellings and the complete absence of artistic objects that were worthy of being studied. No doubt, London was the place for principal and original objects of Art; but duplicates were unwisely sold, instead of being distributed, and the fragmentary and unsystematic reproductions that had been made hitherto were totally inadequate to meet the necessities of the Provinces, to supply the examples that were needed by the designer and the artist, and to enable the managers of Provincial Museums to make the best selections of illustrations that were locally required. Could they not do much more in reproducing existing Art treasures? He had never seen anything obtainable that the British Museum had reproduced. He understood that the reproduction of ancient coining had been abandoned by that institution. [Mr. Beresford Hope said, that was going on.] He was glad to hear it. They had, however, not seen much evidence of it. Collections ought to be copied on a business-like principle, and he desired that the managers of their Provincial museums should know where they might go with a certainty of success in completing their Collections. He was pleased that South Kensington had done so much. He might be told that the advance had not been very largely responded to by the public; but there were one or two reasons for that. One was that he thought where towns undertook the erection of museums, and provided proper places of deposit and exhibition, the Directors of those institutions should not be called upon to pay so much as half the cost, but should become entitled to them when they could show that they had done what was required. It had been suggested that the local rates should be called to bear the cost of filling the museums; but they were pretty well over-burdened already; and in regard to local subscribers they were really a very small body of persons, and naturally felt somewhat being called upon for so many purposes. The successive demands necessary, therefore, fell upon a limited few; and he claimed that the matter should be met by the Government. Only the nation possessed the supply—the local authorities could not find it if they wished. South Kensington Museum now swept the whole country; and he could only look to his right hon. Friend to do more to assist those industrial centres which had become to so great an extent the taxpaying power of the country.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, the Prime Minister having replied to the first part of his hon. Friend's Motion, all that he (Mr. Mundella) had simply to do now was to notice that portion of the Motion which proposed that a special grant should be made to the Science and Art Department, South Kensington, to enable them to supply Provincial Art Galleries and Museums with artistic examples and reproductions of industrial Art, adapted to their special local requirements. He had often told his friends that it was impossible that South Kensington or any other Department could undertake to supply original examples to the Provinces. But South Kensington could supply assistance and advice in the making of purchases, and a collection which had just been purchased for Birmingham had been very greatly admired. If it were possible for South Kensington to provide original examples for the Provinces, there would immediately arise contests as to which museum should have particular specimens. But his answer to this demand was that if they distributed their Collections in that way, they would disintegrate the whole National Collection. There must be in the great centre of this Empire the very best original examples that could be found in the world. There were not only 4,000,000 of people in London, but they had all the people of the Empire visiting the capital some time or other. When men came to London from the Provinces they expected to see there the very choicest objects of Art which the British nation could produce. Those original articles could not, therefore, be distributed from one side of the country to the other without the present great National Collections of Art objects being broken up. While he could not accede to his hon. Friend's demand for originals, he was quite ready to accord to the utmost of his ability anything in the shape of reproduction which was necessary to stimulate Art. What the Government had done in the past year in this respect had been a great advance on anything that had ever been done before. The Estimates showed the great advance which had been made. The Vote for Schools of Science and Art was this year £160,000, against £154,000 in the previous year. Then the sum spent in the purchase and circulation of works of Art was £28,954, against £24,561. The whole increase, then, was in order to increase the circulation of works of Art in the Provinces. The Vote for South Kensington had increased from £39,000 to £42,000; the total amount of the two Votes having increased from £63,000 to £73,000. He would tell hon. Members what had been done. A few years ago South Kensington commenced to make loans of objects for temporary exhibition at different towns in the Provinces. Those loans had gone on increasing from year to year until the mere cost of the carriage came to £4,000 a-year. Last year they circulated throughout the Provinces 15,047 objects —that was to say, paintings and other original objects, to something like 80 or 100 museums. They were continually sending fresh streams of objects from South Kensington to the different museums. One museum had a collection for six months, then it was exchanged with another, and so a circulation of objects was kept up through the different towns of the Kingdom, care being taken that those kinds of works of Art which were best calculated to stimulate the taste of any particular locality should be sent to it. No part of the work which he was engaged in was more interesting than to witness the active, useful work done in connection with the South Kensington Museum; and yet the hon. Gentleman came down to the House and reproached the Government for not having done sufficient. They could only say—

> "We give you all we can, no more,
> Though poor the offering be."

He could not honestly say that the Treasury had been illiberal in this matter, for he thought that an increase of £10,000 upon a Vote for one Department was a very substantial increase. The hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg) had said that they compared poorly with foreign nations; but he would probably find that more was done for Art by the State in England than in any other country. He was very doubtful whether France did as much for Provincial Art as England. France did a good deal, but it was for Paris alone, while Lyons and the other large centres had to pay for the Art they required from their local rates. They did it, and he could not believe that Manchester would be behind Lyons, or Birmingham behind any corresponding town on the Continent. Moreover, this country did a great deal in the way of reproductions. Already £3,000 worth of reproductions had been ordered for next year. When the State supplied Birmingham, Leeds, and the other large towns with casts and facsimile reproductions of all kinds of works of art at half the price they cost, he did not think there was any reason to complain. The hon. Member for Manchester thought they should be supplied gratis. He (Mr. Mundella) was not of that opinion. He thought it was only fair, when the State contributed 50 per cent of the cost, that an effort should be made by the locality to pay the remainder. Everything that could be done to stimulate Art throughout the country was done. Already industrial Art in many towns and places in the Kingdom had been greatly benefited by what South Kensington had effected. There were Schools of Art all over the country, which were doing a great work, assisted by the loan of an increased number of objects of Art, which were constantly in general circulation by means of an increased staff appointed for the purpose. The larger the increase in the Vote, the larger would be the number of objects of Art which he would be able to circulate throughout the country during the year. He thought that everything that could fairly be asked was now done by the Department to realize the aspirations of his hon. Friends, and that the localities might justly be required to have sufficient public spirit to pay their moiety. He trusted that, after the assurances the Prime Minister had given, and the explanations he had tendered to the House, the Motion would not be pressed.

Mr. GEORGE HOWARD said, that the Trustees of the National Gallery were fully alive to the desirability of circulating throughout the Provinces drawings and artistic works, and were doing the utmost in their power in that direction. Only recently they decided to transfer a Collection from Dublin, where it had been 10 years, to Liverpool. As a Trustee of the National Gallery, he denied that Turner's pictures were being kept in a cellar there or in the dark. As many of Turner's drawings as could be lent out were on loan. With respect to Mr. Ruskin's suggestion that the Trustees of the National Gallery should place the Turner Collections in some conveniently-built garret or upstair room, all he could say was that he wished the Treasury would enable them to extend the National Gallery. The Trustees found themselves very much cramped, not only with respect to the Turner drawings, but in other respects, and they were unable to act in the matter without the assistance of the Treasury. He fully agreed with the suggestion of the hon. Member for Manchester as to the great advantage which would result from co-operation between the National Museum and the Provincial Museums in the purchase of original works of Art. There were, no doubt, large numbers of original paintings, which, although they might not be suitable for the National Collection, might be well worthy of a place in a Provincial Museum. He was sure that anyone who had seen the objects of art which Birmingham had purchased for its Museum with its own money would feel a wish to assist the development of Provincial Museums.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, that there was a growing feeling of discontent at the practical monopoly enjoyed by the Metropolis in the Art treasures concentrated in London. It was high time that it should be understood that the Metropolis could not supply the demands of the whole Kingdom, for, after all, London had only one-tenth of the population of the country. It was practically impossible for the great bulk of those artizans who wished to improve themselves in every branch of industry to come to London to obtain a practical acquaintance with the Art treasures in it. It was absolutely necessary that these should be brought to their own doors, that they might study to improve the branches of industry for the purpose of meeting the competition of the Continent. He did not doubt that the right hon. Gentleman had done everything in his power; but this Vote was most insufficient and almost contemptible. A sum equal to this was spent in despatching Embassies to decorate Foreign Sovereigns with the Order of the Garter. He thought it was time for the public voice to be heard in that House, in order that the adjustment and distribution of the public money should be controlled. What in the past had been the condition of the people of this country? They lived in gloomy homes in narrow streets; their hours of labour were excessive, and the taxation was excessive. The House was reminded that in the last 50 years they had made a marvellous advance. He was thankful for that; but he hoped that the public would put an increasing pressure on the House in order that the public income might be expended in more useful directions than it had been in the past. A new wave of public opinion was arising in favour of State aid being given to the stimulation of Art in Provincial towns. A new demand would be made on the Education Department by the public, who would not be satisfied with the altogether inadequate proposal which the right hon. Gentleman had mentioned, and which appeared in the Estimates of this year.

Mr. H. DAVENPORT said, that the Vote, which had been slightly increased this year, was inadequate to the wants of the great manufacturing towns throughout the country. Connected as he was with North Staffordshire, he felt deeply interested in the question of bringing before the body of artizans in that district a large number of specimens of ornamental Art. He concurred in the observations of the hon. Member who had just spoken as to the necessity of bringing such specimens down to Provincial localities. He hoped that the discussion which had taken place would excite attention on the part of the Education Department to this question.

MR. O'DONNELL said, that the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Collings) very properly thought fit to make some reference to the interests of Ireland in his Motion; and although no other English Member manifested the least desire to grant any assistance whatever to that country, it raised a cry of "Divide!" when the first Irish Member rose to speak. He intended briefly to refer to one or two points which concerned the interests of Ireland. He found fault with the Parliamentary outlay sanctioned by the Government for the reproduction of specimens of Art, and, at the same time, must express his concurrence in the remarks of the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) that the assistance given to the important department hardly deserved to be designated by the name of grants. It was not until they should see £1,000,000 devoted to the culture of the brains and the training of the fingers of their workmen in the higher ideals of perfection in every department of Art and industry could they be justified in saying that a real attempt had been made by the Government to promote this all-important branch of education. However, he thought they might take the observations of the Vice President of the Council as clearly intimating that all his desires were with the increased encouragement of artistic and industrial education in this country. He wished to refer particularly to the suggestion of the Mover of the Resolution that aid of this description given by the Government should be regulated by the degree in which towns or cities were rated under the Towns Improvement Act. A condition of that kind might be very proper in England; but in Ireland, where British administration had made a *tabula rasa* of all industrial perfection, the policy of the Government should necessarily be one of gratuitous assistance for some time to come, so as to repair, in some degree, the vast injuries inflicted upon every department of industry in Ireland. In sending their artistic missionaries to Ireland they should proceed on the supposition that the past history of that country left very little artistic development existing at present, and that their first duty should be to produce that development before expecting any efforts at local and independent initiation. It was admitted in Papers and Reports presented to the House that there was no population more susceptible of industrial culture than the Irish people; and the policy of the Government should be to direct their missionaries to discover that susceptibility in different parts of Ireland, and, by giving it proper and liberal encouragement, to promote industrial prosperity in the country. It might seem rather strange that he should be pleading the assistance of the Government for the Irish people in what might be called the luxuries of refined civilization, while so many of those people were in want of the very necessaries of life; but he trusted there was a better outlook for Ireland than might be immediately visible from the standpoint of English legislation. He was sincerely desirous that some vigorous effort should be made for the development of artistic education in Ireland. There were a dozen places in Ireland where such assistance could be conveniently and profitably given at the present moment, and it was only by efforts such as those that they could expect to bring about the improvement of the present state of affairs of the country. He was aware that his suppositions were rather Utopian, and that to the minds of many hon. Members of that House it was like looking for the advent of the Millennium to expect the day when fair administrative ability would be conspicuous in Irish affairs, and when such institutions as the Board of No Works and the Local Misgovernment Board would be abolished.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—THE NEW CODE.—OBSERVATIONS.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK, in rising to call attention to the following Amendment of which he had given Notice, but which the Forms of the House prevented him from moving, namely—

> "That it is desirable to allow School Boards and Committees to present Children for Examination in any of the recognized Class subjects,"

said, he trusted he need hardly disclaim any intention of attacking the New Code as a whole. Far from it, he thanked the right hon. Gentleman for the great care and attention he had given to the subject. There were, however, some points in the Code which he feared would work injuriously. For instance, his right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council was taking a retrograde step in excluding children of the Fourth Standard from specific subjects. On some future occasion he should, perhaps, ask the House to allow him to call their attention to this part of the subject, unless, indeed, his right hon. Friend could be induced to reconsider the matter. He would only say now that the clause as it stood would cut off three-fifths of the science instruction at present given in Liverpool. For the present, however, he wished to ask the House to let him direct their attention for a few minutes to the regulations affecting what were called class subjects. The subjects taught in elementary schools were divided by the Code into three heads—obligatory subjects, class subjects, and specific subjects. The obligatory subjects were reading, writing, and arithmetic; the class subjects were English, geography, elementary science, and history, and for girls, sewing. Now, the points of which he complained were that two of these only could be taken, and that one must always be English. Most schools would, he believed, select geography or history for the second, and the consequence was that elementary science, though nominally included, would have but little chance. A good elementary education should surely include the rudiments of all four; and though he would not press schoolmasters to take them all up, at any rate at present, still he saw no reason why they should limit the number to two and exclude the others. Now, the "English" of the Code was mainly grammar. It included, no doubt, the learning by heart of a certain number of lines of poetry; still, the main portion of the time would be devoted to grammar. Of course, it sounded very plausible to say that everyone should learn his mother tongue; but the question was how? He believed the child would learn English better by reading Shakespeare and Milton and the Bible than if he knew all Lindley Murray by heart. How many gentlemen in that House ever learnt English grammar? Not even, he believed, a "bare" majority. Had our greatest orators done so? The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster had told them that he had never learned any English grammar, and he doubted whether the Prime Minister ever had. Still, he had no desire that grammar should be excluded. All he asked was that it should not be given an unfair advantage. Another reason against making grammar obligatory was that they must, to a certain extent, consult the idiosyncrasies of schoolmasters. He did not deny that some men could make grammar interesting; but he believed that they were few in number. To force men who could not make it interesting to teach it was not only to waste time, but worse, for anything that made children hate their lessons did them irreparable injury. Now, he hoped no hon. Members would be frightened by the term "science." Some even of Her Majesty's Inspectors seemed entirely to misunderstand what was desired. For instance, Mr. Holmes, in a Report published in the annual Blue Book, said—

> "With all due deference to Sir John Lubbock's opinion, I hope that the children in our elementary schools will long continue to learn about Liverpool and Glasgow, the Rhine and the Danube, the manufactures of England, and the commerce of Australia, rather than about cortical parenchymas and chlorophyll granules, the mesenteric lymphatics and the thoracic duct."

Mr. Ley, again, severely remarked on—

> "The notion of some 3,835,272 little Sandfords and Mertons walking about the highways and byways of Great Britain listening to sermons on stones and spiders, or discussing petals and sepals with duly qualified Mr. Barlows."

But he did not wish to introduce technical phraseology, though he might add that there were as long words in grammar as in any other subject. The elementary science of which he spoke was that defined in the 1st Schedule. Hon. Members would see that it meant a progressive course of simple lessons on common objects, such as familiar animals, plants, and substances in ordinary life. It might be said that "elementary science" was a very grand name for simple lessons in common and familiar objects. This he admitted; but he must, of course, use the language of the Code, and he thought critics would find it difficult to substitute any better name for "elementary science." Even Mr. Matthew Arnold was driven to fall back on German and call it *naturkunde*, which we might, perhaps, come to adopt as we had *clôture*. At any rate, he hoped it would be distinctly understood that he was not asking for anything difficult or advanced; but merely that teachers should not be precluded from giving children interesting and instructive lessons on familiar natural objects in order to torment them with abstruse grammatical technicalities. His right hon. Friend would admit that Mr. Fearon was a great authority on such questions. Now, how did Mr. Fearon say that grammar must be taught? He said—

> "The teacher should, immediately after imparting the first elementary notions and general definitions, proceed to the subject and predicate, beginning with the noun and pronoun as the subject, and with intransitive verbs as verbs of complete predication. He should then pass on to the direct objective relations of nouns and pronouns with verbs of incomplete predication."

This was surely as difficult as any branch of science. Few men ever understood children better than the late Dean Dawes, and he supposed his school at Sombourne was one of the very best England had ever seen. What was the secret of his success? The school was specially reported on for the Education Department by Mr. Moseley, who said—

> "That feature in the King's Sombourne School which constitutes probably its greatest excellence, and to which Mr. Dawes attributes chiefly its influence with the agricultural population around him, is the union of instruction in a few simple principles of natural science applicable to things familiar to the children's daily observation with everything else usually taught in a national school."

The Committee of that House, which sat in 1868, under the able presidency of his hon. Friend the Member for Banbury (Mr. B. Samuelson), recommended that the rudiments of natural science should be taught in all our national schools, and recorded their opinion that "Nothing less will suffice if we are to maintain our position in the van of industrial nations." Sir Francis Sandford, in giving evidence before the Scotch Commissioners on Endowed Institutions, spoke strongly in favour of the clause in the old Code on these subjects. He said—

> "It is a distinct encouragement for him to take up subjects for instruction of great and lively interest in the school itself, and of practical utility in after life to the great majority of the children when they leave school."

Dr. Percival, also, the late Head Master of Clifton College, speaking of our public schools, said—

> "I consider that the introduction of science has not in any way interfered with the successful pursuit of the old studies; while many of our boys who have gained distinction in classics or mathematics have thus acquired a sound elementary knowledge of two or three branches of science, and many others have had all their powers stimulated by thus finding out that slowness in learning languages does not necessarily mean general stupidity."

Remarking on this, Mr. Hance, the able Secretary of the Liverpool Board, truly said—

> "If, however, such are the results of the introduction of science instruction into schools whose curriculum already included not only the study of the masterpieces of Greece and Rome, as well as the varied attractions of mathematics, modern languages, English literature, &c., what must be its stimulating effect upon children whose mental food has hitherto been confined to the dull routine of reading, writing, and arithmetic, varied only by a modicum of grammar, history, or geography?"

In this he believed that Mr. Hance expressed the general opinion of elementary teachers. At the recent Conference of the National Union of Elementary Teachers it was resolved—

> "That this Conference is of opinion, with regard to Article 19 of the Code of 1876, that each subject taught to the satisfaction of the Inspector should be paid for at the rate of 2*s*. per subject up to a limit of three subjects."

The advantage of introducing geography and elementary science was strikingly shown by the experience of Liverpool. For several years the percentage of passes was 74·5 per cent, varying only between 74·3 and 74·7; but in 1877 special subjects were added, and in four years the percentage of passes rose to no less than 89 per cent. Again, the British Association, through its Special Committee, had carefully considered the subject. They represented the general feeling of men of science in the country; and they felt that under the proposed Code the teaching of elementary science, in which he knew the Vice President of the Council took much interest, would be placed at a great disadvantage. They therefore adopted, and a few days ago forwarded to him, the following Resolution:—

> "This Committee has heard with satisfaction that Sir John Lubbock has given Notice to bring the question of the teaching of natural knowledge again before Parliament, and offers him its support in asking that the three class subjects of Schedule II. of the New Code—namely, English, geography, and elementary science—should be placed on the same footing."

If he were not afraid of wearying the House it would be easy to quote many other authorities. They did not ask the House to make science obligatory, but only to give it a fair chance. The next ground on which he based his Amendment was on the undesirability of interfering more than was absolutely necessary with local self-government. His right hon. Friend the Prime Minister had often pointed out the advantages of local self-government with force and eloquence. He intended to propose a wide and comprehensive Bill for County Government, yet in this Code the Government actually dictated to School Boards exactly what subjects they should teach, and forced them to take up grammar instead of elementary science whether they wished it or not. The School Board of London, and, he believed, of Liverpool also, had passed resolutions condemning this provision of the Code. Surely it was a great anomaly that when they had a School Board representing 4,000,000 of people they could not trust them on such a point as that. There was one other body of persons in whose name he implored his right hon. Friend not to harden his heart against the appeal. He meant those mainly concerned —the school children themselves. On a previous occasion he mentioned to the House the result of votes he had taken in several schools between the different subjects, and that elementary science was by far the most popular. Of course, he had never used this as an argument for excluding other subjects; but it seemed to him a very strong one against excluding science. He should never forget a lesson he heard in one of the Liverpool schools. He wished his right hon. Friend could have heard that lesson, and seen the eager attention of the children, their vivid interest, and bright faces; it would have pleaded for his Amendment with irresistible eloquence. He would venture to give the House another of his own experiences. He persuaded the master of the school in his village to take up elementary astronomy. The schoolmaster was very reluctant to make the experiment. He had no taste for science, and knew little about it. Still, he consented. A year later came out the last Code, which made grammar and history practically obligatory. The schoolmaster then called on him in some distress, and asked if it was really necessary to give up the astronomy, as he was not prepared to take up three subjects. He explained to him that it was, but said he thought he would have been glad of the change, "Oh, Sir," he said, "you know I did not wish to take up astronomy; but as soon as I began I found the children were so much interested; it brightened them up so much that they learnt their other lessons all the better, and I should, therefore, be very sorry to give it up." That, he believed, was the general experience of those schools in which elementary science had been taught. His hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty, in his charming *Life of Macaulay*, said that that great man, who had everything which ability, wealth, and rank could give him, derived his greatest happiness from books. That source of enjoyment would be open to the poorest of those children if they taught them how to use it; but the Code forced on all schools one subject, and that the driest and most technical, the most distasteful of all to the minds of children. They were anxious, on the contrary, to make the schools as interesting to the children as possible. People often talked of teaching children to read as if it consisted in the mere mechanical act of deciphering the letters and transforming the written characters into audible sound and mental images. But teaching a child how to read and teaching it to read were two totally different things. They had not taught them to read if they have not taught them to love reading. In reading one of the last numbers of *The Journal of Education* he was much struck by an experience of a schoolmistress. She had some difficulty with her school, till one day she thought of giving a lesson on animals. The effect seemed to have been magical; the children were delighted. She had no longer any reason to complain of absence or inattention, and they strove to behave well at other lessons for fear of being excluded from this one. Thus this lesson actually became a reward. No doubt in education they must have much that was tedious, much that taxed the memory. That made it so much the more necessary to introduce some subject of a different character. They did not ask for the introduction of any subjects of a difficult or abstruse character. They did not ask that any subject should be made compulsory. All they begged for was that those elementary lessons on familiar objects should be placed on the same footing as grammar—that the book of Nature should not be shut out from the schools of England.

Mr. STORY-MASKELYNE said, that no reasonable person could doubt the advisability of taking some steps in the direction of the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for the University of London. He thought the managers ought to have the option of two or three different subjects. There would be difficulties raised, no doubt, to that course, and the same sort of answer would be given as had been given to the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Collings); and they would be told that the Code was elaborate, but could not, in present circumstances, be made much less elaborate. The question as between the subjects under discussion, as it appeared to him, resolved itself into a discussion as to the relatively educational character of those subjects. And here he would assert that none of the other subjects presented to his mind a better educational implement than did some of the simpler forms of natural science. It was true that there was some difficulty in teaching those branches of science well, and they might easily be taught in a dry and uninteresting manner, so as to have little value. He knew that in teaching them they were often not made educational; but, on the other hand, neither were the other subjects. The subject of history, for instance, was by no means, even in their aspect as subjects for examination at the Universities, of high educational value. For history, as taught ordinarily, was little more than an exercise for the memory. English and literature, he admitted, had a very high educational value, while geography, to be taught at all usefully, trenched on more than one branch of science. Natural science, on the other hand, dealt with what the child was in contact with on every side, exercising his observant faculties and awaking his interest, while forming his mind by the more or less exact study of what was above him and around him. English and literature were not likely to be neglected by managers or teachers who had the whole career of the child in which to teach them; while, of the remaining subjects, he maintained that there was no one which could be made so educational as that of natural science. But the discretion ought to lie with the managers, who would teach what the staff were best qualified to teach, and what was most suitable to the wants of the children and the requirements of the particular district. He therefore supported the proposal of his hon. Friend, and hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to make some concession. But, before sitting down, he desired to express a hope that as time went on and Codes got developed, the right hon. Gentleman or his successors might get a firmer hold, at least on the children in urban and densely peopled districts, up to and beyond their 13th year; so that their education might be of some real value in the class of subjects to which the attention of the House had been drawn in the Amendment of his hon. Friend. In this way primary education might become the stepping stone to, without superseding, that secondary education which it might be hoped the Department would take in hand at no remote future.

Viscount SANDON said, that the position of natural science had of late years materially changed in our elementary schools. Men were made shy of the subject by the grand terms applied in the New Code to its different branches. The question, in his view, was—What were really the subjects of instruction in elementary science to which children in the first four Standards were going to be subjected? After all, the first four Standards were the really important matter. Subjects 1, 2, and 3 were common objects, such as familiar animals; then came more advanced objects, such as animals and plants, with particular reference to agriculture, art, and manufacture, together with the thermometer. Now, those were very much, after all, what were considered formerly among the teaching of "common things." Those were subjects of teaching which gave very interesting views; and he thought, unless the Vice President of the Council suggested some very grave difficulties in this matter, that the time had come when it would be well to give a freedom to schools to allow the elementary science being taken up at the option of the manager. He thought the whole tendency of action in regard to schools of late years had been to feel their way towards giving the greater option to managers with regard to the subjects to be taught in the schools. It had been so when he was Vice President, and the same policy had been followed by his noble Friend the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton). As time went on, no doubt the tendency would be to give greater freedom in this respect; and he, for one, rejoiced in the prospect. The greater variety of choice the managers had, the better it would be for the children. His hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) had ably advocated, on that and other occasions, the claims of natural science. He quite agreed with the hon. Baronet that the great thing was to make children, as far as possible, observe and think. Reading, writing, and arithmetic were the three great primary objects. With reference to the Code generally, he would not like to go into details at that late hour; but he very much regretted that they apparently would have no opportunity of discussing this most important document. He did not know whether the Vice President could hold out to them any hopes of further discussing it; but he (Viscount Sandon), for one, must put in a distinct protest against that important Paper becoming the law of all schools without further sifting. It was probable it would be some months yet before those interested in it would have really understood or completely mastered it. He rejoiced at the prospect of simplification, for, from experience of four years in the Education Department, he was not quite so hopeful as the right hon. Gentleman of making it a simple Code. Though he recognized the earnest desire there was to make it simple, the more he saw the more he felt it was a duty to make it a simple document. However, it had his best wishes, as it had those of all who were interested in the schools. It seemed to him the whole action of the Code in the future turned very much on the conduct of the Inspectors in wielding the great powers which were about to be placed in their hands. It was to be regretted, however, that at the time when the Inspectors were made very important personages, they should be somewhat checked in the freedom of their criticisms on the action of the Department. He gathered from the Circular that in future they were not to criticize the Code which they administered. Whoever had been at the head of the Department had often received suggestions that the criticisms of the Inspectors, in their Annual Reports, should be checked; but he had always resisted any interference with the freedom of the Inspectors in this respect, because he thought it was of the greatest advantage to the country that there should be free discussion in the Blue Books as to our educational system. There was one important change made with respect to the grants for the three elementary subjects; of course, it was one of the cardinal changes of the Code. Just before coming to the House he received an important letter from the clerk of the school board at Liverpool, which had most admirably carried out the whole of the educational system for the last 10 years. With the permission of the House he would read from that letter a passage which raised a grave doubt as to one important matter in the Code. The writer said—

> "You will observe that by Article 109 (*e*) the amount of this grant per head on the average attendance is to be regulated by the percentage of passes obtained to those which might have been obtained at an examination in which all children whose names had been on the rolls of the school for the last 22 weeks of the school year, and are so still on the day of inspection, must be presented. This makes it to be the direct interest of managers and teachers that no child should fulfil these conditions who is not likely to be successful in the examination, and, therefore, inevitably tends to the exclusion of backward children. To illustrate the working of the proposed grants for elementary subjects, I am desired to take the cases of two schools each with an average attendance of 100, one of which (*a*) having been gradually purged of all backward scholars as the day of examination approached, presents and passes 90 children; while the other (*b*), which has taken no such

precautions, presents 100, of whom five fail. The grant to the two schools would be as follows—viz. (*a*) 100 times 8*s.* 4*d.*, or £41 13*s.* 4*d.*, and (*b*) 100 times 7*s.* 11*d.*, or £39 11*s.* 8*d.*—the difference between 7*s.* 11*d.* and 8*s.* 4*d.* arising from the fact that the first school has passed 100 per cent of the number presented, and the other only 95 per cent, although the latter has actually passed five children more than the former, in addition to having given conscientious instruction to the five children who failed, but whom the first school would have excluded."

This letter raised a very important point, which he felt sure would receive careful consideration from the right hon. Gentleman. There was another point of change in the Code that he personally regretted, although he believed his right hon. Friend was justified in making it—he meant the dropping of the honour certificates. It was a very great pity that the scheme was not re-modelled, instead of being dropped altogether. He might have been faulty in his provisions respecting it; but still he thought the principle itself was a sound one—namely, that when the children of the whole working class were being driven into the schools, certain exhibitions should be provided to act as an encouragement to them. Thus, they would not be merely driven to school, but encouraged to remain there. He believed the honour certificate might be rendered very valuable if it were worth something like a small scholarship; and he hoped that, as time went on, the subject might be re-handled. Another change which he regarded with some suspicion was that relating to the grants to small rural schools. In the Act of 1876 the late Government provided that grants should be made to such schools, and there was a proposal in the New Code to strike off these grants. He must strongly plead for these small schools in the interest of the rural population, as it was most important that the children should not be forced to go to larger schools at a distance, at a greater cost of strength and anxiety. He desired now to make a few remarks on one of the most important clauses of this New Code—namely, that relating to the merit grant. The right hon. Gentleman had omitted the definition of discipline that had been in the Code for seven or eight years. The following was the definition which he put into the Code seven or eight years ago:—

"To meet the requirements respecting discipline, the managers and teachers will be expected to satisfy the Inspector that all reasonable care is taken in the ordinary management of the school to bring up the children in habits of punctuality, of good manners and language, of cleanliness and neatness, and also to impress upon the children the importance of cheerful obedience to duty, of consideration and respect for others, and of honour and truthfulness in word and act."

He and his Colleagues thought that it was very important that the State should speak out boldly on this subject, after having determined to take no part in religious teaching. School boards and managers of schools—Church of England, Nonconformist, and Roman Catholic—had written letters thanking the then Government, and himself as representing it, for having thus strengthened the hands of managers and teachers in maintaining a high moral tone in the schools. The most valued Inspectors hailed with the greatest cordiality the step which was taken at that time. One of them, who represented the Department in Yorkshire for some time, said—

"It is quite certain that unless discipline is well maintained the best instruction is worthless. I am very glad, therefore, that under the New Code a grant is to be made to schools where the discipline is satisfactory, and that certain requirements must be fulfilled for the grant to be earned. Unless I am much mistaken, this explicit statement of the teachers' duties will mark an important epoch in our educational history. Definite rules are now for the first time given, and the objects to be aimed at are distinctly prescribed. A wider and higher meaning is now attached to the word 'discipline,' which signifies not merely the maintenance of order, but moral training. The best opportunity of testing discipline is afforded by visits paid without notice, when the school is seen in its ordinary working dress."

Another Inspector, in the Sheffield district, observed—

"The special grant for discipline is evidently tending to make teachers more attentive to the bearing and conduct of their scholars. It is, I find, a matter of general satisfaction that the importance of moral discipline, as well as mere outward order, is now recognized by the Department. This declaration on your Lordship's part that the above are essential elements in the education which the nation desires to secure for its citizens is, I feel convinced, having a good effect; it is, as I have found by personal experience, not only a means of strengthening the hands of your Inspectors when they feel obliged to call attention to defects in the moral discipline of any school, but it is also an encouragement to those who cling to the belief that the true ideal of national education includes the training of the mind and heart, and the formation of the moral character."

Again, an Inspector from Wales wrote—

> "But, after all, to give true education, hand-in-hand with this mere instruction must go the discipline of mind and body; and with hearty goodwill did I greet those words on discipline first introduced some two years ago into the Code."

It might interest the House to know how they came to insert this definition of discipline. What first brought it to his mind personally was the reading of a most remarkable definition laid down by the Queen as to the highest qualities of a British sailor on the occasion of Her Majesty giving a gold medal to a sailor on board one of the training ships. In much the same way their object was to lay down in the Code the model of the character which the teachers should attempt to encourage. The right hon. Gentleman opposite was, he knew, as eager as possible to promote the moral character of the schools; and, that being so, there could be no reason for taking away the standard that they wished the scholars to copy. The present time afforded a most admirable opportunity for efforts in this direction, as there would soon be 5,000,000 of children in the schools and an army of 50,000 trained teachers. There were many other matters connected with the Code to which he would not now call attention; but he wished, before he sat down, to make an appeal to his right hon. Friend. The prosperity of schools hereafter, from a monetary point of view, would depend on the attendance of children. For the sake of the thousands of children who attended no school, and for the sake of the hundreds who only attended irregularly, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would lose no opportunity of impressing on the School Attendance Committees of school boards the absolute necessity of enforcing the regular attendance of children. He (Viscount Sandon) put a strong clause into the Act enabling the Vice President of the Council of Education to supersede School Attendance Committees for neglect, and appoint two or three gentlemen at a suitable remuneration for a period of two years to fulfil their duties. If the right hon. Gentleman would only appoint one or two of these Committees, there would be a general alertness aroused on the part of School Attendance Committees throughout the country. The country was greatly indebted to the right hon. Gentleman for his labours in reference to the children under his charge; and, having done so much, he trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would not forget that their moral welfare was quite as much cherished by the people of England and the parents of England as their intellectual qualities.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY, who had the following Amendment on the Paper:—

> "That the existing system of training colleges being mainly under denominational management, and the admission of students being entirely in the hands of the college authorities, is unsatisfactory and inadequate at the present day as affording no protection to the rights of conscience of the students, and as tending to exclude those students who come from Board Schools who are desirous and well qualified to pursue the career of elementary teachers; and that the School Boards of this country, which now educate a continually increasing proportion of all the children attending public elementary schools in England and Wales, are entitled for their teachers to an unsectarian system of training, with the protection of a conscience clause,"

said, he agreed with the noble Lord opposite as to the importance of regular school attendance; but thought that this was a matter upon which his speech should have been addressed to the Home Secretary rather than to the Vice President of the Council. The experience of the London School Board was that the magistrates formed the most serious obstruction in the way of carrying out the work of elementary education; and, moreover, after parents had been brought before the magistrates, and after the magistrates had imposed a fine upon them, the Summary Jurisdiction Act, by substituting distress for imprisonment, had imposed an almost insuperable obstacle to the work of school boards. The London School Board had been obliged to leave the coercive bye-laws almost in suspense, because they shrank from applying so cruel a remedy against the poor. The imposition of a term of imprisonment in 99 cases out of 100 produced the payment of the fine; whereas, to enforce distress, might cost from £1 10*s.* to £2, and often caused great misery to innocent wives and children. In listening to the remarks of both the hon. Baronet and the noble Lord, he felt the difficulty of discussing the details of the Code in the House of Commons. Many of them were for the consideration of experts, and the question raised by the hon. Baronet was pre-eminently one of that category. The House was fitted well enough to deal with great principles, but not to settle minute details, and the Privy Council ought to have a wide discretion allowed to it with regard to minor matters. As to the subject of his Resolution, the Vice President of the Council stated in the debate last year that he was strongly of opinion that no student ought to be excluded from College on account of his religious opinions, and that he would look into it and take steps to remedy any grievance. Since that time the matter had been taken up by a great many school boards, including those of London, Bradford, and Ipswich; and the Department, in reply to the representations from Bradford, had stated that it was contemplated shortly to establish three new Training Colleges, two of which would be undenominational. But any such remedy as that would be quite inadequate to the grievance complained of. The grievance was that the entrance to the profession of teachers was almost entirely in the hands of Colleges which were irresponsible in their management, and mainly sectarian in their teaching. If the Training Colleges were strictly voluntary institutions, Parliament would have nothing to say to their management; but they were not in any respect voluntary or private. It was true that a great part of their original cost was defrayed by private subscriptions; but about three-tenths of it was supplied by the State. The question, however, was not the original cost, but the annual maintenance; and of the whole yearly expenditure of those Colleges only 15 per cent was defrayed by private subscriptions, while 85 per cent was defrayed by the State and by the fees of the students. If the Training Colleges defrayed their own expenses without coming to Parliament for a Vote, they might conduct their business on the narrowest basis they pleased. But when the managers came to Parliament for an annual grant to subsidize their labours, the House of Commons was morally as well as legally justified in looking into the system of management, and, if it thought fit, in imposing new conditions upon which the annual grant should be obtained. He did not think that he would have any difficulty in persuading hon. Members on that side of the House that the undenominational system of Training Colleges was the best. In 1839, when Lord Melbourne first constituted the Educational Committee of Privy Council, the first proposition was that the State should establish undenominational Training Colleges; but the proposal was defeated by the obstinate resistance of the Bishops and the Tory Party. He hoped the Liberals of the House of Commons in 1882 were not less in favour of undenominational and unsectarian teaching than their Predecessors more than 40 years ago. When the opposition succeeded, the State deliberately handed over to the various sects the task of doing the work of the nation. But all knew that when they undertook to encourage the sects, all the money and the patronage fell, in point of fact, into the hands of the most powerful sect which enjoyed the privilege of establishment. When there was a concordat between the Government and the Bishops, when the Government Inspectors were bound to be clergymen, when their nomination was to be approved by the two Archbishops, who could also, by withdrawing their approval, procure their dismissal, it was no wonder that from 1840 to 1870 they should have side by side a system of denominationalism in the day schools and in the Training Colleges. But in 1870 was passed an Act which, in spite of its shortcomings, was one of the most progressive this country had ever seen, and which first recognized the duty of providing national education. A truly national system was then established, which had increased with such rapid strides that nearly 30 per cent of all the children in this country were now educated in Board schools; and yet the Church Training Colleges had 580 more places than were necessary for supplying the Church schools; the Wesleyan and Roman Catholic Colleges had more than their share; while the Board schools and British schools, forming the undenominational part of our national system, which provided for more than 38 per cent of the children, had only 15 per cent of the Training College accommodation of the country. If undenominational school children had an adequate proportion of Training College accommodation supplied to them, there would be 780 more institutions for that purpose than there were now. He thought that great injustice was done by compelling undenominational students to enter the Training Colleges, because they were called upon to violate their consciences by taking part in the religious instruction of the College. It was most undesirable that students should be placed in such a position as to be tempted to barter away their consciences for the material advantages which those Training Colleges offered. He wished to ask hon. Members who were connected with Yorkshire if they had ever considered the wretched state of things existing with regard to Training Colleges there? That county, with all its activity, and what some hon. Members opposite might perhaps call its aggressive Nonconformity, had only two small Church of England Training Colleges—one for masters at York, and one for mistresses at Ripon. There was no choice there whatever. At Ripon the candidates for admission were asked if they had been baptized and confirmed, and the Communion was practically re-imposed as a test, although he should have thought Churchmen would have considered that a desecration of the Sacrament. There was also an entrance examination in the Prayer Book. Now, if the educational results had been good, some might make light of the religious difficulty; but, as the Reports showed, the results were deplorably bad, for at the 1880 Examination York College came out at the bottom of the list. Whereas, in the average of Training Colleges in England, 40 per cent of males passed in the 1st division, at York only 3 per cent passed; and instead of the average of 12 per cent in the 3rd division, it was there the very excessive number of 36 per cent in the lowest rank. Yet, young Baptists from Bradford and Halifax must get baptized in dozens, like the conquered Saxons, and get up a Catechism they did not believe in in order, if they went to a Church College, to have their intellectual ability spoiled and come out in the 3rd division. Turning to another important centre of the country's activity and industry—Lancashire and Cheshire—and omitting reference to the Catholic College at Liverpool, he found that there were only two Church of England Colleges available — one at Chester for males, and another at Warrington for females. At the latter there were the same conditions of admission as at Ripon; but neither Warrington nor Chester was as bad as Ripon or York, although both fell below the average. Surely much injustice was done to the activity of this great district; and no one could doubt that the energy which had there done so much for other purposes would produce satisfactory results if applied to the establishment of Training Colleges. Insufficiency of means caused this inefficiency; but he refused to recognize any vested interest in the ignorance of the people of this country. He thought the school boards ought to establish Colleges of their own. The interests of the country ought not to be sacrificed to the requirements of denominations. But he should be met with the usual charge of reckless expenditure. Let him take London as an example. The London School Board educated 270,000 children. There were 3,700 teachers, and would soon be 4,000. More than 300 fresh teachers were required every year. Therefore, they ought to have Colleges accommodating 600 pupils, as the course lasted two years; so that they might be enabled to supply annually 100 fresh masters and 200 fresh mistresses. In the existing Colleges the cost to the subscribers was £17 a-year for each male pupil and £12 for each female. He thought those sums were too small, and would allow £30 for the males and £20 for the females. The total annual cost would even then only be £7,000; and, allowing £3,000 as a sinking fund for the re-payment of capital, £10,000, or a sum less than a rate of one-tenth of 1*d.* in the pound. The Denominational Colleges should no longer be allowed to enjoy the monopoly they had hitherto enjoyed. If something was not done very shortly in that matter, he believed the claim would be raised that they should put an end altogether to that system of utterly irresponsible and private management which neither satisfied the rights of conscience nor gave security for efficient instruction.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, he wished, before coming to the terms of the Motion to which he desired to call the attention of the House, to refer briefly to some of the speeches which had been made that night. And, first, as to the proposal of the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), he confessed that he cordially sympathized with it. When he was himself Vice President of the Council, the hon. Baronet brought forward the proposal that natural science should be one of the class subjects in elementary schools; and, although objections were then urged against it by more experienced authorities on education, he had thought the balance of argument was in favour of the proposal. Since then the Vice President of the Council had made alterations in regard to those class subjects, and imposed some limitations to which the hon. Baronet objected; but unless there were very strong administrative reasons to the contrary, he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would give a favourable consideration to the suggestion of the hon. Baronet, and allow teachers and managers fuller option as to the subjects they might teach as class subjects. He had listened to the vehement denunciations of the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley) against the system of Denominational Colleges. That hon. Member had evidently a strong dislike of anything like denominationalism in connection either with schools or Colleges except in the case of the Roman Catholics. He was curious to know why the hon. Member made that exception, and he supposed it was because a great number of Roman Catholics who took an interest in the Training Colleges resided in Oldham. But, be that as it might, those Colleges had long been established, and they were recognized upon a certain understanding. If it could be shown that they had led to the violation of conscience, or to the imposition of unfair conditions upon candidates for admission, then it would be the duty of the Vice President of the Council to interfere. But he believed that, as a rule, the complaints in that matter came from candidates who had failed in the examinations, and who were, perhaps, naturally inclined to attribute their want of success to some unfairness. If it were true that the present Colleges were not sufficient to meet the growing demand for teachers, the remedy was clear; let them add to the number of Training Colleges. He certainly did not think the country would be of opinion that the Government ought to accede to the proposal of the hon. Member for Oldham, which practically meant the destruction of Colleges which had unquestionably done much to promote elementary education in this country. Adverting to the important Minute of Council, known as the New Education Code, he agreed with the hon. Member for Oldham that all those Codes must necessarily be very technical, and that it was almost impossible to discuss their detail with advantage in that House. There were, however, one or two points among the minuter details of the Code to which he wished to ask the attention of the Vice President of the Council. One of the alterations made in it was, that the number of hours during which pupil teachers might give instruction in the schools was reduced from 30 to 25. No doubt the motive of that change was a humane one—namely, to prevent pupil teachers from being overworked; but it must be remembered that they formed part of the teaching staff in every school, and especially in the rural schools, and that, if that abridgement of the hours was insisted upon, it would disorganize the whole arrangements of the school. He hoped, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman would not be unwilling to reconsider that point. The Resolution which he had purposed putting on the Notice Paper last Friday night if the House had not been counted out was to the effect that the House, while approving of many of the changes made in the Code, was of opinion that the introduction of the new Standard VII., under which children of the middle classes could, up to any age, obtain secondary education in primary schools receiving public money, was contrary to the understanding sanctioned in the Acts relating to elementary education. He had taken substantially the same position in a speech he had made two years ago which had been misunderstood. He admitted it was essential that if we were to maintain our commercial supremacy every facility should be afforded for certain of the children of the artizan class getting education in excess of that described as primary; but we were now going further than that. Of course, all children must start from the same point, and receive primary instruction; but the difference between primary and secondary instruction was considered to be determined by the age at which instruction was expected to cease. Elementary education was supposed to end at 14, and secondary education was supposed to be continued up to 16 or later; and there had been a good deal of legislation on the basis of the difference thus defined. Hitherto the Elementary Code had prescribed six Standards; but now a seventh was added, and whereas hitherto a scholar must be presented in a Standard higher than that in which he had already passed, he might pass more than once in the Seventh Standard. That would give masters and mistresses great inducements to keep children at school as long as possible. He would not in the least object to that if they were *bonâ fide* the children of the working classes; but it was clear that this would be the setting up of a system of secondary education, and that middle-class children would chiefly benefit by it. When he was Vice President of the Council he received communications on the subject from Bradford, Sheffield, and Barrow-in-Furness. They expressed a demand for higher elementary education, which he thought might be safely acceded to on certain conditions, and he sanctioned the establishment of a certain number of higher-grade schools at a fee of 9*d.* on certain conditions, which were embodied in the Code of 1880. The two safeguards were that the instruction was not to be continued above the age of 15, and that not more than 10 per cent of the scholars were to pay 9*d.* One school board had proposed to charge 1*s.* or more, and in order to bring the school within the statutory limits of 9*d.* per head to associate with the higher-grade school an infant school with a fee of 1*d.* In the New Code there was no definition of elementary education, so that any subject could be taught; there was no limitation as to the amount of money which might be spent; and there was no definition of the classes who might send their children to the schools. Even a Member of Parliament might send his children to them. He did not object to that so long as it was elementary and not secondary instruction that was given. With payments by results, the system encouraged teachers to prefer intelligent children who could do their home lessons well, pass examinations, and increase the grant earned by the school. One of the difficulties of everyone who had had any personal experience of the administration of the Education Votes was, that if they sanctioned a first-rate school with a low fee in a poor district, because the district was poor, there was the greatest possible inducement on the part of the teachers to try and draw into it children of a higher class than was intended for it. Taking all these things into consideration, it was quite clear that if they were going to set up a system of secondary education along with the primary schools, undoubtedly more and more of the middle class would go there, because they would attain, not primary, but secondary education. He believed that various school boards were setting up these schools. The Endowed Schools' Commission were re-organizing, on certain principles, the various endowments in England, and they were establishing secondary schools; but there was nothing to support such schools except the endowments, and, consequently, it was found necessary to insist on the payment of a fee enormously in advance of the fee paid for elementary education. He had hitherto stated only his own opinions. He frankly admitted that but very little weight might be attached to his opinions, because he had had very little experience in connection with the subject; but the Report on which he based his opinions was a Report made some years ago upon Education in England, which formed the basis of the action of the Endowed Schools and Charity Commissioners, and which furnished Mr. W. E. Forster, the then Vice President of the Council, with many of the arguments he brought forward in support of his Elementary Education Act of 1870. The Noblemen and Gentlemen who sat upon the Commission were Lord Taunton, Dr. Hook, Lord Derby, the Bishop of Exeter, Mr. W. E. Forster, Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir Edward Baines, and Sir Thomas Acland. The Commissioners, in their Report, summed up the whole matter in a few sentences, and placed in an intelligible form the precise difference between secondary and primary education. They said—

> "It is found that, viewed in this way, education, as distinct from direct preparation for employment, can at present be classified as that which is to stop at about 14, that which is to stop at about 16, and that which is to continue till 18 or 19; and for convenience we shall call these the 3rd, the 2nd, and the 1st grade of education respectively. The difference in the time assigned makes some difference in the very nature of the education itself. If a boy cannot remain at school beyond the age of 14, it is useless to begin teaching him such subjects as re-

quire a longer time for their proper study; if he can continue till 18 or 19, it may be expedient to postpone some studies that would otherwise be commenced early. Both the substance and the arrangement of the instruction will thus greatly depend on the length of time that can be devoted to it."

And this was the conclusion to which the Commissioners arrived—

> "It is obvious that these distinctions correspond roughly, but by no means exactly, to the gradations of society. Those who can afford to pay more for their children's education will also, as a general rule, continue that education for a longer time."

If that were so, what followed? Why, that the richer a man was the longer he kept his son at school, and the poorer he was the sooner he had to take him away. The children of the richer classes stopped at school longer than the children of the poorer classes, and if the Government grant was to go to these schools, then it followed that the longer a child was at school the more he got of the public money. Consequently, as the child of the rich man remained longest he received the largest sum, and that was exactly the reverse of the principle on which the grant was given, because the purposes and object for which the grant was originally given were to promote the education of the children who belonged to the humblest classes. [Mr. MUNDELLA: That is not the Act.] He (Lord George Hamilton) admitted that that was not the Act. There was nothing in the Act which made such a declaration; but he maintained that that was the object of the grant. And what must be the inevitable result? He contended that this spurious system of secondary education was detrimental to the elementary or primary education of the mass of the scholars who went to the elementary schools. He was aware that he spoke a little feelingly upon the matter; but he believed it to be one which afforded considerable ground for complaint. Every boy who went into a great public school was put through exactly the same course of classical instruction as if he were going to College, and were to aspire for honours; whereas, as a matter of fact, 19 boys out of 20 did not go to College, but left early, at the age of 17 or 18, in order to seek employment, and seldom obtained a thorough knowledge of Latin and Greek. In other words, their education was sacrificed in order that a few other boys might obtain the classical knowledge necessary to enable them to proceed to the Universities. He thought care ought to be taken that the children of the poorer classes, to whom a general knowledge was absolutely necessary, did not suffer from the efforts that were made to provide secondary instruction, and that all of them were thoroughly grounded in all elementary and more necessary subjects. He had now stated very briefly what were his reasons for calling attention to this important matter, in reference to the present Code. The Vice President, or rather the Lord President, was now raising the limitation in regard to age, and a boy could remain at school up to the age of 21. Certainly that was not the education of the children of the working classes. He did not believe that 100 children, above the age of 15, who were *bonâ fide* sons of working men, were in the schools of the Kingdom at the present moment; and if this system of education were suffered to continue, the children who received it would be the children of the middle classes. Who would obtain the prizes and exhibitions? The children of the middle classes, of course. He quite admitted the difficulties in the way of the Vice President in dealing with these graded schools; but if they were sanctioned it would be absolutely necessary to put a limitation of some kind upon them. Could they limit the expenditure? He admitted that it would be unwise to define the character of the children who were to be admitted; but they could lay down a limit in regard to age—that was to say, that no child after a certain age should attend the elementary schools, and if there were exceptionally able children belonging to the working classes, he would be quite ready to consent to a liberal system of exhibitions, or scholarships, by which such children would go on to the second grade or into the purely secondary schools. He could not consider that if the Code passed in its entirety, and there was no such limitation as he had mentioned imposed on the elementary schools or the scholars in England, it would be soon found necessary to legislate in one direction or the other. In Scotland, although the children of all classes attended the parochial schools, yet the practice was for the children to pay a higher fee in proportion to the Standard they attained, and the parents did not object to that. In Ireland there had been an endeavour in the last few years to improve the elementary education by an intermediate system of examination. What he felt was, that if anything was done in order to give facilities for the children in the elementary schools to obtain an education in excess of that which it was anticipated at the time the Education Acts were passed they would demand, he thought they ought to seek to bring forward some scheme that would be a little more uniform, and would not have the disadvantage of allowing one Department to compete with another. At the present moment they had the Charity Commissioners on one side of Whitehall, and the Education Department on the other, with schemes of education absolutely incompatible with one another. There could be very little doubt that if the Education Department were to succeed, and this Code were to become law, it would altogether kill the secondary schools established by the Endowed Schools Commissioners. He said, then, that whatever they did, let them do it openly; and he wished to warn the House against giving its assent to the passing of this Code without a protest, because, if it did so, it would be sanctioning, by a side-wind, a spurious system of secondary education. The proposed system, certainly, did seem to abolish all distinction which previously existed between primary and secondary education, by increasing the age and altering the bye-laws on which the schools now rested. He contended that the children who would suffer most from this spurious system of secondary education were the children of the working classes, for whom the existing system of education was mainly intended. He therefore said to the Government—Do one of two things. If you change the Code so much, bring in a Bill to put under Parliamentary control, not only the higher grade of elementary schools, but all the secondary schools now promoted by the Endowed Schools Commissioners. On the other hand, if they did not propose to go that length, and did not think that the time had arrived when secondary education should be promoted by money from the State, they would have no alternative but to come to the conclusion at which he had arrived, and accept this spurious system of education imposing some limit on the money grant, the subjects taught, or on the age of the children who attended the schools.

Mr. MUNDELLA: If I do not answer all the speeches which have been made at the length I should if I had had the opportunity of answering them earlier, I hope, looking at the hour of the night (12.15), I shall not be thought disrespectful to any Member of the House. My hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) complains that we have not given sufficient freedom for science, and he is anxious for several things in reference thereto. His Resolution says—

> "That it is desirable to allow School Boards and Committees to present children for examination in any of the recognized class subjects."

Now, Sir, the whole of the evidence and the whole of the experience of the Education Department is that that is really impossible, considering the short school-life of the great majority of English children, to encourage children who leave the schools when they pass the Fourth Standard that they are not only to be acquainted with reading, writing, and arithmetic, but that they must also read history, and must attain English elementary science and geography as class subjects. That is more than can possibly be put on children who leave school when they have passed the Fourth Standard. A great number of our children having passed the Fourth Standard go out to labour at as early as 10 years of age, especially in the agricultural districts. Out of 14,000 there are 9,000 who go out after having passed the Fourth Standard, and I would ask anyone who has examined the question, whether it is possible, within the short school-life of those who have reached the Fourth Standard, to crowd all these subjects upon a child, and have them all equally well taught? The whole object of our Code is thoroughness. We want to secure that what is done is done well, that the children who only have reading, writing, and arithmetic shall attain—the girls needlework, and the boys English, with a knowledge of geography; and that they shall have a good acquaintance with them all. The experience of all of our best Inspectors is that any attempt to force more upon them is to dissipate their energies, confuse their minds, and leave them in the end ill-educated. If the House will only give to us what

Germany does, and what France has this morning given—namely, the power to keep the children at school up to a definite age, and not to allow a child to leave until he has reached 13 or 14 years of age, then we say—"You may teach such children the whole of these subjects; but, as long as they can in any way pass from the school, and, under bye-laws, go out to work at 10 years of age, it is impossible to exact from them all that you are attempting to obtain." Under pressure from my hon. Friend, I placed certain specific subjects in the Fourth Standard, and I pledged myself to the House that I would thoroughly investigate the question of science-teaching in the case of children who reached that Standard, and satisfy myself whether it would be possible to teach specific subjects properly in the Fourth Standard. And I said if I found I could not do so I would advance a Standard, and put those subjects in the Fifth. But I am bound to say that the result of our observations is, that to attempt to make children physiologists and political economists before they are 10 years of age is attempting too much. A system that aims at that results in mere cram, and under such a system the whole Standard-work is neglected, while the child's mind, so far from its being enlarged, is deteriorated. My hon. Friend refers to the case of Liverpool, and he says that the effect of the Code, as it stands, will be to cut off something like one-half or three-fifths of the science-teaching in that town, that is to say, with regard to children who have not passed the Fourth Standard. But, Sir, we have allowed what is, in fact, a large measure of science-teaching in addition to the Standard-work, and that is a point which my hon. Friend has apparently overlooked. We have made geography one of the class subjects, two of which can be taken up; and my hon. Friend complains that only two of the subjects named—English geography, and elementary science and history—can be taken up. Let us suppose that English, and one other class subject—say, geography—are taken up. Although we have simplified the subject of geography, we have included in that branch physical and political geography; and it no longer means something to be learned by rote, such as a number of names on the map—it is something to be done by means of reading books and oral lessons, illustrated, so far as possible, by maps, diagrams, specimens, and simple experiments; and the result is that a large amount of science-teaching is associated with physical and political geography, which are included in the 2nd and 3rd classes. The plan of instruction may, therefore, be so varied and worked as to include a large amount of what is really good and suitable in elementary science. I am well aware that science has been most successfully taught in the Liverpool schools. Liverpool has had rare advantages in this respect. It possesses one of the best and most public-spirited School Boards in England. In its schools, however, science is not taught by the ordinary teachers—it is specially taught, and a special Science Demonstrator is employed by the Liverpool School Board, with the successful result which I have alluded to. But if you were to engage the ordinary teacher to take this subject, he would most probably fail in all his work. Therefore, I think it is better to limit the teacher to two of the class subjects named in the Schedule, and that one of these should be English. I believe that a knowledge of our language imparted by the reading of standard English poetry and prose is of more value to the child than any other teaching which can be given to him. In this branch the main portion of the child's time would not, as my hon. Friend supposes, be devoted to grammar. English, in the sense used in the Code, does not mean the teachings of Lindley Murray, of which, I have no doubt, many hon. Gentlemen have a horror. It is a different thing altogether, and our arrangement is one that cannot fail to be most instructive to the child. Then, again, what can be better than to cultivate the imagination of children by imparting a knowledge of good poetry at the time of life when their memory is most capable of retaining imaginative impressions? On the whole, we considered that we could not do better than insist upon English in the First Standard. My own predilections are favourable to freedom, and I have endeavoured to carry out that principle in the Code. I shall give this subject further consideration, and will submit the question to the Council of Her Majesty's Inspectors and the able men who have assisted in framing this Code; and, if it be possible, I shall be only too happy to yield to what seems to be a general wish. The noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Viscount Sandon) has asked me whether there would be further opportunities for discussion? Sir, I regret that this opportunity has been spent in almost anything but discussion of the Code. That, however, has not been my fault, or the fault of the Government. This is not a time for requests and supplications to hon. Members to set aside their Motions in order to meet the wishes of other hon. Members, and I can only again express my regret that there has not been a better opportunity for discussion on the present occasion. But the noble Lords opposite, who have had so much experience in this matter, and who know all the bearings of the question, and who have faced all the difficulties which I myself have encountered, have, I think, expressed everything which, to their minds, appears in the nature of a shortcoming in the Code. Now, I believe that whatever may be the other merits of the Code, it has at least the merit of simplicity. For the first time we have a Code without cross-references, without foot-notes, and which anybody can understand. The credit of this is not due to me, but to the permanent officials in the Department, who deserve all the credit the House can give them. The next point which the noble Lord called attention to was that the Code gave enormous powers to the Inspectors. This is quite true; but in this respect the present Code is the same as its predecessors. Every School Board Code that has been issued gives enormous powers to the Inspectors; and I do not think, on the whole, that, except with regard to the merit grant, the Code gives larger powers than any which has preceded it. We were bound to secure fairness, and some approximation to uniformity of tests applied by Inspectors—a thing which at the establishment of our educational system was much easier than it is now, because formerly there were only some 20 Inspectors, whereas at the present time there are between 110 and 120. The noble Lord must be aware that there has been a great deal of heart-burning at the different tests applied by Inspectors; but we believe we shall be able to get rid of these difficulties by the system we have organized, which places the whole supervision in the hands of a small number of Inspectors. The noble Lord has expressed some regret at the issue of the Circular, which places some restrictions on the criticisms of Inspectors with regard to the Code which they have to administer. But the Circular in question is not a new one, and I find it was in use when the noble Lord himself was in Office. It is, I believe, simply a reprint of a form which has been in use for many years. The noble Lord has given us the opinion of Mr. Hart, the clerk to the Liverpool School Board, who has expressed his fear that the effect of the regulation of the grant by the percentage of passes would be, in the case of some schools, that the masters would purge them of the backward scholars at examination time, in order to obtain a higher percentage of passes. No doubt, all schools are exposed to some acts of this kind; but it would be the duty of the Inspectors to see that the registers had not been cleared of the backward scholars, and if, on examination, it was found that children were absent without sufficient reason—in other words, if we discovered that any schoolmaster had turned out the dunces for the purpose of obtaining a higher percentage, I think it would be right to treat the act as a fraud, and to deprive that schoolmaster of his certificate. I do not think it very likely that such a practice will be resorted to; nevertheless, it is a matter we have not overlooked, and measures will be provided to deal with it. The noble Lord has also expressed regret that a change has been made in the matter of honour certificates. But, as a matter of fact, it has been found that the system of honour certificates, as given by the Department, did not always produce the best results, and we think that better results may be looked for from a system of honour certificates administered by the local authorities. We think that more encouragement to diligence is afforded to a child by the possession of a parchment testimonial, which can be taken away, framed, and hung up at home, than by any intangible proof of merit. With regard to the objection by the noble Lord to the omission of a definition of discipline from the Code, I must remind him that this is hardly a subject which can be dealt with in the Code. It is a matter for the Inspector, and the principles referred to in the definition read by the noble Lord are, of course, expected to be enforced in every school. With regard to the apprehension expressed by him, that the extra grants to rural schools would be diminished, I can assure him that there is not the smallest intention of any such reduction. The object of the change in relation to these grants is to prevent large schools in small districts which are fed by neighbouring parishes, from getting extra grants. The noble Lord has referred to the need of impressing upon School Boards and Attendance Committees their duties with respect to the regular attendance of the children, and has also recommended the disestablishment of two or three Committees in case of their failure to enforce regular attendance. Perhaps the noble Lord will be surprised to hear that I have already done this, in some instances with very excellent results. In one district. where the attendance was very bad, we found that the chairman of the Attendance Committee was a large employer of children, who were kept at work contrary to the Act. In this case—the action of the chairman being supported by his brother committeemen—we simply dissolved the Committee and insisted upon the appointment of a new one, with the result that the school attendance nearly doubled. The whole success of this Code turns upon the School Attendance Officers doing their duty; and I can assure hon. Members that the statement of the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley) is not at all exaggerated when he says that some of the magistrates in the country believe that they are doing parents a kindness in not enforcing the attendance of children at school. We have many appeals from poor men to allow their children to escape from what they believe to be the hardship of the Act; but it must be borne in mind that the hardship is not in compelling the attendance of the children at school, but in the fact that unless they pass the requisite Standards they cannot obtain certificates. Magistrates, therefore, do a most cruel thing in not enforcing the attendance of children at school during their early years. I will do my best to insist on local Attendance Committees doing their duty; and I wish I could do something with regard to the Summary Jurisdiction Act, which is a matter of much greater difficulty. Now I come to the very important point raised in the able speech of the hon. Member for Oldham. Nobody could have presented the case to the House with greater force, and yet I cannot agree with the proposition the hon. Member has made. I say at once that we should never have succeeded as well as we have done in enforcing compulsion in England if we had not enlisted all the forces at our command—religious and other bodies. We have 2,000,000 children in the Church schools. Why are they in the Church schools? Because the Church is willing to pay £500,000 or £600,000 a-year to give those children definite religious instruction in the principles of the Church. But how can she do this if the teachers are not trained in these principles? I cannot see how we can insist on sending teachers to Training Colleges which are founded on distinct conditions — which are the subject of special trusts, and have received money for special trusts. We cannot ask them to admit persons of all faiths and creeds, or of no faith or creed, into the family life of those Colleges—and it must be remembered that, after all, it is a family life. I have visited several of these Colleges, and what do I find? In Liverpool there is a Catholic Training College for women, excellently conducted, but practically of conventual life? How can you insist on persons of all creeds being admitted there? I want to know how we can carry out compulsion in England if the Catholics are not to be allowed to teach religious principles in their own schools? In towns like Liverpool, where you have 200,000 or 250,000 Roman Catholics, and like Manchester, Sheffield, and other great towns, it would be impossible to force children into the schools unless you had all the assistance which the religious denominations can give you for that purpose. My hon. Friend says we can trust to the day schools, and why not to the Training Colleges? But day schools and Training Colleges are not on all fours. In regard to the day schools, parents give religious instruction to the children, and can take them to their own church or chapel on Sundays; but what can be done in Training Colleges? There you may have 100 or 200 young women living a life in common, and joining in prayers in common; and how can you possibly separate the various religious faiths of those people? I must say I cannot see my way out of this difficulty, except by one method—and there I meet my hon. Friend. Any person who is a fit subject to enter an undenominational College, and desires to enter it, ought to have the right to receive that training. To that extent I am entirely with my hon. Friend, and I will endeavour to secure it; but if my hon. Friend says that will not meet his case, and what he insists on is that we shall break down the denominational principle in these Colleges, then I say you must first change your Act of Parliament, and break down the denominational principle in your schools. The Training Colleges are a necessary corollary of your denominational schools. Let us take the case as it stands. There are about 2,000,000 children taught in denominational schools, to educate whom the various Denominations spend about £750,000 a-year. Why do they do this? In order to give them religious instruction. Then we have the Training Colleges, on which the Church of England has spent £271,000; the Roman Catholics, £66,000; the Wesleyans, £68,000; the British and Foreign Society, £80,000; and the Congregationalists, £30,000; making altogether nearly £520,000, in addition to the Government grant of £114,000. Then let us take the annual income. The total cost of maintenance is about £149,000 a-year. Of this, £109,000 is the Government grant, and the remaining £40,000 is made up of £23,000 in voluntary subscriptions, and £16,000 or £17,000 in rates. The Board schools have 30 per cent of the children on the register; 30·4 per cent of the certificated teachers; 31 per cent of the pupil teachers; 24 per cent of the pupil teachers were admitted into the Training Colleges as students in 1881 from Board schools. In the Church of England Colleges alone about 19 per cent were from Board schools, and 17 per cent of the females and 20 per cent of the males in the Wesleyan Colleges were also from Board schools. It cannot, then, be denied that the teachers employed in the Board schools are of all religious denominations. Many of them—probably as large a proportion of them as of the people generally—are members of the Church of England, many are Wesleyans, many Congregationalists, and many of other denominations. Why, then, is the case so unfair as my hon. Friend seems to suppose? All I can say is, that men whom I believe to be thoroughly impartial, and who have investigated the matter with the greatest thoroughness, assure me that there is no practical injustice. However, there are two or three undenominational Colleges under the consideration of the Education Department. Further, I should be glad if I could see my way to establishing day Training Colleges in London. That, I think, would meet the whole case. I think the Church Colleges, and all the other denominational Colleges do very wisely to provide a conscience clause for day students. But my hon. Friend is not content with that, and says it must be outside the existing Colleges. I think that is pushing the matter to an extreme; for if there is room inside, I do not see any necessity for going outside. I stand up as strongly as my hon. Friend for the rights of conscience, and I should resent as strongly as he would the violation of the conscience of any pupil teacher. I will do my best to secure that every pupil teacher who desires undenominational training shall have it; but, at the same time, I cannot say that I would be a party to any attempt to destroy the religious teaching in these Training Colleges. I was sorry to hear what my hon. Friend said about the rudeness, coarseness, and absence of refinement in these Training Colleges. The last Report I have on the Colleges says the Inspector cannot speak too highly of the *morale* and general tone of the whole body of students. He says the arrangements are excellent, and that efforts are made in every direction to refine and cultivate the taste, and enlarge the ideas of the teachers; and I am sure, when that Report reaches the hands of my hon. Friend, he will find it in striking contrast with his remarks. Just one word more. I have two letters—one from the Principal of one of the British and Foreign Society's Schools, the other from the Principal of the College at Bangor—saying they hardly know how to place the teachers; that there are too many in the market; and that there is no necessity for any more Training Colleges for the middle students. Now I approach the remarks of the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton), my Predecessor in the Office I now hold. The noble Lord first raised the question of the hours of work for pupil teachers; and I will tell him what decided me in reducing these hours. Since I have been in the Education Department, I have received frequent representations from the pupil teachers, especially the females, as to their breaking down through extreme stress of work; and I have proof positive from clergymen and medical men of the pupil teachers being shamefully overworked. I have a Memorial from the Liverpool Council of Education praying me to take some steps to reduce the hours. In January, I had an opportunity of going to Liverpool, and I visited the whole of the Training Centres there. There are three or more of them, assisted by the Lady Superintendents. I examined the female pupil teachers as to their hours of work, and I found numbers of those young women working from 7 or 8 in the morning till 10 and 11 at night—week in, week out. The representations made to me were that it was most distressing to see how they lost their health and tone, and became nervous and dyspeptic, through the overwork. I laid the matter before the Council and the whole of the senior Inspectors, every one of whom agreed that a change was desirable; and everyone since appealed to said the same thing —that, if the senior teachers will so arrange their time-tables that at certain hours these pupil teachers may get relief, the necessary relaxation can be provided. However, I am as anxious as the noble Lord that we should not derange the organization of the schools, and the matter shall have my most serious consideration, and no mischief shall result. No mischief can result, because the arrangement does not affect the existing contracts. By the existing contracts the teachers are bound to work 30 hours a-week, so that at present no harm can arise, and it will only be the future teachers who will be affected. The final point raised by the noble Lord, and the most important one probably to the House, is that we are trenching on the domain of middle-class instruction. I assure the noble Lord that he has been fighting a shadow, a ghost, or a monster of his own creation. What are the facts? The noble Lord said that we allowed children when they had passed the Sixth Standard to be considered as "ex-6," and to go on year after year taking three specific subjects, and, as the result, taking up what an Inspector to-day called "fads," and not solid instruction—this and that of the specific subjects requiring the concentrated attention of the master to manage these few advanced and, probably, clever boys. But the Code of the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Viscount Sandon) and the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) allowed these "ex-6" boys to be presented again and again till they were 18 years of age, if they chose to be presented. [Lord George Hamilton: I put the limit at 15.] The noble Lord put a limit on the 15th year; but let us settle one thing at once. First, as to the curriculum. Is it better that boys who have passed the Sixth Standard in reading, writing, and arithmetic, should get no more instruction, no continuous and regular instruction in plain, good work, which could go on year after year—taking, say, a language and two science subjects, and two class subjects—and draw the full grant; or that, having passed the Sixth Standard, they should do something better in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and so raise the whole tone of the ordinary work of the school? That is all round education; the other is incomplete education; and that was the sole reason for introducing the Seventh Standard. I have the authority of all the best Inspectors for this. I have received hundreds of Memorials in its favour; and the first protest I have heard against it is that by the noble Lord, who thinks he sees an attempt to bring in middle-class education by a sidewind. I assure the noble Lord that that was the very last thing intended. What we want is that the clever boys shall not be driven out of the schools. Every year children are passing at an earlier age. Last year the noble Lord will find, by the Returns, that 150 children passed the Fifth Standard before they were 10 years of age; and some of them also passed the Sixth Standard. What are we going to do with them? They will be "ex-6" at 10 years of age. Can you turn them out of school? Are they to go on to 14, and have no continuous instruction? Are they not improving the whole tone of the reading, writing, and arithmetic, for the benefit of the whole of the children? That is the sole object of the Seventh Standard, and I am satisfied that the noble Lord will, on inquiry, find that I am right. But I will grant him one point—namely, that the limitation of age is well worthy of consideration. We simply adopt 18, because there are no children who stop till 18, except poor cripples or children who have been injured in early life, or have suffered long illness. We thought it unnecessary to continue that age any longer, and that misled the ordinary reader of the Code. But as for this year, children can only be paid on passing the Seventh Standard, and, as all the children who are now "ex-6" must pass the Seventh Standard, no harm can happen this year; and I will take care, before the Code is laid on the Table again, that there shall be a limitation of ages to prevent such a possibility as the noble Lord points out. The noble Lord himself created the very schools in which the clever boys are found; I have not had to certify for one; and it is rather hard that he should reproach me for giving this higher education of which he is himself, practically, the author. There are the Bradford School and the Sheffield School; they are the creation of the noble Lord, and they are doing excellent work; and in many instances the children are maintained from 12 to 16 years of age. How? The noble Lord visited the school at Sheffield, and he put forward a particular child, and then said—"This will not do." What was the case? The child had won a scholarship of £10 a-year given by the manufacturers in the town. The child was the son of a poor woman who earned a living by mangling. She was paid £10 a-year to allow the child to continue at the school, and he is the most promising scholar in the school. I hope I have now said enough to satisfy the noble Lord, and to allay the fears of hon. Members who think that we are going to establish, under the pretext of secondary education, a system of middle-class education. That is the last thing we desire. I am afraid I have wasted my own time and the time of the House; but it was necessary to say this much to satisfy the House. I hope I have met, as far as I can, the wishes of the hon. Members who have addressed the House; and that, even late as it is, the House will allow me to make my Statement and to take my Vote.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT said, he thought this was one of the most inconvenient debates that the House had ever been called upon to take part in. Having had a desultory discussion for some hours on a subject brought forward by the Government—the Army Bill—and after a long and desultory discussion, the right hon. Gentleman now asked the House to allow the Speaker to leave the Chair at 1 o'clock in the morning, in order that he might make his Statement on the Education Estimates. He never had been an Obstructionist, and did not wish to be; but he thought, if ever there was a case for insisting upon delay, it was this. Of course, he might have to give way; but he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would himself give way, and allow hon. Gentlemen an opportunity of considering the Statement, and would promise that, on the Report of the Education Vote, there should be an opportunity for the discussion which could not be taken tonight——

Mr. MUNDELLA: I have no command of the time of the House.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT said, the points he wished chiefly to impress upon the right hon. Gentleman were—first, the conditions under which the Inspectors were to act under the New Code. He thought that the right hon. Gentleman had sought to minimize the effect of the new alterations, and that his statements were unintentionally misleading, and would lead the House and the country to imagine that Inspectors would have no more influence on the ultimate grant in aid of education than they had previously had. But upon this he wished to point out that, with regard to the merit grants, the schools were to be considered excellent, good, or fair. If they were excellent, they received 3*s.*; if good, 2*s.*; if fair, 1*s.*—all on the average attendance. The case was stronger as to infant schools, which received 6*s.* for excellent, 4*s.* for good, and 2*s.* for fair. All that was to depend entirely upon the individual judgment of the Inspector. A few days ago he had put a question to the right hon. Gentleman, whose answer was, to some extent, satisfactory—namely, that he hoped to organize some system of appeal to the head Inspectors, in order to mitigate, in some degree, the extreme discretion given to the Inspectors. It was, however, a question of extreme importance whether, unless instructions to Inspectors were most specific, the schools which did the hard work of teaching the poor children in large towns and in the remote rural districts would not be injured by this extreme discretion. This license to Inspectors was given now for the first time. The right hon. Gentleman, in his natural anxiety to commend his work to the House, had rather misled the House by pressing upon them the necessity for this discretion being given to Inspectors. Then the right hon. Gentleman had gone out of his way, in kindness of heart, to make alterations in regard to pupil teachers. But kindness to one person might be cruelty to another; and there was such a thing as apparent kindness to pupil teachers which would inflict hardship upon the other teachers. Upon the question of reducing the hours of work, a body of school managers and teachers, meeting in Oxford, and having, unfortunately, no Member of their own for that City, had adopted the following resolution:—

> "That serious inconvenience and embarrassment would be caused to managers and teachers by the proposed rule to restrict the employment of pupil teachers to 25, instead of 30, hours a-week, as at present. In support of this resolution it is submitted:—I. That the proposed change would be injurious to the order and discipline in the school. II. That in some schools, particularly in rural districts, it would be all but impossible for the head teacher to carry on the work of the school during the occasional absence of a pupil teacher, who may happen to be his sole assistant. III. That it would tend to the withdrawal of pupil teachers from the hour of religious instruction, as a convenient plan of reducing the time of their service to the 25 hours. IV. That there is great danger that the inconvenience resulting from the change would lead to a serious diminution in the number of the pupil teachers employed. V. That the reduction of the hours of employment in school is not the most desirable way of giving relief to pupil teachers, even supposing it to be a fact that they are in any cases suffering from an excessive strain."

Some weight ought to be given to the representations of these school managers, and the House should be very careful lest, in attempting to do an act of kindness to the pupil teachers, they were injuring the other teachers. The right hon. Gentleman had rightly remarked upon the strain put upon the pupil teachers; and if he (Mr. J. G. Talbot) had his way, he would agree with the hon. Baronet (Sir John Lubbock) as to preferring specific subjects, and in the case of almost all the pupil teachers, except the most advanced, he would not require them to be instructed in out-of-the-way subjects, and so diminish the strain put upon them by cramming into their minds all kinds of subjects, which were neither profitable to them nor necessary for them to teach.

SIR HENRY FLETCHER said, the Vice President of the Council (Mr. Mundella) alluded to many subjects connected with the Code; but they had been mostly subjects relating to schools in large towns. He, being connected with rural populations and immediately connected with rural schools, wished to point out one or two facts which he thought ought to be brought before the attention of the House. The people in rural districts were most anxious that education should be promoted in every possible way; but, having himself been for many years a trustee of a national school and chairman of a Board of Guardians under whose superintendence the school education had been placed, he wished to express his hope that over-education would not be produced among the rural classes. He maintained that for the rural classes the rudiments of education were quite sufficient, and it was a great mistake to over-educate them. Let them have instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic; but do not let their minds be crammed with other matters, which would not be of any use to them in their future walk of life. With regard to the question of the magistrates, who, the right hon. Gentleman had said, did not support the Committees in enforcing attendance, he wished to remind the right hon. Gentleman that the magistrates were placed in a very difficult position. The Attendance Officers were supposed to bring cases before the magistrates, and to require the attendance of the children's parents; but there was a certain laxity in the law at present, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would do his best to alter the law in such a way as to provide better punishment for persons who did not send their children to school. At the present time, if a parent was brought before a magistrate for the non-attendance of his child, a fine of 5*s*. could be enforced; but if that 5*s*. was not paid at the time, the law provided a very roundabout way of enforcing that payment—namely, by a distress warrant, which increased the cost to the parent. He would urge on the Vice President of the Council that he should devise some means of imposing on a parent who did not pay the fines a certain term of imprisonment, say, seven or ten days. He urged this, because it was known amongst the people generally that there was this laxity in the law, and the magistrates were, in consequence, placed in a very unfortunate and very unpleasant position. If this alteration could be made, those who were members of school boards, and trustees of schools and Chairmen of Guardians, would use their best efforts to carry out the Code which was now proposed.

Sir MASSEY LOPES said, he thought the managers in small rural districts and poor suburban districts would feel great anxiety under the new proposal. He had had some experience of these small schools, and he thought the effect of this Code would be to increase the ordinary expenditure, decrease the Government grant, and throw a great many of the voluntary schools into the hands of the school boards. There were at least 30 per cent of these small schools in the country, with an aggregate attendance of 60 children. What would be the effect of this Code upon them? The Code changed the whole system. The basis of the grant was to be the average attendance of the whole year, instead of 250 attendances as before; and that, he thought, would be very detrimental to the small schools, because, though in towns there was no difficulty in the way of children attending schools, in the country, where distances were long and roads often bad, it was frequently impossible for the small children to attend. He had seen some of them coming two miles in the wet, and had known them remain four and five hours in their damp clothes, and without any refreshment. Under such circumstances as these, it was cruel for parents to send their children. Well, as to the other point—namely, the maximum they were going to give for the "three R's," they had reduced it from 9*s.* to 8*s.* 4*d.*, whilst for class subjects they were giving the opportunity of obtaining 12*s.*; but small rural schools would not earn a farthing for these special subjects.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, that, as against that, there was the 4*s.* 6*d.*

Sir MASSEY LOPES said, he was aware of that; but he was going to point out that, in increasing the amount from 4*s.* to 4*s.* 6*d.*, the right hon. Gentleman had imposed new conditions which would render it impossible for small schools to avail themselves of the increased grant. There was one other grant—that in regard to music—which had not been touched on. They were giving 1*s.* per child for music; but that was to be curtailed by 6*d.*, unless the children were taught by note or by some regular system. He maintained that it was impossible for children in rural districts to learn by note, for the reason that they would never be able to secure the necessary instruction. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that there was also a merit grant; but that grant was entirely at the discretion of the Inspectors. He wished to point out to the right hon. Gentleman that, in his opinion, the key to this Code was in his (Mr. Mundella's) pocket at the present moment, because he had not given them the instructions he was going to issue to the Inspectors. The right hon. Gentleman had promised that these instructions should be placed upon the Table; but they were not yet completed. Until, however, they were presented to the House, hon. Members would not know what the effect of the Code was to be. He would like the right hon. Gentleman to tell them whether the same standard of intelligence and attainments was to be applied to the small rural schools as was applied to the large schools in towns? In forming an opinion as to whether these schools were good or bad, were the same rules to be applied to one class as to the other? If so, a considerable grievance would be created. What he (Sir Massey Lopes) urged was this—that the whole of the Code depended upon the instructions they were going to give to the Inspectors. There was another complaint he had to make—and the subject of it had been already alluded to. It was, that they were really by this Code going to give what he called "secondary education," instead of that education which it was the sole object and intention of the Education Act to impart. They were not only undertaking to give primary education to the lower classes, but they were undertaking to give an advanced education to the middle classes. That was a grievance which many conceived to be a great one. They did not object to paying their rates for elementary education; but they said the Government were now not only imposing burdens on ratepayers for purposes which were never contemplated when the Act was passed, but they were also taking a Parliamentary grant, and using it for purposes for which it was never intended. He would not, at that hour of the night, any longer detain the House; but what he wanted to impress upon hon. Members was, that to small schools in rural places this Code would be a very serious thing, and would affect them very disadvantageously. It would be found for good schools a very good Code; but for indifferent—or what an hon. Gentleman had called "less satisfactory," schools, it would take from them the very means they required for improvement. In the Code the Government were making no allowance for special circumstances and difficulties, and for what he would call the inequality of conditions in the different examinations.

GIBRALTAR (RELIGIOUS DISSENSIONS) —DR. CANILLA—THE PAPERS.

OBSERVATIONS.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he wished to call the attention of the House to what appeared to him to be a breach of good faith on the part of the Government. He was obliged to bring the subject on at that late hour (1.30 A.M.) and he was sorry to be obliged to do so in the absence of the Prime Minister, of whom he had asked a Question earlier in the Sitting. They had Ministers of consequence in the House early in the day; but late at night only Ministers of less consequence remained, and it was sometimes a misfortune to hon. Members that they could not address themselves to all the Ministers. He was about to mention a breach of faith on the part of the Colonial Office; and if he did not obtain an answer he should renew it to-morrow, and whenever it might be open to him to do so. Before the 9th March he had brought before the House a question concerning Gibraltar. He had asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether there would be any objection, on the 9th of March, to lay Papers on the Table relating to the appointment of the Vicar Apostolic of Gibraltar, and the hon. Gentleman had informed him that there would be no objection. The next day, after the hon. Gentleman had arranged with him that he should put down a Motion for an unopposed Return of these Papers, the hon. Gentleman came to him and asked him to withdraw his Motion on the understanding that the Papers would be presented to both Houses of Parliament. He waited until the 17th of March, when he again asked the hon. Gentleman a Question on the subject, and the answer he received from him was that the Papers were already on the Table of the House. He (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) was certain the hon. Gentleman would not, knowingly, have made a mis-statement; but what had taken place showed an enormous administrative carelessness on the part of the hon. Member, inasmuch as he was the Minister who ought to have placed the Papers on the Table, and they had not been handed in up to the present moment. On the 24th March the hon. Member for Hertford, on his behalf, asked the Under Secretary for the Colonies when the Papers, which he had been told were laid on the Table on the 17th, would be presented; and the hon. Gentleman replied that he had been promised proofs on the following day—the 25th—and would then present them to the House, if no unforeseen circumstances occurred to prevent him. Another week passed, and on Friday last a noble Lord asked a Question of the Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Earl of Kimberley) in the other House, the reply being that these Papers would not be laid on the Table until after Easter. There were particular reasons why these Papers should be presented; but he would not detain the House by explaining them. He would merely say that he believed acts of great illegality had occurred at Gibraltar. At the present moment British subjects were imprisoned on accusations brought against them before a military magistrate. They had been condemned, and were not allowed to appeal; and it was for this reason, he believed, the Government dared not produce these Papers. But there was something more. It was perfectly well known that the action of the Government at Gibraltar had been taken at the dictation of the Vatican, and that this subject had an intimate connection with the negotiations between Mr. Errington and the Pope. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen might laugh, but it was, nevertheless, the fact. If he was to be interrupted in this way he should move the adjournment of the debate, and bring the subject on again to-morrow. What had been done was part of the arrangement with the Vatican for the appointment of Archbishop M'Cabe to the rank of Cardinal. That, he believed, was beyond a doubt. The Under Secretary for the Colonies (Mr. Courtney) chose to laugh at what he (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) said; but before he did that he ought to learn to keep his word.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. To say that an hon. Member has not kept his word is an expression hardly befitting an hon. Member.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, that if he had used an improper expression he would withdraw it, and express regret for having used it. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Courtney) chose to treat with contempt statements made on the Opposition side of the House, and considered himself entitled to make allegations which were not borne out by facts. He wished to ask the hon. Gentleman whether it was the intention of the Government to lay these Papers for which he asked on the Table? If it was not, he should have to bring the matter forward again to-morrow.

Mr. COURTNEY said, he quite allowed that the hon. Member, at 5 o'clock that afternoon, had considerable ground for complaint; but at 1 o'clock in the morning he could not be said to have the same ground for complaint, because a letter explaining the delay which had occurred in the publication of the Papers, which letter was in the House at 5 o'clock, but, unfortunately, had not been delivered, had since been received by the hon. Member. For his own part, he was as much annoyed as the hon. Member could be at the delay which had occurred in the printing of the Papers in question, and he still hoped that they would be on the Table on Tuesday. With regard to the suggestion that the matter to which the hon. Member referred was connected with Archbishop M'Cabe's Cardinal hat and Mr. Errington's visit to Rome, it might just as reasonably have been connected with the transit of Venus.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he really did not know whether the hon. Member had any ground for his opinion that there was some connection between Mr. Errington's visit to Rome and the proceedings at Gibraltar. But, whether he had or not, it was quite time that some official information of what had occurred should be furnished to the House. He understood the hon. Member to say that before the 9th of March the Under Secretary for the Colonies had promised him these Papers as an unopposed Return, and that on the 17th he had told the hon. Member that they were already on the Table of the House. He (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) certainly thought it did not speak well for the arrangements in the Colonial Office that, in spite of those statements, the Papers should not have been laid on the Table by this time, and that it should be impossible to say that they would be delivered on Tuesday. The hon. Member had a Notice of Motion down for an early day after the Recess, and it was obviously essential that he should be in possession of these Papers before he brought on the discussion. He trusted, whether or not the Papers were presented to the other House, that there would be no delay in presenting them to this House.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, it appeared that the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies had not carried out a promise he had given. He had first promised to lay certain Papers on the Table, had afterwards declared that they had been laid on the Table, and it now turned out that they had not been presented at all, and were not likely to be until after Easter. The Under Secretary had just stated that he had written a letter to the hon. Member which ought to have appeased his indignation at the non-laying of the Papers on the Table. Well, the hon. Member had shown him (Mr. A. J. Balfour) the letter, and he was bound to say there was no more explanation in it than there was in the speech they had just listened to from the Under Secretary. The letter, written by the Private Secretary to the Under Secretary, merely said that the hon. Gentleman "was sorry he could give no other answer than that which was given on Friday by the Earl of Kimberley"—that was to say, that the Papers would not be laid on the Table until after

Easter. If the indignation of the hon. Member was justified at 5 o'clock, his indignation was not likely to be allayed by the receipt of that letter.

GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT OF ROADS (SOUTH WALES).

OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT EMLYN wished to ask the indulgence of the House whilst he called attention to a matter arising out of a Question put to the President of the Local Government Board to-day. He did not wish to allude to the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman which was down on the Paper; but he desired to draw attention to the action of the Government at the present time apart from that measure. Under an Act of Parliament —the 7 & 8 *Vict.* — the Government had power — or were, he thought, obliged—to appoint a General Superintendent for turnpike roads in South Wales; and his contention was that under the provisions of that Act the Government were compelled to make such an appointment, and that until the Act, or a section of it, was repealed, they could not remove a General Superintendent from his office unless they appointed someone else to act in his place. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had informed him to-day — though rather vaguely—in reply to a Question, that the General Superintendent's Office had ceased to exist, that the gentleman was no longer continued in his office. He (Viscount Emlyn) would read the section of the Act of Parliament upon which he founded his Question; and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman to take the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown upon it, and see whether his contention was correct, and, if it was, to appoint someone to carry out the duties which now no one could properly carry out, the Government not having given the county power to appoint anyone in the place of the Superintendent. The section to which he referred of the 7 & 8 *Vict.*, c. 91, said—

> "It shall be lawful for one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, in any writing under his hand, to appoint a fit and proper person, or two fit and proper persons if required, to superintend the management, maintenance, and repairs of all the turnpike roads within the said counties; and from time to time the discretion of the said Principal Secretary of State shall move such person from such office, and appoint another in his stead."

He contended that unless the Government appointed "someone else in his stead," they were not justified in removing the officer who alone could perform the duties. He would not argue the point, which was a legal one, but would merely submit to the right hon. Gentleman, who could refer the matter to the Law Officers of the Crown, that he was bound to continue the Superintendent in his office, or appoint someone in his place, at any rate until he had passed an Act to enable him to follow a different course.

MR. DODSON said, he did not concur in the interpretation which the noble Lord had placed on the clause he had cited from the Act of Parliament—namely, that—

> "It shall be lawful for one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State to appoint a fit and proper person," &c.

The words, "It shall be lawful," were sometimes obligatory and sometimes permissive, according to the nature of the Act in which they were found; and if the noble Lord would give a little further consideration to this Act, he believed he would perceive that in the present instance they were not intended to be obligatory upon the Secretary of State. The Government having advanced money in the Welsh counties, a Superintendent was appointed for the double purpose of superintending the efficiency of the roads and their expenditure, in order to maintain the productiveness of the tolls and provide the Government with security for the debt. He was also to guard against any further debt being incurred calculated to impair that security. The debt having been paid off, the reason for the appointment ceased both with regard to the finance and the superintendence of the roads. The noble Lord said that the Act made no provision for the discharge of the duties of Superintendent. Although he agreed with him that the present was not the time for entering into a discussion of the Bill which had been introduced, he would point out that the County Boards had power, by the 74th section of the Act, to appoint clerks, treasurers, and any officers they might require, and power, under the 95th section, to pay them out of the tolls. But there appeared to be no power for the Boards to appoint a General Superintendent, or Superintendents, and obtain payment out of the county rates to make good a deficiency of tolls without such an officer. The Bill which he had introduced, however, gave power to the County Boards to appoint such Superintendents, if they wished, jointly or separately, and to obtain assistance out of the county rates. That Bill had been delayed principally at the wish of the noble Lord himself. He was only waiting until the noble Lord and other hon. Gentlemen came to an agreement upon it, and as soon as their wishes with regard to it were ascertained he should be quite ready to proceed. But no practical inconvenience would result from this delay, inasmuch as the Estimates for the year had been framed by the late Superintendent before his term of office expired.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he had understood his noble Friend to ask two questions—first, as to whether the Government were not under an obligation to appoint a Superintendent in place of the gentleman who had been dismissed; and, secondly, as to whether the Government had power to dismiss the late Superintendent under the section of the Act to which he called attention? It appeared to him (Mr. Sclater-Booth) that the section referred to did not contain the power of dismissal; and he could not but regard it as great neglect on the part of the Local Government Board to remove this Superintendent of the Roads in the six counties without providing an entirely new system. The Superintendent who had been dismissed would seem to have been the key-stone of the system; and he regretted that a change should have been made which might lead to a complete break-down of the road management in the district concerned.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—RETURNS AS TO NUMBER AND COST OF ARMS SURRENDERED.

QUESTION.

Mr. HEALY asked when Returns relating to the surrender of arms in Ireland, and the amounts paid for the same, would be laid upon the Table of the House?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter) said, in the absence of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, he would make it his business to procure the information asked for.

Viscount SANDON suggested to the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education that, in view of the lateness of the hour—1.50—it might be more convenient if his Statement were postponed until to-morrow.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, he thought it best to proceed, notwithstanding the delay which had taken place. He should, however, address the Committee as briefly as was consistent with clearness.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

Supply—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Class IV.—Education, Science, and Art.

(1.) £2,199,863, to complete the sum necessary for Public Education (England and Wales).

Mr. MUNDELLA: Sir, the sum required for public education in England and Wales for the year 1882-3 is £2,749,863, as compared with £2,683,958 granted by Parliament for the year 1881-2, showing an apparent increase of £65,905, or £82,086 less than the estimated increase of the previous year. But the real increase on the expenditure of last year is £111,500, the Estimate for 1881-2 having proved to be £45,000 in excess of the sum actually required for the service of that year. The true difference between the two years, therefore, is the increase in 1882-3 of £65,905, as it appears on the Estimates, to which is to be added a saving on 1881-2 of £45,500, making a total increase of £111,500, almost the whole of which occurs under the sub-head of the Annual Grant for Elementary Schools, and is accounted for by the anticipated increase of 140,000 additional children on average attendance at day schools. The rate estimated last year at 15*s.* 8½*d.* has proved to be less by 1½*d.* per head than the sum actually assigned; and the estimated rate of 16*s.* per head for the coming year allows for a further increase of 2*d.* per scholar, as compared with the increase of 2¾*d.* of the previous year. There are also some small increments under various sub-heads, with the particulars of which I will not, at this late hour, occupy the attention of the Committee. I may, however, mention a slight increase of charge for two senior Inspectors and six Sub-Inspectors at a lower rate of pay, an arrangement that will ultimately effect a saving on the Inspectorial Vote. The sum granted in 1881-2 was £2,683,915, and the sum expended, £2,638,500. The saving occurs almost entirely under the sub-head of Annual Grants to Elementary Schools. We estimated the average attendance in the day-schools for last year at 2,983,682; but the result has shown only 2,909,000 in average attendance, and an increase of 150,000 scholars on the rolls. There has been a considerable decrease in respect of the evening schools, the estimated average attendance at which was 42,763, and the expenditure £18,709; whereas the actual attendance and expenditure were 37,940 and £15,142 respectively; and there seems to be no doubt that, under the existing Code, the night schools will gradually become extinct. The attendance at them has been steadily decreasing for some years past. The statement I have made will show that it is becoming more and more difficult to get in a number of the neglected children who are still outside. The attendance is certainly not as large as it ought to be; nevertheless, when I come to show the educational progress we have made, I think the Committee will have every reason to be satisfied with the work of last year. Probably at no period since the passing of the Act of 1870 has there been more satisfactory evidence of solid progress in education than there has been during the past year. The by-laws are beginning to tell on the quality as well as on the quantity of the education given in the schools. The number of children who leave our schools for labour may be reckoned for the past year at 7,000 per week, whereas the number entering the schools weekly is no less than 10,000; and this excess has been going on year by year during the last 10 years. The increase during last year in the number of scholars is 120,000, and we anticipate for next year an increase of no less than 140,000, the normal increase, according to the growth of population, being something like 150,000. Now, there are only two tables which I shall trouble the Committee by referring to, for the purpose of illustration. The first of these shows the decline of the dunces, or neglected children, and the second the advance of the children in intelligence. I have here a table showing the number of scholars over 10 years of age presented for examination in the three lowest Standards. In these Standards the total number presented in 1872 was 118,931, and of these 14·71 per cent were presented in Standard I.; in 1875, 481,094 children were presented, of whom 11·83 per cent were in Standard I; in 1878 there was a percentage of 10·48 in Standard I., out of a total of 775,772 presented; while in 1881, out of a total of 1,011,208 children presented for examination over 10 years of age, only 5·48 per cent were presented in Standard I. I will now take the higher Standards. In Standards IV. to VI., in the year 1872, the number of children presented was 144,799; in 1875 it was 194,509; in 1878 it was 324,517; and in 1881 it was 535,442, showing a growth of about 420 per cent since 1872. The statistics of the past year show that there is now accommodation for 4,389,000 children in our schools, being an increase in that respect of 159,000 in the past year. The number of scholars on the register is 4,045,000, or an increase of 150,000 on last year, and the scholars in average attendance number 2,863, which shows an increase of 112,000. The average attendance is the highest yet attained, and amounts to 71 per cent of the number of scholars on the Books. Of scholars examined the total number is 1,995,000, which shows an increase of 91,000 on the year 1880. The percentage of passes in the "three R's," as it is termed, was 81·82, and that is the highest number of passes we have ever had. The proportion of scholars in Standard IV. and passing was 23·8; on the whole, a very large increase upon previous years, and showing a steady increase. The certificated teachers numbered 44,600, being an increase of 3,174, and of pupil teachers there were 33,639, showing a slight decrease. Now, as to the expenditure and the cost of maintenance of these schools. The cost per scholar in board schools averaged £2 1*s*. 6*d*., or a decrease of 5¾*d*.; and in voluntary schools, £1 14*s*. 10¼*d*., or a decrease of 2½*d*. But in the London board schools the cost per scholar was £2 15*s*. 10½*d*., a reduction of nearly 2*s*.

per head; and the cost per scholar in the Provincial board schools was £1 17*s.* 10*d.* The London board schools earned 16*s.* 9¾*d.* per head, or an increase of 2*d.*; and the voluntary schools earned 15*s.* 7½*d.*, or an increase of 2½*d.* Satisfactory as these figures are as to the increase in numbers and payments, there is still great scope for improvement. We have school-places for 4,389,000 children, and there are 4,045,000 on the registers; but the highest average attendance we have yet reached was 2,863,000. This shows an average daily absence of 1,182,000. Now, what does this mean? It means a waste of expenditure, a loss of power, and a loss of grants to the schools. The teachers are there, the buildings are there, the expenditure on the schools is the same; but yet there is this large absence. Everything that can be done, as the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Viscount Sandon) suggests, shall be done to increase this average attendance and to improve the quality of education in this country. I will not detain the Committee at this late hour with a statement as to Scotland; but I want to mention one illustration as to the attendance. There are two or three instances of the same kind to show what can be done when there is a proper staff, and when there is a steady pressure to increase the average attendance. There are two schools in this country which are striking illustrations of what can be done under the greatest possible difficulty. First, there is the Jews' School at Manchester, a very large school, and 50 per cent of the parents speak broken English. Three or four languages are spoken in the families of the scholars, yet 99 per cent of the children pass. At the Jews' schools in London 2,400 children passed this year, which is 98½ per cent, or the highest education obtained by any children in Her Majesty's schools. These children, many of them, have come to the schools within the year with an imperfect knowledge even of the English language. Well, the figures I have given for England, although they show a general steady advance, compare unfavourably with those for Scotland, as I will point out. The percentage of average attendance of the number on the Books in England is 71, whilst in Scotland it is 75·2. The percentage of passes in Standard subjects in 1881-2, in Scotland, was 88·32. In England the percentage of scholars, in all schools individually examined in Standard IV. and upwards, was 26·83, and in Scotland 36·13, showing that there were at least 10 per cent of older children in Standard IV. in Scotland more than there were in England. I believe that in England there is just a trifle over 1 per cent of all the 4,000,000 of children in the schools over 14 years of age. In Scotland there are more than 3 per cent; and when you come to the payments there is no comparison between the two countries. It must be remembered that the public schools in Scotland combine elementary education with secondary education, and that every year they are sending up increasing numbers to the Scotch Universities. The rate of progress is shown by the Returns of Inspection made on the 30th of September. These seem to indicate that the school boards in Scotland have not much more room for gathering in children. They only increased the number in the schools last year by 11,000. They have completed nearly the whole supply of accommodation for the whole of the children, and, no doubt, the field they have before them now is a very limited one. But the attainments of the children are increasing in a greater ratio than their numbers. The estimated grant in Scotland for 1881-2 was 17*s.* 6*d.* per head. They actually earned 17*s.* 7¾*d.*; and I have estimated for the present year 18*s.* per head, which will give Scotland 2*s.* per head more than England. They have accommodation in the schools of Scotland for 612,483 scholars. There are on the registers 545,000, and the average attendance is 410,000 scholars. The percentage of attendance to the number on the Books is 75·24. The percentage of passes in the "three R's" is 88·32, and the expenses of maintaining the schools in Scotland are these—In the public schools, £2 2*s.* 7¼*d.* per head, being an increase of 3*d.* per head; in the voluntary schools, £1 16*s.*, being a decrease of 1*s.* 3¾*d.* The grants earned in the public schools were 17*s.* 9¾*d.* per head; and in the voluntary schools, 16*s.* 8½*d.* It is impossible for me to close my remarks about Scotland without saying that that country has done wonders since the passing of the Education Act of 1870. Great as has been the progress in England, the progress in Scotland, both as regards numbers and completeness of attainments, has been much more marked; and, no doubt, Scotland has done more, in an infinite degree, towards the completion of her national system of education than England. Nevertheless, the educationists in Scotland are now looking forward anxiously and impatiently to the further development of their national system. Some localities are, it is said, without the means of higher education. There are gaps that require to be filled up, and which demand, and are receiving, the best attention of the Scotch Education Department in connection with the recommendation made last year by the Endowed Schools Commissioners. The most important and pressing measure for Scotland is the Endowed Schools Bill, which, I hope, will receive the sanction of Parliament this Session. With the power to utilize her endowments, with a Code that admits of increased expansion and usefulness, with the elementary schools linked to the Universities, Scotland will become possessed of a truly national system of education which Englishmen must, I fear, be content, for at least a generation to come, to regard with envy and admiration. I had intended to say something about the New Code; but, at this hour of the morning, I will not detain the Committee longer. I have made a statement which, I hope, will warrant the Committee in granting the Vote for which I ask. I can assure the Committee, in conclusion, that there never was an educational proposal more thoroughly considered, and one where the suggestions made were more carefully weighed and sifted. I admit the friendliness with which the Code has been criticized; and I believe the fears expressed by some hon. Members as to its operation will be dissipated in the first 12 months' experience. I beg to move the Vote of £2,199,863, for Public Education in England and Wales, and the expenses of the Education Offices in London.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, he did not rise for the purpose of opposing the taking of this Vote, even at that very late hour of the morning; and he hoped the Government would duly appreciate the great consideration hon. Members were exhibiting towards them, especially when he reminded them that when he held the Office of Vice President of the Council he was never allowed to take a Vote after half-past 11 without having every prominent Member of the present Administration dividing the House against him. His reason for not opposing the grant to-night was that about 10 days back, when he questioned the Government as to the propriety of giving hon. Members an opportunity of considering the Education Estimates before the Easter Recess, those Estimates were put down for to-night. It was not the fault of the Government that the whole evening had not been devoted to the discussion of them. The Votes for England and Scotland might be taken to-night; but the Government should undertake not to bring on the Report to-morrow, but to postpone it until after Easter. They had already sufficient money to last them for two months, and the Education Question should be allowed to come on at a time when it could be thoroughly discussed. Would the noble Marquess give them an assurance that the Report would not be put down until after Easter?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: An arrangement that would be convenient to the noble Lord would be, that we should not attempt to take Supply to-morrow, but put down the Report, in order, if there is time, that discussion should be taken. If there is not time, then, of course, it could be postponed until after Easter. I would not propose to take Supply to-morrow, but to put down the Report of this Vote after the Committee on the Army Bill.

VISCOUNT SANDON thought that if the debate on the Report were put off until after Easter, hon. Members would, in the meantime, have an opportunity of consulting with their friends outside the House who were interested in the subject of education. The matter was much too formidable to be hurried over. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) had himself stated that he had intended to go into the question of the New Code, but had been prevented by the lateness of the hour. He (Viscount Sandon) was quite sure the Government would not lose anything by accepting the suggestion for the postponement of the Report.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: If it would be more convenient to the House for us to postpone the Report until after Easter we will adopt that course.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL said, he rose to call attention to a question which was of some importance to Scotch constituencies. He proposed to move the reduction of the Vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Scotch Vote will come on presently.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL said, he wished to move the reduction of the English Vote. If he had waited for the Scotch Vote to come on, he believed he would not have had the opportunity he sought; otherwise he should have been most happy to meet the convenience of the Vice President of the Council and the Committee. He proposed to reduce the Vote by £1,000, in order to call attention to a point on which, he believed, Scotland was rather unfairly treated. There was no allowance made to Scotland in respect of needlework. It was provided for in the English Code. The grant in Scotland was conditional on plain needlework being taught in elementary schools. Article 17 of the Scotch Act was to this effect—that before any grant was made to a school, the Department must be satisfied that, among other conditions, girls were, as a rule, taught plain needlework and cutting out as part of the ordinary course of instruction. But needlework was entirely excluded from Schedule III. of the Scotch Code, and was excluded from the subjects in Schedule IV., for which alone the grant was made, whereas in the English Code there was provision for a grant of from 2*s*. to 4*s*. per head; and if they examined the Irish Estimates they would find a still greater discrepancy—£140 was provided for needlework in the Normal School in Dublin; and a salary for an instructress in needlework of £45 a-year was provided in the Model School. The amount was only £39 last year, and it had since been increased. There was also a sum of £100 for needlework materials. [MR. MUNDELLA: Not in the English schools.] No; in the Irish schools. He was pointing out the discrepancy between the Scotch Votes and the English and Irish Votes, and the apparent unfairness with which Scotland was treated in the Estimates. It would appear, further, from the Irish Estimates that a sum of no less than £2,500 was provided for the salaries of 170 workmistresses in the National Schools. He did not mean to say that full value was not obtained for the money voted, and he believed that it was most desirable to teach needlework; but what he wanted to draw the attention of the Committee to was this—that Scotland was not fairly treated in the matter. He had often been told as the reason why Scotland did not obtain fair consideration in regard to these grants in aid was that the Scotch Members were too bashful to ask for them. He wished to impress upon his Scotch Colleagues that it was their duty to ask the Vice President of the Council for some encouragement in this branch, or some equivalent, at all events, equal to that which had been offered to the Irish schools. If he failed to obtain such encouragement he should feel obliged to put the Committee to the trouble of dividing.

MR. MUNDELLA remarked, that it had been found unnecessary to provide needlework in the Scotch schools, except where it was taken as a special subject. Where it was taught as a class subject, according to the Schedule, a grant was given, and the same principle applied to Scotland and England equally with Ireland. He could assure the hon. Member that Scotland already earned her fair share of the grant.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL was satisfied with the statement of the right hon. Gentleman.

Vote *agreed to.*

(2.) £358,512, to complete the sum necessary for Public Education (Scotland).

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum not exceeding £291,400, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Science and Art Department, and of the Establishments connected therewith."

MR. SALT hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council would not press this Vote at that hour of the morning (2.30). It was clear to him that it was impossible for the Vote to receive a fair discussion. He was quite aware of the difficulties which the Government had to contend with, and he was not desirous of interposing additional ones in their way; but it was really a serious matter, in regard to the financial arrangements of the country, that, night after night, the Votes in Supply were brought on for discussion at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, and that many most important Votes were passed without any discussion at all. Now, with regard to this Vote, and to the question of education generally, it was most important that suggestions and expressions of opinion should be obtained from hon. Members in every part of the House, in order that full information as to the feeling of the country might be obtained. They had already passed two Votes quietly on the assurances which had been given to the Committee by the right hon. Gentleman, and they had agreed to stop what might have been a most valuable discussion.

MR. MUNDELLA said, he thought the subjects involved in this Vote had been very well discussed in the early part of the evening. The debate, indeed, had been almost entirely confined to matters connected with this Department, and he hoped the Committee would now allow the Government to take the Vote. He had been in attendance since 4 o'clock in the hope that he would be allowed to take these Votes.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, he thought the Committee ought to have some little regard for appearances. Either they had a serious function to perform or they had not, and it was a perfect farce to pass Votes of this magnitude at that hour of the morning. When he filled the Office of Vice President, he was never allowed to take a Vote after half-past 12 o'clock. The Government had already got two large Votes, and had been able to make their Statement; and he thought the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President ought now to rest content. They had so far succeeded without a division, and he hoped the Government would give way.

MR. MUNDELLA said, he could not press the Vote against the desire of the noble Lord and hon. Members opposite; but in regard to the remark of the noble Lord that he had never pressed forward a Vote at so late an hour, he must remind the noble Lord that he never had the same excuse.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

House *resumed.*

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* 17th April.

Committee to sit again *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

MOTIONS.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY BILL.

On Motion of Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, Bill to facilitate and regulate the Supply of Electricity for Lighting and other purposes in Great Britain and Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. CHAMBERLAIN and Mr. ASHLEY.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 122.]

MILITIA ACTS CONSOLIDATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Secretary CHILDERS, Bill to consolidate the Acts relating to the Militia, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Secretary CHILDERS, The JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL, and Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 123.]

RESERVE FORCES ACTS CONSOLIDATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Secretary CHILDERS, Bill to consolidate the Acts relating to the Reserve Forces, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Secretary CHILDERS, The JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL, and Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 124.]

ARTILLERY RANGES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Secretary CHILDERS, Bill to extend "The Artillery Ranges Act, 1862," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Secretary CHILDERS, The JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL, Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, and Mr. TREVELYAN.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 125.]

PARTNERSHIPS BILL.

Select Committee on Partnerships Bill *nominated* of,—Mr. LEWIS FRY, Mr. SALT, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. WHITLEY, Mr. EUSTACE SMITH, Mr. MOLLOY, Lord ALGERNON PERCY, Mr. BAXTER, Mr. SHAW, Mr. ECROYD, Mr. NORWOOD, Mr. KNOWLES, Mr. RYLANDS, Mr. COMPTON LAWRANCE, and Mr. MONK, with power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.

House adjourned at a quarter before Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 4th April, 1882.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—NEW WRIT ISSUED—*For* the County of Meath, *v.* Michael Davitt, who, having been adjudged guilty of felony and sentenced to penal servitude for fifteen years, and being now imprisoned under such sentence, is incapable of being elected or returned as a Member of this House.

Select Committee—Standing Order 167, *appointed* and *nominated*.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

STANDING ORDER 167.

Select Committee *appointed* to consider and report whether Standing Order 167, prohibiting the payment of interest or dividend on calls during the construction of a Railway, shall be retained or modified:—Mr. Baxter, Mr. H. R. Brand, Mr. Shaw, Mr. Salt, and Colonel Walrond *nominated* Members of the Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records; Three to be the quorum.

PRIVATE BILLS.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 129 and 39 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, be extended to Monday the 17th instant.

QUESTIONS.

POST OFFICE — THE AMERICAN MAILS.

Mr. THOROLD ROGERS asked the Postmaster General, Whether he will consider the propriety of saving time in the conveyance of passengers from England to the United States, by discontinuing the practice of calling for the mails at Queenstown, especially as the causes which led to the practice have been wholly superseded by the almost daily mails to the United States, and since the delay is a great inconvenience and discomfort to passengers and a hindrance to the transaction of business?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, the advantage of the packets calling at Queenstown for mails to the United States is, that it gives a later despatch by 24 hours from London than if the mails were embarked at Liverpool; while it gives even greater advantage to correspondence posted in Ireland. I do not think, therefore, it would be desirable to make the change suggested by my hon. Friend. I may add that mails are only sent by three out of the several lines of steamers to America; and I cannot help thinking that it is a convenience to passengers, and especially to passengers from Ireland, to have the opportunity of embarking from Queenstown.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. JOHN HEALY.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any reply has been returned to the application of Mr. John Healy, suspect in Limerick Gaol, to be allowed out on parole to enable him to take steps to collect his debts?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter) (in the absence of Mr. W. E. Forster), in reply, said, that His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant had been pleased to order the release of this man.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. JAMES HOLDEN.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that Mr. James Holden, of Shanborgh, near New Ross, who has undergone over five months imprisonment in Naas Gaol, was arrested at the same time and on a similar warrant as Mr. Hugh Mahon, who has long since been released; and, whether, considering that the district around New Ross is in a peaceable condition, he thinks it necessary to detain Mr. Holden longer?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter), in reply, said, that Mr. James Holden had been imprisoned in Naas Gaol. During this period Mr. Hugh Mahon, who was arrested at the same time, was discharged because it represented that his life was in danger. Mr. Holden's case had been recently considered by the Lord Lieutenant, who found that he could not at present recommend his release.

Mr. REDMOND inquired whether the district of New Ross was not in a perfectly peaceable condition at present?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter) said, he could not give any information on that point; but it did not follow that because a district was peaceable after arrests that it would necessarily continue to be so if the prisoners were released.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — MESSRS. GANNON AND JOHN RYNOLDS.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Messrs. Gannon and John Rynolds have not been in Monaghan Prison since 30th October last charged with inciting others not to pay rent, and of which charge they declare themselves innocent; whether the district in which they formerly resided is not now perfectly peaceable; and, whether, under all the circumstances, these two suspects should not now be released?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER), in reply, said, that these men had been arrested, not for inciting others not to pay rent, but on reasonable suspicion of maiming cattle. No such representation as those mentioned in the Question had been made to the Government. The districts where these men were arrested had undoubtedly improved; but the cases were considered last month, and it was found that they could not at present be released.

STATE OF IRELAND — THE "EMERGENCY" MEN — CASE OF JAMES CARSON.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true, as reported in the "Belfast Morning News" of the 29th March 1882, that James Carson, one of the emergency men who accompanied the expedition from Monaghan to save Captain Boycott's crops, was, at Monaghan Petty Sessions, on the 28th March instant, charged by the police with cursing the Queen, cursing the Pope, and drawing a bayonet from a soldier, and threatening to shoot said soldier with a revolver, for which series of outrages said emergency man was merely fined in forty shillings; and, if he will explain what steps he has taken against the magistrates who heard the case and inflicted such mild penalties?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER), in reply, said, the facts were not correctly stated by the hon. Member. James Carson had been charged with disorderly conduct, with refusing to leave licensed premises, and with having assaulted a soldier. Sergeant Jones, upon whom the assault was alleged to have been committed, regarded it only as a joke. Carson was fined 30*s*. and costs for the disorderly conduct, and 10*s*. and costs for the assault, and it was believed that a summons would be issued against him for having used seditious language. It was not the intention of the Government to take any steps against the magistrates who had adjudicated in the case.

STATE OF IRELAND — THE "EMERGENCY" MEN — ASSAULT AT MANULLA STATION — DECISION OF MAJOR BOND.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true, as reported in the "Belfast Morning News" of the 29th March instant, that at Balla Petty Sessions, held on the 28th March 1882, an Emergency man was fined in £10 for presenting a revolver and threatening to shoot a Railway guard, at Manulla Station, on the 18th instant; if the said offence was indictable, for what reason the magistrates acted summarily in a case so grave and serious; and, if the Major Bond, R.M. who presided at the trial is Major Bond, late of Birmingham?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER), in reply, said, that at Balla Petty Sessions an Emergency man was charged with having presented a revolver at two railway officials. After hearing the case the Bench were unanimous in treating it as one of common assault, and not one that should go to the Superior Courts. They therefore dealt summarily with it, as they were entitled to do. The Major Bond referred to was Major Bond, late of Birmingham.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—CASE OF MRS. IRWIN, OF BROOTALLY, CO. ARMAGH.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that Mrs. Irwin, of Brootally, county Armagh, a widow over 90 years of age, was evicted on the 23rd March by her landlord, Mr. Thomas Hansom, who, it is alleged, broke into her house, smashed her furniture, delf, &c., destroyed her potatoes, hay, and straw, and left her lying on the roadside, although she offered him the rent, and asked him to wait for two hours until her daughter proceeded to Armagh to consult a solicitor about the sheriff's costs; and, whether it was legal for the landlord, before the two months' "stay" had expired to evict Mrs. Irwin; and, if not, what notice Government propose to take in the matter? The hon. Member said, that portion of the Question had been omitted, and it was this—The County Court Judge had given a stay of execution in the case, and it was before that stay had expired that the eviction took place.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER), in reply, said, that it was true that Mrs. Irwin had been evicted for non-payment of rent. There was no ground for the statement that her house was broken into and her furniture destroyed. The door was open when the party arrived, and Mrs. Irwin herself stated that no damage was done to her property. She was re-admitted three or four hours after the eviction, having paid her rent in the meantime.

SOUTH AFRICA—CETYWAYO, EX-KING OF ZULULAND—VISIT TO ENGLAND.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is still proposed to bring the ex-Zulu King, Cetywayo, to England, and by whom the expenses of the journey are to be borne, whether by the ratepayers of the Cape Colony or of this Country?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, Her Majesty's Government have not relinquished the intention of bringing Cetywayo over to this country; but the arrangements are not completed, and no time has yet been fixed for his departure from the Cape. The expenses will be paid by this country.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—JOHN O'BRIEN.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, On what grounds John O'Brien, of Clogheen, county Tipperary, now detained as a suspect in Naas Gaol, has not been released, seeing another prisoner, arrested at same time on same charge of intimidation, has been released; whether the district of Clogheen is perfectly peaceable; whether it is true, as reported, that the sub-inspector of the district stated the suspect would be kept in the full term, as he had been arrested in 1866, and should be punished again for the offence committed at that time; and, whether the continued detention of John O'Brien has been influenced by the Report of said sub-inspector?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER), in reply, said, the case of this man had been considered, and it was not thought safe to release him at present. He did not think he should state the grounds upon which his further detention was deemed necessary.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—BALLYCARY DISPENSARY DISTRICT AND LARNE WORKHOUSE.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the largest number of paupers who have been inmates of Larne Workhouse from the Ballycary Dispensary district during the past year; and, how many persons have received outdoor relief from same district during that time?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER), in reply, said, the Returns would be given unopposed.

STATE OF IRELAND—ALLEGED OUTRAGE IN WEXFORD COUNTY.

MR. REDMOND (for Mr. BARRY) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any report has reached the Government of an outrage committed by the wife of the sub-inspector of police at Taghmon, county Wexford, who, it is alleged, on the 8th instant, fired a revolver at her servant man, whose face was scorched by the discharge, the bullet passing through a window and lodged in the woodwork of a house on the opposite side of the street; and, if the Government will cause inquiry to be made into this case?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER), in reply, said, the facts of the case were being inquired into; and if the hon. Member would repeat the Question when the House reassembled, he hoped to be able to give him all information.

POST OFFICE (CONTRACTS) — THE MAILS BETWEEN LONDON AND DUBLIN.

Mr. FINDLATER asked the Postmaster General, When the Contract for the Mails between London and Dublin will be renewed; whether he will secure, under the new Contract, such acceleration of the service as will enable persons in the provinces in Ireland to answer letters from London by the same day's mail from Dublin; and, whether the terms of the Contract will be laid before Parliament before their final ratification?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, the contract is still in force, and can be terminated only on 12 months' notice. Such notice has not yet been given, although tenders for the sea service have been called for with a view to the question being considered. While in some parts of Ireland letters from London can already be answered by return of post, it would not, in any circumstances, be possible to secure the same advantage to all parts of Ireland; but the question of acceleration referred to by my hon. Friend the Member for Monaghan shall not be lost sight of. As in the case of all contracts for sea service for a term of years, it will be necessary that a new contract for the Irish mail service should be laid before Parliament for ratification.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MESSRS. CULLEN AND LYNOTT.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the district of Manorhamilton, county Leitrim, is reported by Mr. Waters, County Court Judge, and by the Rev. Patrick O'Reilly, C.C. in "Freeman" of 21st March, to be perfectly peaceable; and, whether, under the circumstances, it is necessary further to imprison Messrs. Cullen and Lynott, more especially as they declare themselves innocent of the charge of intimidation which has been brought against them?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter), in reply, said, the cases of all these men were considered last month, and it was decided that they could not be liberated at present.

PREVENTION OF FIRES IN THEATRES AND MUSIC HALLS (METROPOLIS).

Mr DIXON-HARTLAND asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has received from the head of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade any Report regarding the condition of the London Theatres, or any of them, with reference to sufficiency of exits and means of prevention of fires; and, if so, whether he will state the nature of that Report, and when he will be prepared to lay it upon the Table of the House?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: In the absence of my right hon. and learned Friend I will answer this Question. The Secretary of State for the Home Department received, a few days ago, a Report of the nature described from the chief officer of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade on certain of the London Theatres. The Secretary of State is in communication with the Lord Chamberlain and the Metropolitan Board of Works on this important and urgent subject; but, pending consideration of such measures as the Report may render necessary, he does not propose to lay it on the Table of the House.

FACTORY ACTS—LEAD POISONING—LEGISLATION.

Mr. BURT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to the case of Hannah M'Carthy, who died in the Shoreditch Infirmary, on Thursday last, from lead poisoning; whether he has seen the evidence given at the inquest by Mr. Forbes, medical officer of the Shoreditch Workhouse, who is reported to have said:—

> "Cases of lead poisoning, fatal and otherwise, are of frequent occurrence. The deceased worked at a lead factory in Southgate Road, where she had been engaged for ten months only. The nature of the work was very deadly. . . . . . My experience tells me that the workers in lead factories require more looking after. I have had sixteen cases under my care in a few months, and the worst of it is that the married women who work in lead factories absorb the poison, and give it to the suckling child in the milk;"

whether he can compel the owners of lead factories to adopt means to prevent what the jury, in their verdict, characterized as "the wholesale poisoning by lead" which now goes on in these places; and, if he has not now sufficient power, whether he will apply to Parliament for any alteration in the Law, so as to afford protection to the lead workers while following their employment?

Mr. BROADHURST asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a report in the "Daily News" of yesterday of an inquest held on the body of Hannah M'Carthy, by the coroner for East Middlesex, who died from the effects of lead poisoning after only ten months employment at the lead works, and to the recommendation of the jury

> "the Legislature should at once take steps to compel the proprietors of lead works to provide proper protection to those in their employ;"

whether the present Factory and Workshops' Acts are sufficient to give the necessary protection to the lives of the people engaged in these deadly works; and, if not, whether he is prepared to ask Parliament for increased power in respect to lead works; and, whether he would consider if it would not be advisable to prohibit the employment of women and young persons in lead works?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, this case has already engaged the attention of my right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary, who has called for a special Report thereon from the Chief Inspector of Factories. The recommendations of the jury and the suggestions of the hon. Member will receive due consideration.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—JOHN HOOLIHAN.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that John Hoolihan, of Lacka, Ballyduff, county Kerry, has been imprisoned, on suspicion, since the 16th April 1881; that he emphatically denies having taken any part in the act to which he is accused of having been a party; that two other men from the same district have been discharged, though arrested long after Hoolihan; and, whether, under such circumstances, it is his intention to prolong this man's imprisonment beyond a year?

Mr. Burt

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter), in reply, said, that the case of this man had been recently considered by the Lord Lieutenant, who now saw his way to order his discharge.

STATE OF IRELAND—JURIES IN THE KING'S COUNTY.

Mr. TOTTENHAM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been directed to the failure of justice at the King's County Quarter Sessions just terminated, and whether the Chairman, Mr. Neligan, Q.C., is correctly reported in the Irish newspapers to have said as follows:—

> "His Honour said the case was one of the simplest that ever went before a jury, and he expressed his astonishment that they were unable to arrive at a verdict. It was not, he said, this case alone that was at issue, but the system of trial by jury was on its trial; and, if a King's County jury could not agree after such evidence as they had, he could only say that it had been reduced to an absurdity, and, if you cannot come to a decision, I must decline to try any more prisoners, and (addressing the Crown Solicitor) Mr. Mitchell, you need not send any more before me. You may send them to the Assizes;"

and, if report be correct, what steps Her Majesty's Government intend to take to prevent a recurrence of similar failures?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter), in reply, said, he had not seen the report in question; but he had no doubt it was correct. The Government would be only too anxious to prevent the recurrence of such a state of facts.

Mr. HEALY asked if it was proposed to deal with the question of the Grand Juries in Ireland at the same time?

[No answer was given.]

LAND LEAGUE MEETINGS (ENGLAND).

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If it was by his instructions the police did, on Sunday 2nd instant, order Michael Barrett, White Swan, Old Gravel Lane, Wapping, to refuse to allow a Land League Meeting to be held in his house; and, if not by his instructions, will he give orders that for the time to come the police are not to interfere with peaceable political meetings?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, from inquiry made of the police authorities it appears that such a meeting did take place at the time and place mentioned. The landlord was desirous of having the house cleared; but the police declined to interfere in any way. It therefore appears unnecessary to issue any instructions to the police such as the hon. Member asks for.

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND) —THE MERCERS' COMPANY AND THEIR TENANTS.

Mr. LEAMY asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a resolution passed at a meeting of the tenants of the Mercers' Company recently held at Kilrea, county Derry, condemning the action of the Company in attempting to force tenants in arrear to sign agreements not to apply to the Court for the purpose of having a fair rent fixed; and, whether the Government intend to take any notice of the statements in the resolution?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter), in reply, said, it appeared that the tenants of the Mercers' Company had made certain complaints; but he had not yet had an opportunity of investigating the circumstances. It would be obviously improper on his part to express any opinion on the complaints themselves, and the matter was not one in which Her Majesty's Government ought to interfere.

CHARITY COMMISSION — PAROCHIAL CHARITIES OF THE CITY OF LONDON.

Mr. JOHN HOLLOND asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he is aware that several of the Boards of Trustees of the Parochial Charities of the City of London have inquired of the Charity Commissioners whether they can sanction the application of the funds of their charities to the purpose of opposing the Public Bill which has been brought into the House dealing with these charities, and promoting the Private Bill brought in for a similar purpose, and that the Charity Commissioners have replied that they consider any such application of charitable funds to be illegal; whether he is aware that, in spite of their reply, certain Boards of Trustees in the City of London are now making contributions out of the charitable funds under their management for the above-mentioned purpose; and, whether, under these circumstances, he will consider the propriety of taking legal steps to have these Boards of Trustees restrained from such a misapplication of trust funds?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): Sir, my attention has only been called to the Question this morning; and I have, therefore, had very little opportunity of making inquiry. I understand that application was made to the Charity Commissioners that they would enable certain Trustees to spend money in opposing or promoting certain Bills, and the Charity Commissioners expressed the opinion that the expenditure for such a purpose would be illegal. They have received a communication from the solicitor to one of the Charities to the effect that, in the opinion of eminent counsel, such expenditure would be legal. My own opinion is in accordance with the decision of Lord Eldon in 1826, who decided that the expenditure of Charity funds in promoting Private Bills which are not afterwards passed into law is illegal. If the Charity Commissioners ask my advice, of course the matter shall be fully considered.

CRIMINAL LAW—THE CONDEMNED PRISONER LAMSON.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he will lay before Parliament the Despatch sent by the Government of the United States to Her Majesty's Government, or communicated by the Minister of the United States to Her Majesty's Government, relative to the convicted prisoner Lamson, and the answer of Her Majesty's Government thereto? The right hon. Gentleman said, perhaps the House would allow him to make a short explanation in regard to the Question. He wished expressly to exclude the Memorial itself and the statement of facts, which the Home Secretary stated yesterday was for himself and not for the House. He also desired to say that he made this inquiry in no spirit of hostility to the Government, but in order to strengthen their hands, and in order that the country might have an assurance that there had been no attempt on the part of any foreign Power to interfere with the administration of our Municipal Laws.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I am glad the right hon. Gentleman has made the explanation, for, in the absence of my right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department, I was about to say that if the right hon. Gentleman's Question referred to the same Papers as those referred to by the hon. Baronet the Member for South Warwickshire (Sir Eardley Wilmot) yesterday, I could only have repeated the reply of my right hon. and learned Friend, that to lay on the Table Papers with respect to the exercise of mercy by the Crown would, in his opinion, make it absolutely impossible that that prerogative should be exercised. If, however, as I suppose, the right hon. Member refers to the formal Correspondence with the United States Minister, I may state that the Foreign Office will have no objection to lay it ultimately before Parliament.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department lay it on the Table himself, or shall I move for it?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: He will lay it on the Table himself, but not immediately.

CIVIL SERVICE (IRELAND)—APPOINTMENT OF MR. CROKER.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has conferred the appointment of Poor Law and Grand Jury Auditor on a Mr. Croker, of Ballinagarde, county Limerick; if Mr. Croker has ever held any other office in the Civil Service; if he possesses a certificate of qualification from the Civil Service Commissioners; if not, what test of qualification and fitness was obtained in his case, what examination he underwent, how many candidates there were for the office, and how many members of the existing staff of the Local Government Board were eligible for and applied for the appointment; and, on what grounds he set aside their applications and selected a person from outside the Civil Service?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter), in reply, said, he understood that Mr. Croker had been appointed to this position, although not on the Staff of the Local Government Board. The same was the case with the last three persons appointed; but his appointment was made subject to his obtaining a Civil Service certificate. Mr. Croker was selected from the other candidates, as he was the best qualified, having been a bank clerk of many years' standing, and eminently fitted for the position.

POST OFFICE (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT)—THE TELEGRAPH SERVICE IN IRELAND.

Mr. CALLAN (for Mr. Gray) asked the Postmaster General, with reference to the recent appointment of Telegraph Superintendent in Dublin by the transfer to Dublin of the Belfast Telegraph Superintendent, Whether the vacancy thus created in Belfast has been filled by the transfer to Belfast of the late superintendent of the Dublin Telegraph Department; and, if that is not the case, whether the vacancy in Belfast has been filled by the promotion of a Belfast clerk; whether, if it be contemplated to fill the Belfast vacancy by a promotion from the Belfast staff, the nett effect of the change will be to deprive, not by their own fault, the entire Dublin staff of four promotions; whether it is a fact that the assistant superintendent of telegraphs in Dublin has for a considerable period satisfactorily discharged the duties of superintendent, and is an officer of long service and of high character; whether, since it is regarded to be of importance that there should be transfers from office to office, and from one part of the kingdom to another, so that persons in the service of the Post Office in Ireland and Scotland should have an opportunity of being appointed to positions in England, and persons in England should have an opportunity of being transferred to Ireland, he could quote to the House any instances in which such transfers resulted in the promotion of Irish clerks to English or Scotch offices; whether it is a fact that whilst frequently transfers of this kind, involving the loss of promotion to the Dublin telegraph clerks, have been made from England and parts of Ireland to Dublin, or corresponding advantages have been obtained by the Dublin telegraph clerks in transfers to other parts of the kingdom; whether it is a fact that, by the interference with the regular system of promotion, the Dublin telegraph clerks have within the past year been deprived of no less than ten promotions, notwithstanding the fact that they have been thanked for the manner in which they performed their work; and, whether he will take any steps to secure that the transfer now referred to shall be effected in such a manner as not to deprive the staff of telegraph clerks in Dublin of their legitimate promotion, and to secure that in future such changes shall not militate against their legitimate claims?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, both at Dublin and at Belfast there has been a recent change of Telegraph Superintendents. The Telegraph Superintendent at Belfast has been removed to Dublin, and the Telegraph Superintendent at Dublin has been removed to Belfast, though no longer in the capacity of Telegraph Superintendent. While officers at Belfast have gained promotion, those at Dublin have not lost any. The Assistant Superintendent at Dublin is an officer of long service and high character, and has discharged his duties satisfactorily; but I thought that on the whole the transfer of the Telegraph Superintendent from Belfast would most conduce to the interests of the Service. With regard to the question of promoting officers from Ireland to England, among other instances I may refer to the fact that two very important offices on the English establishment—namely, those of Provincial Surveyors—are now held by gentlemen who were originally in the Secretary's Office in Dublin. As regards the remainder of the hon. Member's inquiry, I am not aware that the Dublin Office has been unduly deprived of promotion.

PUBLIC WORSHIP REGULATION ACT—THE REV. MR. GREEN.

Mr. J. G. HUBBARD asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, on the adjournment of the House for the Easter Festival, he will consider the position of the Rev. Sidney Faithorn Green, now, and for a year past, incarcerated in Lancaster Gaol, under these circumstances: Mr. Green was prosecuted for an alleged infraction of the legal Ritual of the Church of England, and for this offence was visited with the punishment of imprisonment; and, whether, considering that Lord Penzance, who tried him, a Judge created by the Public Worship Regulation Act, and exercising the function of Official Principal, had never completed his qualifications in the usual way, and, considering also the severity of the penalty inflicted for a Ritual irregularity, he will devise some means of terminating Mr. Green's prolonged detention in Lancaster Gaol?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, this Question relates to the case of the Rev. Mr. Green, who is now, and has been for some time, in prison under, I believe, the Public Worship Regulation Act. My right hon. Friend asks me whether we will consider the position of Mr. Green? We have had occasion to consider this case carefully in consequence of various Memorials and representations made to Her Majesty's Government. But my right hon. Friend asks me whether I will devise some means of terminating Mr. Green's prolonged detention in Lancaster Gaol? Well, Sir, what I am advised is that Her Majesty could not, without going beyond the limit of Constitutional practice, which it would be wrong in us to transgress, apply the Prerogative of mercy or any other power which she may possess for the release of Mr. Green by her own order. With respect to devising some means of terminating the imprisonment of Mr. Green—which must mean legislative means—I think that is rather a business belonging to the consideration of the high authorities who devised and who passed the Public Worship Regulation Act than it is for Her Majesty's Government.

INTERNATIONAL LAW—PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—INTERVENTION OF THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether any representations have been made to Her Majesty's Government, by the Government of the United States, relative to the detention in Ireland of suspects of American nationality; and, whether any answers have been received from the United States Government to the representations made to the Government of the United States, as described on the 20th of June 1881 by him, as to the incitements carried on in that country to outrages in England; and, if so, whether such answers can be laid upon the Table?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, representations have been made to Her Majesty's Government by the American Government in relation to certain subjects of the United States now detained in Ireland among the "suspects." Those communications are in progress, and I am not in a position to give any account of their purport or issue at the present moment. In regard to the second part of the Question, I have to say that communications were made last year in respect to a particular description of literature in circulation in the United States; but no answer has been received from the American Government on the subject.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he could state, for the information of the House, how many of the "suspects" in Ireland claimed American nationality?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have no exact information on this subject, but my impression is that the number is very small indeed. [Mr. Healy: Four.] I was going to say either four or six.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—THE LABOURERS.

Mr. A. MOORE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the difficulties which beset labourers in endeavouring to avail themselves of the provisions of the Land Act; and, whether the Government will consider during the Recess what steps may be taken to render the Act more accessible to the deserving class?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, my attention has been called to the subject, particularly by my hon. Friend the Member for County Cork (Mr. Shaw), of the difficulties of the labourers in certain districts of Ireland, and after considering during the Recess what steps could be taken, I have only to say that I have no reason to despair of the subject. It is possible that the Act may be improved; but I am not able to say that we have in our minds any exact plan for that purpose. Any suggestion tendered by my hon. Friend, or any other person acquainted with the position of the labourers, will receive our careful attention.

NAVY—LAUNCH OF H.M.S. "COLOSSUS."

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Why the workmen who were employed from half-past one and three o'clock in the morning in preparing for the launch of the "Colossus" were not paid overtime in accordance with custom; and, whether the Admiralty considers that an allowance of only the same time as was worked during the nights in question is fair to the men concerned?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the time given in lieu of extra time worked at night exceeds the actual time worked by one-third. That is the rule, and it, no doubt, was observed on this occasion; and, if it was not, I will see that it is made up. These details are in the hands of the Admiral Superintendent; but if the matter had been referred to the Admiralty, the Board would not have refused the payment of the work in money instead of in time.

TUNIS—COMPENSATION TO BRITISH SUBJECTS.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any compensation has been awarded by the French Government to Mr. T. L. Smith, a British subject farming at Matu, near Tunis, for injury to his crops and farm in the year 1881; and, whether any Papers on the subject can be laid upon the Table?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris has brought Mr. Smith's case before the French Government with a view to the re-consideration of his claim for compensation, or the reference of it to arbitration. No reply has yet been received; but the Papers will be included in the general Correspondence which will ultimately be laid upon the Table with regard to British claims for losses sustained in Tunis.

IRELAND—MR. PARNELL—REPRESENTATION OF LIVERPOOL.

Mr. SEXTON said, that in the absence of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, he wished to ask the Head of Her Majesty's Government, Whether his attention had been called to a correspondence between Mr. Thomas Evans and the Chief Secretary for Ireland, with reference to the request on the part of some of the electors of Liverpool to visit Kilmainham next Friday or Saturday to present an address to Mr. Parnell with reference to the representation of Liverpool; whether they were not right in appealing to the central Government, and not to the gaolers, to give a direct reply to the appeal?

MR. GLADSTONE said, that he had no knowledge whatever of this subject, nor could he undertake to answer in the absence of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman would, he had no doubt, give full consideration to this matter, and he had no doubt that these gentlemen were entitled to appeal to the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and to have the answer of the responsible Government on the subject.

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT—RECENT APPOINTMENTS—MR. WALPOLE.

MR. O'DONNELL asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to an alleged necessity of appointing to the post of Secretary of the Customs a person having qualifications outside the ordinary experience of the Customs, Whether Mr. Walpole, the assistant-secretary, has performed most important duties outside the ordinary experience of the Customs; whether Mr. Walpole has represented this Country in three conferences abroad; whether Mr. Walpole's services on those occasions received the marked approval of two successive Secretaries of State for Foreign Affairs and of Her Majesty's Government; and, whether it is true that the sugar trade, which was the industry represented at those conferences, signified to Her Majesty's Government their warm acknowledgments of the ability and zeal displayed by Mr. Walpole in those negotiations; also, with reference to the alleged advancement of Mr. Walpole to a salary of £1,000 per annum, in compensation for the introduction of Mr. Herbert Murray into the Secretaryship of the Board of Customs, whether, since Mr. Walpole's salary already figures on the Estimates for the current year at £925, rising to £1,000, the Treasury, in awarding Mr. Walpole the immediate salary of £1,000, together with a gift of about £150, has fairly compensated that gentleman for the loss of the Secretaryship, and the other members of the Secretary's staff for the loss of their promotion?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GLADSTONE): Sir, this Question is founded on a misapprehension. So far as I know, the duties upon which Mr. Walpole was engaged on various occasions were inside, and not outside, the ordinary duties of his office, though not within the routine of those duties. With regard to his services, and the acknowledgment of them by Secretaries of State, I am not in a position to answer that part of the Question, nor could it be answered without laborious search in the Department. With respect to the approval of his ability and zeal by the members of the sugar trade, it may be so, but I am not able to say. I should not, however, attach very much importance to that, as the trade has been actuated by very peculiar views of these proceedings as to the sugar duties. It is true that Mr. Walpole has taken part in several conferences—three, I think—and that his conduct has been approved by the Treasury. With regard to the latter Question of the hon. Member, it is absolutely necessary that the Government should take their stand on this position, that however desirous they may be to promote from within a Department, the public interests absolutely require that they should retain in their own hands the power of making appointments from the outside.

MR. O'DONNELL asked whether the clerks in the Customs Department had memorialized the Treasury, protesting against the appointment of a stranger, and whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would lay a Copy of the Memorial on the Table of the House?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GLADSTONE): Sir, I have received that Memorial, but I am not at all prepared to say I should lay it on the Table. I do not think it would be a good precedent in the working of the Executive Government.

MR. O'DONNELL gave Notice that he would move for the production of the Memorial, and also for Copies of the strong expressions of approval of Mr. Walpole's conduct by his official superiors.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—CLONMEL GAOL.

Mr. HEALY wished to know whether the Solicitor General for Ireland could now give any information respecting the outbreak of fever in Clonmel Gaol, and whether it had spread through the cells?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter), in reply, said, he had not all the information on the subject; but he could state that the recent case of fever was a mild one, and the patient had been removed to the fever hospital, out of the prison altogether. An inspection of the prison had been made by competent sanitary authorities, and the cause of the disease had been traced to an obstruction in one of the closets, which was situated in a part of the gaol remote from the place where the prisoners were now confined. Arrangements had been made to prevent any danger arising to the prisoners.

Mr. HEALY inquired whether the warders had not caught the infection, and whether, under all the circumstances of the case, the "suspects" are to be detained there?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter) said, there was no case of fever in the prison at present. There had been only three cases, one a "suspect," another an ordinary prisoner, and the third a warder.

Mr. HEALY: What is the date of the last case?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter): The last case was on the 29th of March, and the patient had been removed to the fever hospital outside the gaol. The report of the Sanitary Inspector was that there was no danger to those inside the prison.

ASIATIC TURKEY—SMYRNA QUAY—THE PAPERS.

In reply to Mr. M'Coan,

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, the delay in the production of the Papers relating to Smyrna Quay arose from the fact that it was found necessary to make some slight change in the Report. They would be ready not later than Monday, and he would endeavour to send advance copies to the hon. Member and to right hon. Gentlemen opposite.

MOTION.

PARLIAMENT — ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—THE EASTER RECESS.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn until Monday 17th April.—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

CRIME (IRELAND).—OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. GORST, in rising to call attention to the proceedings at the recent Assizes in Ireland, and to the evidence thereby afforded of the increase of agrarian crime and the general collapse in the administration of justice, and to ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they proposed to take in relation thereto, said, it was of the utmost importance that the truth about the present state of things in Ireland should be known, not only to the Members of Her Majesty's Government, but to the House and to the country. The facts which he intended to lay before the House were, he ventured to say, new to the great majority of Members, and, at all events, to the majority of the people of this country. The first step towards the inauguration of a better policy in Ireland was to obtain full and accurate information of the state of things in that country, to look at the facts fairly in the face; and if the supporters of Her Majesty's Government had been for the last 18 months living in a "fool's Paradise," the sooner they got out of it the better for themselves and for the country. Now, the facts he was about to adduce rested on the best of all evidence—namely, the statements of the Judges, made not for political purposes, but in the discharge of their regular official duty, and from the sworn testimony of witnesses called in the Courts of Justice during the last Assizes. In County Longford, Lord Justice Deasy found at the late Assizes 98 cases, as against 75 in the preceding year; and of these 98 cases, 3 were cases of firing at the person, 9 of arson, 13 of malicious injury to property, 5 of obtaining forcible possession, and 6 of stealing cattle. The Judge said that in a few cases only was the Crown able to bring forward any evidence. In County Clare, on March 7, Mr. Justice Barry said that there extensively prevailed a spirit of insubordination, and lawlessness manifested itself in crime and outrage. There was an absence, not of crime, but of criminals being made amenable. In that county there were 356 cases of agrarian outrage, as against 127 in the preceding year; but as this latter number represented the crime of four months only, while 356 was the number for eight months, the Judge corrected his statement by saying that the proper comparison would be between 356 and 254 outrages. In Leitrim, Chief Justice May found some signs of improvement; but one of the cases brought before him was that in which Keegan, an old man, had been attacked and half roasted alive. The prisoner pleaded "Not Guilty." The sworn evidence of Michael Keegan, who was described as a feeble-looking old man, was as follows:—

> "I reside near Cloone. I remember the 12th of August last, on which day I was working for Mr. Houston, a land bailiff. About 4 o'clock next morning the door of my house was knocked in, when I heard a voice calling on me to come down. I went down into the kitchen, where I saw 10 or 11 men with both guns and pistols in their hands. They put me on my knees and kicked me several times. The barrel of a pistol was two or three times thrust into my mouth. I then got a blow from a gun on the back, and was knocked down. The party then took the fire out of the fireplace and spread it on the floor. They then pulled me off my knees and put me over the burning coals. My shirt then caught fire. I then received a deep gash across the breast about seven inches long. I also received other wounds. My grandson, while I was over the fire, tried to tear off a portion of my burning garment, when he got a blow from one of the party which rendered him senseless. One of the party then said to him, 'What made you go to cut the meadows?'"

The Judge said it was a sad state of things that such a crime should be committed in any community. The jury then retired, and after an absence of some hours were discharged, on their stating that there was not the slightest probability of their agreeing to a verdict. In the county of Louth, Mr. Justice Lawson commented on the increase of offences committed with a view to prevent people paying their rents, and observed that no persons were made amenable for those offences. In the great county of Tipperary, Mr. Justice Fitzgibbon observed that in the North Riding there were 159 agrarian crimes this year, against 75 in the preceding year, an increase of more than double; and that in the South Riding there were 230 agrarian crimes, against 106 in the preceding year, the proportion being considerably more than double. Therefore, in the whole of the county the total number of agrarian crimes in the present year was 389, against 181 in the previous year. The Judge noticed not only the increase in the actual number of offences, but the alarming character of the increase of the more serious kinds of crime—for instance, the wilful injury, killing, and maiming of cattle, which had grown from 13 in the preceding to 48 in the present year; firing with intent to murder; breaking into dwellings at night, which had increased from 20 last year to 63 in the present year, or more than three-fold; and the Grand Jury, at the close of the Assizes, made a formal presentment to the Court, in which they said—

> "The Grand Jury wish to draw the attention of Her Majesty's Government to the alarming increase of the so-called 'Boycotting' in the South Riding of the County Tipperary, whereby men of all classes are affected and obstructed in their legitimate business, isolated, and deprived of the very necessaries of life. The Grand Jury respectfully suggest the necessity of making 'Boycotting' a malicious injury, giving the sufferer the usual claim for compensation, or stamping it out by such other measures as Her Majesty's Government may deem fit. They would further suggest that the cost of the extra police in disturbed districts should be placed on smaller areas than counties, and also that compensation be given for injury to the person."

He made no comment on these things, because in cases of the kind comment was needless. In the county of Westmeath, Mr. Justice Fitzgerald said that there were 86 criminal offences, against 84 in the previous year, and that in the whole 86 evidence was forthcoming only in two cases of a petty character. In the county of Limerick, Baron Dowse said that, leaving out of consideration the Winter Assizes altogether, he found that 315 criminal offences had been specially reported to the police, against 244 in the preceding year; that out of the 315 cases there were 246 in which offenders were not known, and there were some 300 persons who refused to give information to the police or make any deposition. In only 65 out of the 315 cases were there any persons charged. In the county of Kilkenny, Judge Harrison found 50 cases, against 39 in the preceding year. In King's County, Chief Justice Morris said that there were 184 serious cases, of which 83 were threatening letters; and as they had heard a good deal in that House about such letters, perhaps he should be excused if he read the observations of the learned Judge. Chief Justice Morris said—

> "Since the last Summer Assizes no less than 184 serious cases are reported to me on the list furnished to me by your County Inspector, a gentleman with whom I have been long and favourably acquainted. That list contains no less than 83 cases of threatening letters—ranging over every species of business that it is almost possible to conceive—threatening to murder, threats of violence, threats of various kinds connected with the various relations of life that must exist in a large and busy community. Gentlemen, sometimes persons of great courage—one of whom I do not profess to be, having merely ordinary fair courage—persons of great courage sometimes suggest that they do not mind threatening letters at all. Well, possibly, when these threatening letters are not seen to be accompanied by any effects, a person may, to a certain extent, possibly arrive at such a conclusion; but when I find that since the last Assizes no less than seven persons have been fired at with, apparently, intent to murder, at various times and in various places—when two of the persons so fired at are members, if not of your Grand Jury, at least of other Grand Juries—when, in four cases out of seven, the person fired at was more or less wounded—in three cases they escaped altogether—when I add as a commentary upon these threatening letters that there have been 46 cases of burning houses, four of hay and other property, that there have been various cases of other malicious injuries to property, and of firing into houses with intent to intimidate—when all these are remembered, I can only sum up this melancholy list by stating that it amounts to 184 cases."

In the county of Sligo, Judge Ormsby found 138 agrarian crimes, against 97 in the preceding year. In the county of Cavan, Mr. Justice Fitzgerald found 158 cases, against 125 in the previous year. The offenders in 100 of these cases had not been made amenable. There had been 15 or 16 cases of successfully taking away arms, and hardly any of them had been discovered. In the Queen's County, Judge Fitzgerald found 62 cases, against 21 in the preceding year. There were 26 of threatening letters, 2 of murder, 2 of letters threatening absolutely to murder—letters of a very dangerous character—2 of firing at the person with a view to murder, and 2 of assaulting dwellings at night; and the learned Judge especially called attention to a most atrocious case—the murder of a man named Martin Rogers. He said—

> "The lamentable occurrence took place on the 3rd of December last. It was one characterized by great audacity. It took place in a populous neighbourhood, between 12 and 1 o'clock on the 3rd of December last, near Rathdowney, on the borders of Kilkenny. The unfortunate murdered man had local knowledge—he had been clerk to an eminent solicitor—here. He had gone to reside in Dublin to pursue his vocation there till he was induced to come down here on the 2nd of December last to serve four writs in this county, as the local process-servers could not be prevailed upon to do so. This young man came down to serve these writs, which were not ejectments, but were intended simply to enforce the payment of rents. He was a small infirm young man. He had lost the use of the right arm. His very helplessness ought to have been his defence, for he was incapable of defending himself. He was offered the protection of the Constabulary; and his reply was—'I know the county well; I do not need protection.' He went and delivered a copy of the writ at each of the four houses. One of the parties charged is a person named Bergin, who is accused of being active in the murder. His house, I collect from the informations, was the last served—the murder, at all events, took place very near his house. This murder must have been witnessed by a number of individuals in the locality; I daresay any one of them could tell every circumstance connected with it; but one of the lamentable features of the case is, that no one in the vicinity of the occurrence will give the hand of the law the slightest assistance. On the other hand, those who have been examined have obviously endeavoured to mislead justice. I gather from that, that there is not only sympathy with crime, but that there is a disposition to defend the murderers. The evidence to come before you will be that of a man who represents that he was actually passing up at the time of the murder. He says he saw two men coming from the one direction, and three from the other, and that, being alarmed, he concealed himself behind a ditch where he was not seen, and from that position he deposes that he saw the murder perpetrated. He says that the five persons accused were the persons engaged in the murder. He described in a graphic manner what occurred—says that the young man cried for assistance and for mercy, and then he said he heard no more. The body of the murdered young man lay on the roadside. The police came and found his head literally battered to pieces. They found there stones with which the murder had been perpetrated. The medical man made a *post mortem* examination, and he found several extensive fractures of the head, which had been battered. The unfortunate young man had endeavoured to ward off the blows; but so outrageous was the assault made on him, that they fractured his arm in more than one place, and also the fingers of his hand."

Perhaps the House would remember a similar case of murder at Lough Mask, which must have been witnessed by several persons, not one of whom came forward to give evidence; and it was not until three weeks after the murder that the place where the bodies were deposited was discovered. Mr. Justice

Barry found there were 379 agrarian cases reported by the police, a decrease upon the number of the preceding year; but the Judge thought proper to call special attention to two cases which had happened since the list was made out, the details of which, he said, would horrify Christendom. An armed party visited a person suspected of having paid his rent, or committed some other offence against some secret organization. The man was shot dead, his wife had her thigh shot away, and a poor girl who struggled to protect her father was beaten and injured in a most savage manner. It was, said the Judge, a most humiliating thing for an Irishman who loved his country to have to state these occurrences in open Court. Within the last two nights, he continued, another man was shot through the window of his house because he was suspected of having paid his rent. At the same Assizes a very remarkable case was heard, in which a man named Jeremiah Mahony was charged with posting threatening notices. The prisoner was caught, as it were, red-handed. There was not the slightest doubt about the case. The jury returned into Court, and stated that if they were locked up for three days they would not agree; and then one of the jury—Mr. A. E. Herbert—intervening, complained that one of the jurors said if kept for a week he would not agree to a verdict. Since the report of that case, Mr. A. E. Herbert had been murdered, his flocks slaughtered, and at his burial the people would not provide a rope to lower his coffin into the grave; and so violent was the revenge against him, that it was feared his grave would be outraged. In Roscommon, Chief Justice Morris found 84 cases, against 30 in the preceding year, and he called attention to a horrible case of murder, where a man, named Brennan, was shot dead in his own house; and what was his offence? It was that his brother was supposed to have paid his rent. The Judge described this case as frightfully horrible. Another man was assassinated because he was called upon to collect the seed rate. What must be the state of feeling among the lower orders in Ireland when men were assassinated for such things? In the county of Cork, Baron Dowse stated that there were no less than 375 cases reported to the Constabulary, including 45 cases of thretening to murder, 32 cases of arson, and 2 of murder, besides cases of malicious injury, treason-felony, unlawful assembly, and riot. In the West Riding of Cork there were 372 cases very much of the same class of offences; and out of the whole number of 659 cases in the two Ridings, only 21 were not of an agrarian character. In Donegal, Lord Justice Deasy found 105, against 45 in the preceding year. In almost every case tried, the prisoner was acquitted or the jury discharged without finding a verdict. In Mayo, there was a clear case in connection with cutting off the ears of a man named Nolan. Nolan himself gave evidence, as well as his wife and son; but the prisoners set up an *alibi* in each case, and they were all acquitted. Prisoners sometimes behaved in an extraordinary manner. There was a case in which Patrick Fahy was indicted for assaulting a process-server heard at the Mayo Assizes. Baron Dowse said there was no doubt the prisoner was guilty, but that if he pleaded guilty he would be allowed to stand out on his own recognizance. After consultation with the solicitor for the prisoner, the counsel for the defence said they would leave the case to the jury. Baron Dowse said that was the first time he ever heard of such an offer being refused. But the jury, without leaving the box, found the prisoner "Not Guilty," and he was discharged. Not only was the disease apparently on the increase in those counties where it had existed before, but it seemed to be spreading, because he found in the county of Londonderry, where the Land League was not very powerful, Baron Fitzgerald found 49 cases, as compared with 15 in the preceding year, and in more than half of these cases, a majority of them being cases of malicious destruction of property, no person had been arrested or made amenable. In Wicklow, the cases were 69, against 40 in the preceding year, and Mr. Justice Harrison called attention to the increase, and said that Wicklow had hitherto been free from the disease. Allusion had been made on a former occasion to the observations of Mr. Neligan, one of the most efficient Criminal Judges in Ireland, who, at a trial in the King's County, finding that the jury would not agree in one of the plainest and simplest cases that had ever come before him, said the system of trial by jury was on its trial, and that if a King's County jury could not agree after such evidence, it had been reduced to an absurdity. One of the jurors then said—

> "Your Honour, if I had to sit here until 12 o'clock at night, I would not agree."

Whereupon Mr. Neligan said—

> "Then trial by jury is reduced to an absurdity. If you cannot come to a decision, I must decline to try any more criminal cases;"

and, addressing the Crown Solicitor, he directed him to send them to the Assizes. In Galway, Lord Chief Justice May said the number of outrages reported was 360, against 335 for the preceding year, and that in only 30 cases had persons been made amenable to justice. The Lord Chief Justice, furthermore, in his address to the Grand Jury, said—

> "There was no doubt the country was in an unsound and disorganized state; but he trusted the powers of this great Empire would be so exercised as to put a stop to a condition of things that was a disgrace to any civilized community."

He had strictly confined himself to the statements of the Judges and the evidence of sworn witnesses; but he could not help referring to a recent case, which every Member of the House must have read with horror, as confirming the impression made by the history of the recent Assizes, in which an innocent lady, resident in Dublin, when on a visit to her brother-in-law in Westmeath, was shot dead on Sunday when returning from church. While there could be no doubt as to the deplorable condition of Ireland, there might be a difference of opinion as to how far the evil was due to the policy pursued by the Government. In connection with that question, a speech delivered in that House by the hon. Member for Tipperary (Mr. Dillon) possessed a peculiar significance. It was delivered, he might say, at the time when the Chief Secretary for Ireland shadowed forth in somewhat ambiguous phrases the policy of mingled coercion and conciliation pursued by the Government for the past 18 months. The hon. Member for Tipperary said—

> "The statement which they had heard from the Chief Secretary for Ireland was a new and remarkable departure from the line of policy pursued by the Government. . . . . He only promised protection to the Irish tenant in the event of circumstances arising which would cause him to introduce a Coercion Act. He said that it was only when there was a prospect of disturbance he would bring in such a measure; but he had forgotten that it might be the duty of Irish Members to their constituents to get up such a condition of affairs as would force the right hon. Gentleman to give the other Act which he had promised, even if he had to pass a Coercion Act. Never had such an extraordinary promise been laid before Parliament by a Minister as to say that what he could not do before Parliament rose he would do, if his hands were forced, in Ireland during the Recess. . . . . . What use was there in putting a premium on disturbance?"—[3 *Hansard*, cclv. 2040.]

Most people would consider that the policy of coercion and conciliation—coercion neutralized by conciliation, and conciliation neutralized by coercion—had failed. He understood the Chief Secretary for Ireland himself to admit that it had, at least, partially failed; and the distinction made by the right hon. Gentleman was remarkable. He said the Coercion Act had failed to maintain law and order; but it had been successful in enabling them to destroy the power of Mr. Parnell and his associates, and the government that they had thereby exercised over the Irish people. It was a strange confession that the partial success of the policy of the Government should have been due, not to the Land Act, but to the Coercion Act. Now, if the Chief Secretary for Ireland were in his place, he would probably reply by saying he should be very much obliged if the House would tell him what to do. The Prime Minister took a more accurate view of his duties and responsibilities. He would admit that a private Member had fulfilled his duty in laying the facts of the case before the House. It was no part of his duty to make any suggestions to the Government as to what measures they should adopt to combat an evil which was described by Lord Chief Justice May as a disgrace to civilization. He had no desire to draw the Government into hasty explanations. He did not expect an immediate answer to the question of what policy they were now going to pursue in Ireland. The matter was urgent; but everyone would willingly give the Government the Easter Recess to think over it and mature their plans. He believed, however, that as soon as Parliament re-assembled after the Easter Recess the country would expect from the Government some clear declaration of their Irish policy—some declaration which would not be made in the ambiguous language of the Chief Secretary for Ireland when he thought aloud in that House; but in the shape of clear and well-defined measures which the Government would lay on the Table of the House, and to which they would ask the assent of Parliament. Unless the Government pursued some course of that kind, and made some proposal to cope with the terrible state of things in Ireland which he had described, he thought everyone would admit that they had not done their duty either to the House or to the country.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, considering the extreme gravity of the facts cited by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), I cannot express either wonder or surprise at his having brought them under the notice of the House. But I do regret that the warning that this subject was to be brought forward was not given when my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland was in his place in this House, so that he could have been present to have given a complete view of the state of Ireland, and not when my right hon. Friend had quitted his place in this House in order to resume his place in Ireland, and to perform his very serious duties there——

Mr. GORST: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. I gave the Notice at the Sitting of the House yesterday, when the Chief Secretary for Ireland was present.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I certainly had been under the belief that my right Friend had quitted the House before Notice of the hon. and learned Gentleman's statement was given; but, certainly, my right hon. Friend had framed all his plans for returning to Ireland. In any case, I do not think that so very grave a challenge, winding up with a statement that, in the opinion of the hon. and learned Member, the Government must, at a certain time which he thinks fit, declare their policy and plans for Ireland, I do not think such a proposition was wisely or conveniently brought forward after Notice of less than 24 hours. My right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland would have been most anxious to have been in his place had it been in his power; and undoubtedly it would have been exceedingly desirable that he should have been here, inasmuch as the hon. and learned Gentleman has made pointed reference, not unnaturally, to the declarations made by my right hon. Friend. In the absence of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, it is my duty to give a brief outline or view of the state of facts in Ireland. I think that on certain points I might perhaps say that the hon. and learned Gentleman has coloured them in language that even exaggerates the most grave, nay, the enormous, mischiefs which prevail; as, for example, when he described—if I understood him rightly—the threatening letters as in themselves forming a class of serious offences.

Mr. GORST: I only quoted the language of the learned Judge to whom I referred.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I beg the hon. and learned Member's pardon. If it is the language of the Judge, I must take the liberty of noticing what I think is some error in the language of the Judge. But it has been taken up, adopted, and repeated in the most distinct manner by the hon. and learned Gentleman. This is a very grave matter. Nothing is to be gained by over-colouring it. I have no disposition to reduce this matter below the tone which it merits. Threatening letters are an evil in Ireland; they are undoubtedly the sign of a disturbed state of society, and they are occasionally connected with the actual commission of crime. But I think it is an over-statement on the part of the hon. and learned Member, or on the part of the Judge whose language and sentiments he has adopted, to describe them as falling into the class of serious criminal offences. The hon. and learned Member has likewise laboured under the difficulty, for which I do not blame him, of not being able to draw a correct distinction between the state of agrarian crime and the state of crime which is not agrarian. Therefore, in what I have to say I shall not follow the precise course of the hon. and learned Member in referring to county by county, but state what I believe to be the condition of agrarian crime in Ireland generally. Now, the hon. and learned Member, if he does in some respects draw a darker view than mine, draws in other respects a lighter view of the state of Ireland. My contention is, that the Government of the country has had, since the foundation of the Land League, to deal with a state of things in Ireland entirely different from any that had been known there for 50 years, and that when you go back for 50 years what you find is a miniature of the operations which have been going on for the last three or four years—I mean that the resistance to tithe, which completely defeated the Government of that day, with all its means, and the Parliament of that day, was, after all, but a miniature of the resistance to rent which has been the basis of the present movement. It was with the greatest astonishment the other day that, when referring to this subject, and attempting to draw a distinction between a political and a social revolution, I heard an hon. Member opposite say they were the same thing. I cannot imagine the state of mind, the state of political vision, of a person who thinks that a political and a social revolution are the same thing. With a political revolution we have ample strength to cope. There is no reason why our cheeks should grow pale, or why our hearts should sink, at the idea of grappling with a political revolution. The strength of this country is tenfold what is required for such a purpose. But a social revolution is a very different matter; and I am grieved to say that, in my opinion, a large number of hon. Members who sit opposite, and among them the hon. and learned Member for Chatham, obviously have not appreciated the gravity of this social revolution. The hon. and learned Member says it may be a fair subject for difference of opinion whether or how far the present state of things in Ireland is owing or is not owing to the Government; and by all means let the hon. and learned Member accuse the conduct of the present Government on this matter or that; but if he could make good every one of his accusations, he would be far, indeed, from showing that he had measured the gravity of the case, or had comprehended what kind of a movement really has been going on in Ireland. Sir, the seat and source of this movement is not to be found during the time the present Government has been in power. It is to be looked for in the foundation of the Land League. The Land League was founded on the doctrine, not of "no rent," but the arbitrary choice of rent; and the right to dissolve and break contracts was proclaimed. No measures were taken against this League—no measures were taken against this doctrine. I am most unwilling to refer in his absence—I do it only historically—to Mr. Parnell; but the plans of that Gentleman were distinctly declared and announced, as far as their principles were concerned, long before this Government came into Office, and Mr. Parnell remained at large. Certain persons were apprehended, but their trials were not prosecuted with the vigour and the expedition that might have been used by the Executive Government. These are facts which cannot be shaken. I do not intend to make them the subject of severe imputation, because I admit that it was difficult to judge. [*A laugh.*] An hon. Member opposite jeers at that; but the subject is really one too serious for me to be turned aside by the manner in which the hon. Member may think fit to receive observations of very great gravity which I make on my responsibility. This is a far larger question than the conduct of any Government. I do not make it a subject of severe censure that the late Government did not foresee the magnitude to which the Land League was to grow, or how it was to take a hold upon the minds of the people of Ireland over a circle infinitely wider than any which has been touched by any movement for the last 50 years. I admit the difficulty of the case, and I do not wish to reflect upon them for it. But at the time when this Government came into Office the Land League was firmly and well established in the land; it had held 200 meetings for its purposes; and the only instrument which had slipped from our hands, inasmuch as only 10 days were left us for the renewal of the Act, was the Peace Preservation Act. I see the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote) smiles. He need not think I am going to make much of this. The only instrument was a Peace Preservation Act, with respect to which I say—that whether it were renewed or whether it were not renewed, was a question infinitely small and insignificant with reference to this great social revolution. The Land League had been founded under the Peace Preservation Act; Mr. Parnell's declarations had been made under the Peace Preservation Act; the Land League had grown and thriven and planted its roots firmly in different quarters of the land under the Peace

Preservation Act; and to say that the non-renewal of that Act was a great and important fact in connection with this controversy indicates a state of mind which wholly fails to appreciate the gravity of the issues before us. I cannot but think that hon. Gentlemen would have lifted themselves above the level on which they have been content to stand had they clearly appreciated the character of this social revolution, and had they been content to fall back on that remarkable declaration of the Duke of Wellington, which I never quoted in this House last year, because it would then have been mischievous, but which it is right and safe now to quote—that warning which he gave to King George IV.—that if ever the time came when there was a war against rent and tithes, the Government would be reduced to extremities, and would have no resources to bring to bear against such a movement. These, Sir, were the circumstances in which we have made a claim on our political opponents; but on the reply to that claim I will not make any observation whatever, except to say that I gladly acknowledge, and have acknowledged in this House, the character of one speech made by the junior Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) at the commencement of this Session which completely answers, as far as we are concerned, to the demand that we made. As to the doctrine laid down by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) at the close of his speech about our policy of mingled coercion and conciliation and about the responsibility of the present Government for the state of Ireland, I will not at present say anything further; but I will give my view of the state of Ireland. The hon. and learned Member brought forward the dark side of the picture only. He did not bring forward the whole case. Nor can I undertake to state the whole case; but I will give an enumeration of its principal features. The hon. and learned Member might have borne in mind that active resistance to the enforcement of the law—I am now mentioning the more favourable circumstances of the case—has ceased in Ireland. So far as I know, it can hardly be said to exist. The payment of rent in that country has been largely and extensively going on; and it is in the power of those who desire to assert their legal claims—if they have no other means of doing it—to enforce them by the law. The action of the Land Act, to which my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary of Ireland, in common with myself, looks as constituting our principal reliance, is daily quickening in extent and laying its hold upon a continuously increasing proportion of the people. We have, in fact, for six months been engaged in—there is no mistake about it—a deadly conflict with an adverse power; and considering that the object of that power was to put an end to the payment of rent, and considering the announcements which were made in other days as to the position in which the Government would be placed when once an organization for that purpose was established, I do not think that we have, on the whole, great reason to be dissatisfied with the progress that has been made in confronting and in conflicting with that adverse power; because, as to its main and principal object, putting an end to the payment of rent, in the terms of the "no rent" manifesto, I will not say absolutely that it has failed, but it has certainly not succeeded, and the power of the Executive and of the Law has made considerable way against it. On the other hand, the hon. and learned Gentleman is perfectly justified in most of the features of the picture he has drawn. It is true that in regard to agrarian crimes, of which alone I speak, we witness the painful spectacle of disagreeing juries and of the escape of offenders. It is true—and it is a marked feature of the case—that there is a most painful character attaching to the present outrages in relation to the causes for which they are inflicted. They are generally inflicted, not because the persons who are the objects of them exercise their rights, but simply because they perform their duty; and it is hardly possible to conceive anything more grievous than a state of things in which that is the case. It is true that there is, I am afraid, on the whole, an aggravation in some degree in the character of the outrages committed, if we compare them with what they were 18 months ago. It is also true that there is an increase in the quantity of those outrages, according to the standard which the hon. and learned Member has adopted. He has followed the figures, I have no doubt, with fidelity, as supplied in the reports of the Assizes. But I do think that those figures fail to convey a full view of the case. We have before us the Reports of Agrarian Offences in the first three months of the present year. One feature of those Reports is the exceedingly large proportion of threatening letters; and, so far as that goes, it is not an aggravation, but a mitigation of their character. But I do not, on the whole, say that the character of the outrages is mitigated. Nor do I think it unnatural that they should become more cruel and severe, guilty as they may be, in proportion to the desperation of those who commit them, and of the persons by whom they may be encouraged. The obvious standard of comparison would be the three first months of last year; but that would not be quite a fair standard, because there can be no doubt that, from whatever cause, at the commencement of last year, there was an almost exceptional reduction of outrages. If we go so far back as last December, and compare that with the previous December, before Parliament met, and the plans of the Government were matured, we find a satisfactory reduction. Since last December the number of outrages has continued without any very great variation, but the case appeared to be rather worse for a time. Whether or not that was owing to a temporary influence arising from the consideration in the House of the Protection of Person and Property Act I cannot say. Subject to that qualification, I do not at all wish the House to suppose that we are otherwise than deeply impressed with the unsatisfactory state of outrages. There is another point in the outrages to which the hon. and learned Member did not refer, and which appears to me to be by far the gravest subject — the absence of evidence that the outrages in Ireland are not associated with some influence behind them higher than that which belongs to those who commit the outrages. It is not for me to explain that influence; but, undoubtedly, I should be very glad to be assured that the funds of the Land League were not made available for the commission of the outrages. I only know one instance in which the subject has been directly mentioned in this House. It was not long after the commencement of the present Session that my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General for Ireland alluded to a case in which money had been sent down from Dublin to a place where Assizes were held for the purpose of defending one of those who I believe were associated with "Captain Moonlight." My right hon. and learned Friend stated on his own knowledge that the counsel for the prisoner had received a fee of 100 guineas; and he asked in the face of the House whether that 100 guineas was or was not contributed from the funds of the Land League? No answer has ever been made to that question. I hope it will be answered; but when we consider what has taken place in Ireland, the language that has been held, the natural effect of that language upon uninstructed minds, the tendency of every movement of this kind to draw into its own channel and to imbue with its own spirit, that part of the population who are naturally the most restless or the most prone to crime, I cannot but say that I think it is in the power of some Gentlemen who regard themselves as more than any others the Representatives of the Irish people, to repress outrage; but, instead of doing much in that direction, they appear to me to be doing nothing at all. There is quoted in a journal of this morning a letter of the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) —I refer to it in order that it may be denied if not true—in which he says—

> "I look upon the English in Ireland as a gang of brigands, whose rule has degraded, and whose actions have impoverished our country; and the captain of the gang is W. E. Forster ——"

MR. HEALY: The major portion of the quotation is accurate, but what I said about the captain of the gang came on a later part of the speech.

MR. GLADSTONE: The report has, no doubt, been compressed. But what must be the effect of this sort of language in Ireland—language which holds up to the people in Ireland all the agents of the Government and of the law as being English and as being a gang of brigands? If the Government and the agents of the Government are a gang of brigands, then resistance to the Government is lawful and right, and if that resistance cannot be carried on in the open field then no very great blame would attach to those who carried on the resistance in secret. If the Government are the enemies of society, those who resist the Government have, at all events, some title to be considered as the friends of society. If language of this kind does not directly lead people to the commission of crimes as horrible as those quoted by the hon. and learned Gentleman, it brings them dangerously near the commission of those crimes. When other passions, perhaps private passions, are all in a state of susceptibility, and when stimulants of this kind are administered, I cannot but say that, in my opinion, that item which the hon. and learned Gentleman has omitted from his case is by far the most formidable feature in it—namely, the sadly strong presumption that behind the commission of these outrages there are influences at work higher than any that belong to those who commit them. I will endeavour to give a fair and rapid view of the state of Ireland, so far as I am able to give it. It is by no means one of an unqualified character. I think that the means and materials for improvement are working powerfully in the country. I think that as regards outrage we can say that the condition of the country is anything but highly satisfactory. The hon. and learned Gentleman says it would be our duty to make proposals in the matter immediately after the Easter Recess. I am much obliged to him for advising the Government as to the time they should select for announcing their proposals on a subject of this character; but it must be obvious to the House that it is the duty of the Government to choose that time for themselves. No man can suppose that, after a measure so exceptional and remarkable as that of last year, we can pass on through the present year, or pass onwards to the time for the expiration of that measure, without bringing the whole matter before the House, and making known to the House what proposals we may thing necessary, or the reasons why such and such proposals are not made; but as to the time for that declaration, we must reserve that to ourselves. We cannot accept from the hon. and learned Gentleman the indication of that time. He is not responsible. We are responsible; and we are sensible of the gravity of that responsibility. I believe it is the gravest that has ever rested on the shoulders of any Government with respect to Ireland since the great war of resistance to the tithes. I think it was, to a certain extent, on the shoulders of the late Government, and they were but little conscious of it; although I am not making that a matter of accusation or complaint. We, at any rate, ought to be conscious of it by this time, and we shall act, I hope, as men who are conscious of that responsibility. Most certainly neither the Chief Secretary for Ireland nor myself should be guilty of such dereliction of our duties, and attempt to throw on the right hon. and learned Gentleman, or others, the burden of suggesting what measures, remedial or otherwise, may be necessary for dealing with the state of Ireland. The responsibility belongs to us; we recognize the difficulty, and we must choose our own time and the method of performance. The hon. and learned Gentleman will see that no advantage would be gained by my attempting to anticipate the period at the present moment; but I can assure the House that there is no disposition on our part to undervalue the gravity of the matter, and that as far as our thoughts and energies will carry us, we shall endeavour to apply them to the performance of one of the gravest duties that was ever incumbent upon any Government in this country.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I cannot but think, Sir, that the speech to which we have just listened is not only a disappointing, but, to some extent, an alarming speech. I must say that I think the opening remarks of the Prime Minister, and his comments on the course taken by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham in bringing this matter before the House, were rather unreasonable. Everybody must have felt that it was not to be expected that Parliament should separate at the present time and under the present circumstances, without some reference being made or some question being addressed to the Government on the condition of Ireland. Even if no Notice had been given, I think it would have been the duty of the Minister chiefly responsible for the government of Ireland to be in his place to answer questions. But the case is a great deal stronger than that, for my hon. and learned Friend gave Notice of his intention to call attention to this matter at a time when the Chief Secretary for Ireland was in his place, and I think we have a right to complain that the Chief Secretary for Ireland, unless prevented by very strong reasons, is not here to give some explanations upon a subject which interests, not only this House, but the whole country. Nobody can deny that there is upon this subject a feeling in the country of great anxiety on the one hand, and of great indignation on the other, excited by the reports we have from day to day, and statements made in the most formal and official manner, as to the condition of Ireland, and the insecurity of life and property that prevails in that country. My hon. and learned Friend has, I think, taken a course entirely consistent with his duty as a Member of Parliament in simply calling the attention of the Government in the most temperate manner, and because the most temperate therefore the most telling manner, to the state of things in that country. He says—"I will not endeavour to cast any blame upon the Government, but I will simply ask them this question—Are you prepared to deal with this state of things? Or will you be prepared to do so when the House re-assembles? Or what will you do?" It is natural that the Government should say that they require the Easter Recess to consider such a question as that, but it was in their power to materially qualify the statements made by my hon. and learned Friend. They have not only not qualified those statements—they have intensified them—they have given them a more serious character than they previously bore. What is the reply they make? It is to a certain extent an attempt to throw upon their Predecessors the blame for the existing state of things. I will not go into that, for I think it is unworthy to endeavour to divert attention from a question of such pressing importance as the existing state of things in Ireland by entering upon the question as to whether or not the Land League should have been prosecuted earlier. If the Government comes to comparisons, I think we could make not a bad case as compared to that of the present Government. But I leave that aspect of the case on one side, because it is blinding the House and the country to the real issue. The question before us is, whether the condition of that country is one compatible with the first demands of a civilized Government, and whether the Government will tell us that they are prepared, or when they will be prepared, to make proposals to remedy that state of affairs? I am told that a great deal can be said with regard to the difference between a political and a social revolution, and that if this were merely a political revolution, there would be no difficulty in dealing with it, but as it is a social revolution, the difficulties are great. But the more this case is different from a mere political revolution, the more necessary is it for us to ask ourselves—"What is this revolution that is going on? What is this evil of which we see the signs and concerning which we hear a good deal of vague and general language? How is it to be dealt with?" So far as we can gather from the Prime Minister, it is to be dealt with only by leaving it alone and leaving it to the operation of the Land Act. When we compared the state of crime now with that a year ago, we have always been told we were not making fair comparisons, because crime in former years was due to the state of the law. That has now been altered; there is an Act passed by the Government to meet the case, which, we are told, is working well—and yet, what do we see? Outrages have not only not diminished, but they have increased, and the state of the country is worse than ever. I think we have reason to apprehend from the language we have heard that even now Her Majesty's Government have not made up their minds to face the difficulty. If there is anything to be done they must be prepared to act and to act with vigour, founded upon conviction, without too much regard to the disagreeable taunts or obstacles which they may have to overcome. It cannot be pleasant for the Government—we know it cannot be pleasant for any Government—to have to deal with such a state of things. Still more, we feel how unpleasant it must be, how particularly mortifying it must be, to those who, in former times, have used such language with regard to the condition of Ireland and with regard to the mode in which they were going to deal with all the evils of Ireland to have to confess themselves wrong and to act in this matter. We call upon them—the country calls upon them—to show themselves equal to the emergency. I think the observations that have previously been made by the Prime Minister, and to a certain extent again to-day, to the effect that he does not receive the support that he ought to receive from his political opponents, and that he does not receive the support he ought from the landed gentry in Ireland, are beside the question, and are altogether unjustified. We have to thank my hon. and learned Friend for having called attention to this subject, and for the manner in which he has done so; and I must express my great disappointment at the tone and the substance of the answer he has received.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he had listened, as no doubt every Member of the House had listened, to the speech of the Prime Minister with the deepest attention. He was in hopes that they might receive from the right hon. Gentleman some idea or suggestion of what might possibly be a new development of his Irish policy. They had not received any such suggestion. He did not expect that the Prime Minister would state to the House the exact way in which he proposed to deal with Ireland. But he did think the right hon. Gentleman would acknowledge the utter failure of his coercion policy. His speech contained no suggestion or opinion of that kind. On the contrary, he seemed to be in the same state of mind as heretofore, and he seemed to show that the Government still thought all they had to do was to charge the disturbance in Ireland upon the Leaders of the Land League and their policy, and to ask the House to follow him in enacting any repressive measures which he might introduce. The right hon. Gentleman at the same time made a distinct charge, the most distinct, perhaps, they had yet heard made in the House, against the Leaders of the Land League in connection with outrages in Ireland. He said, in effect, and the words might as well have been spoken frankly, that he believed the outrages in Ireland were associated with some influence behind and higher than those who actually committed them; and he expressed a doubt whether funds collected for the Land League had not been applied in some cases to the encouragement of outrage. Well, he was not a member of the Executive of the Land League. He held no place whatever in its body, except that of an ordinary humble member; but those who were administering the affairs of the Land League he knew well. He knew what they did, and what their hopes and ambitions were with regard to Ireland; and he would say that there was not in that House any body of men against whom such a charge could be less justly brought than the Executive Committee of the Land League. They were men not one of whom was capable of having the slightest sympathy or part in the commission of outrage. From the Prime Minister himself down to the obscurest Member of the House, there was no man less likely to be guilty of such acts than every member of the Executive of the Land League in Ireland. That was the only refutation he could give to the charge of the Prime Minister; and from his knowledge of the men—the House might take his knowledge for what it was worth—he could declare that the accusation was not only unjust, but was preposterous. A not very generous use had been made by the right hon. Gentleman of the expressions employed by the hon. Member for Wexford in speaking of a Member of the English Government in Ireland as being something like a king of the brigands. The right hon. Gentleman asked whether stigmatizing a Government in that way did not amount to a declaration that private acts of revenge might be as legitimate as resistance to the Government? The right hon. Gentleman, therefore, charged his hon. Friend with distinctly inciting to crime and assassination. He (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) would like to put a case to the right hon. Gentleman, and he was only sorry that the Prime Minister was not in his place to give them his fair and impartial judgment upon it. The right hon. Gentleman once denounced the Government of Naples, and stated that open resistance to that Government would have been lawful and just if the people were strong enough. His words undoubtedly bore the interpretation that he would countenance such resistance if it were strong enough to be successful. Did he mean to say that he was thereby making himself responsible for the encouragement of crime and assassination in Naples? If he did not mean to say that, could he with candour or with justice endeavour to connect the hon. Member for Wexford with outrage or crime of any kind?

The right hon. Gentleman had also spoken of the employment by the Land League of counsel for the defence of a prisoner accused of having committed an outrage. Did he mean to infer that because they employed counsel in a case, they sympathized with the commission of outrage? He (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) knew nothing whatever of the transaction; he did not know whether counsel was employed or not; but even if the Land League did pay for counsel, he did not see how that showed their sympathy with the criminal or with the accusation brought against him. Surely the Crown itself would retain counsel to defend prisoners who had no other means of obtaining defence. If that be the only ground upon which the Prime Minister rested the charge against the Land League of complicity with outrage, he should say he was surprised the right hon. Gentleman should have brought so flimsy and foolish an accusation forward in the midst of a discussion so grave and serious He (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) had listened with great attention to the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). Although he (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) looked at these matters from a different point of view, yet had the hon. and learned Gentleman introduced some few alterations in his Amendment, he should have been inclined to agree with him. He was ready to admit that there had been an increase in agrarian crime, that the administration of justice and of the affairs of Ireland generally had failed, and also that the case was one of extreme gravity. As regarded the remarks of learned Judges referred to by the hon. and learned Member, he was sorry to say that Judges in Ireland did not hold the same relation to the public as they did in this country. In this country there was no partizanship on the part of the Judges; but in Ireland they exercised functions which almost compelled them to be politicians. Many of them, for instance, were members of the Privy Council, and when they had in that capacity procured the proclamation of a certain district on the ground that outrages were committed there, they were then sent down to the same district to try the persons accused of those offences. Recently they had had the case of a Judge being obliged to retire from the Bench on the hearing of a political case, because he had committed himself to an opinion concerning it in a previous Charge. All this was hardly compatible with a sound administration of justice, and was not compatible with freedom in the public mind from suspicion of these Judges. Some of these Judges who now bore so hardly on violent speech-making and agitation had been noted in their younger days for their passionate utterances and keen agitation. The speeches and actions of embryo Judges in Ireland were of such a character that it was impossible for the words of an Irish Judge to have the same influence over the Irish people as the words of an English Judge had over the people of this country. He did not in the least dispute the assertion that crime had increased of late in Ireland. A great part of the case he wished to make out consisted in the admission that crimes in Ireland had recently increased, both in numbers and in gravity. But he wanted the House to believe that it was the coercive policy of the Government which had brought about the present state of affairs. In the discussions on the Coercion Bill in that House, one of the strongest arguments which the Irish Party endeavoured to impress upon the Government was that if the Government removed the Leaders of such a movement as the Land League, and prevented its meetings, there must, as a matter of course, be a return to a *régime* of midnight conspiracy. But that was distinctly what the Government had done in the present case. They had put down the Land League and had restored to their former power the Ribbon and other secret conspiracies. It was the honest, patient, earnest effort of Mr. Davitt and his colleagues to put an end to the era of midnight conspiracy in Ireland; but the right hon. Gentleman had prevented politicians from discussing their grievances on public platforms before their countrymen, and had brought back the conspirator to take the place of the agitator. The Government, therefore, could not be surprised at what had since happened. A striking instance of the effect of that policy occurred in the county of Longford. At the time of the discussion on the Coercion Bill he had challenged the Government to show a single instance of agrarian crime from that county. But now, although the

Land League there had been totally suppressed, the number of such crimes had assumed serious proportions. That was the actual result all over Ireland of the policy of Her Majesty's Government. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the social revolution which was going on in that country. He was glad that the right hon. Gentleman admitted that the agitation had assumed that character. The right hon. Gentleman had also referred to a remark of the Duke of Wellington. He thought he might as well have quoted from a speech of a later day which was made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. In his speech on the Coercion Act of 1866 or 1867 the right hon. Gentleman declared that the difficulty seemed to be that they were threatened in the future with a strike against rents, and if that came about it would be impossible for a Government to meet it with any success. If the Government were possessed of so much prescience as that, why were they not prepared with some policy which was more fit for the occasion than the clumsy, ineffectual, and miserable Coercion Act which had recently been passed? But he could not discern any signs of change in the mind of the Government from which he could hope for any improvement, and the state of things must grow from bad to worse the longer the Coercion policy continued. The Government had of late been pursuing a policy at once truculent and mean. Sheridan had described the administration of India in the days of the East India Company as the rule of a man who wielded a sabre with one hand and picked a pocket with the other. In the same way the policy of the present Government might be described as that of a man who thrust home a bayonet with one hand and opened a letter with the other. That was a policy which never would bring peace to Ireland, nor win the people of that country to sympathize with the English Government. The practice of arresting young women and convicting them for having publicly uttered a few words, which were not even taken down by the informer, was not calculated to discourage conspiracy or outrage. So far as the Government had gone, they had been the direct cause of the revival of conspiracy and midnight outrage; and he warned them that if they persisted in the course they were pursuing, they would find that they had repressed agitation only to create conspiracy.

Sir JOHN HAY said, he had listened with great interest to the speech of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham; but he was sorry to say that the reply which was made by the Prime Minister, and, to some extent, the answer to him made by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, he could not think had been satisfactory to the House. They heard a tale of crime and outrage in Ireland which was disgraceful to civilization, and they were told by the Prime Minister that against a political revolution he would know how to deal, but that he was entirely ignorant how to deal with a social revolution. He did not believe that any person in the position of Prime Minister of England should acknowledge that there was any danger which could exist in the presence of which his heart should quail or his cheek turn pale. That must be unsatisfactory to the country. One thing that appeared to him to be wanting was courage — and what he thought was necessary was that the present system of administration in Ireland having signally failed, and the remedial legislation which had been tried having been shown to be a failure, the House itself, by its independent Members, should point out in what manner the government of Ireland might be conducted so as not to be a disgrace to Europe and civilization. They had been told that the amount of crime in the month of December was decreasing; but, so far as he could judge, the statement of the Prime Minister was inaccurate. He had the Return for the month of December and the months preceding, and found that in October the number of cases was 511, in November 534, and in December 574—a gradual increase—there being a total of 4,439 crimes committed during the last year. That was a statement of crime which must surely excite the contempt of this country. If it had happened in Bulgaria, or Russia, or Naples, the Prime Minister himself would have called for remonstrances; and one was only surprised that the Great Powers of Europe did not remonstrate with the Government of this country for the condition which Ireland was in. About a year ago the Protection of Person and Property Act was passed. The statement that then was made was, that if that Act was passed, if it were given to the Government, the result would be an immediate reduction of the amount of crime in Ireland. It was pointed out by the Chief Secretary for Ireland that the Westmeath Act had been passed, and that the result of it was so summary and so expeditious that only 19 outrages were brought to trial since it had been passed. But while the agrarian outrages in 1880, omitting threatening letters, did not amount to more than 1,253, they now had to contemplate, after making a similar omission, more than 4,000 outrages, or treble the number that occurred in the year he had mentioned. The prediction of the right hon. Gentleman, therefore, had not been verified. The Chief Secretary for Ireland also pointed out, as an argument in favour of the Protection of Person and Property Act, that, if it were passed, it would aim at persons who were beyond reach; that its object was to deter by arresting persons whom, if he had knowledge of, he would immediately arrest; and that there were three categories who, if known to the police, would be arrested. These were members of the old Ribbon Societies, Fenians, and persons—*mauvais sujets*—well known to the police, who, he explained, if at large, must incite to crime, but whose arrest would at once put a stop to crime and outrage in Ireland. The result had been a decided failure. The arrests under that Act amounted to 800, and at this moment 600 persons were in gaol, at the instance of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, under the authority of this Act. So far as they knew—and they accepted his statement as being thoroughly accurate—the Chief Secretary for Ireland himself had personally investigated every one of these 800 cases. Some Friends said that not above 10 per cent of the persons reported to him were arrested; and if that were so, he had examined, with all his other duties, 8,000 cases, and that must be a labour which few Judges would undertake. However, they had his word for it that at least he had examined personally 800 cases; and each of them, if there were no more, had been persons whom he fairly could suspect of inciting to violence, or being, in some way or other, connected with the categories he had mentioned — Ribbon Societies, Fenians, or *mauvais sujets*. He (Sir John Hay) had looked over the Return laid on the Table. It was stated that hon. Members who represented more especially the persons arrested would have an opportunity in the House of challenging and inquiring into the condition and cases of the arrested persons under this Act; but, as far as he knew, none of these persons were suspected either of being members of Ribbon Societies, of being Fenians, or generally of being village ruffians, and he did see with great regret a document of that importance placed on the Table, containing the names of batches of persons who were at this moment undergoing punishment—undergoing solitary confinement for no crime assigned. There were pages with "ditto" after the names, and they had to go over page after page to ascertain for what reason these persons were deprived of their liberty. They might be guilty; but he said these men were entitled to trial, and trial could not be too soon, either to prove them guilty or free them from arrest. They had no knowledge of the mode or process by which a criminal information was laid before the Chief Secretary for Ireland to enable him to investigate these matters. Who suspected? So far as they knew, it was the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Who was the witness? So far as they knew, it was the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Who tried the cases? So far as they knew, it was the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Who was the gaoler? So far as they knew, it was the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He was Judge and jury and everything but executioner, for which office, no doubt, his heart was too humane, and that was not in his power; but he (Sir John Hay) thought that it was monstrous that above 30 murders should have been committed in Ireland, and that not one single execution should have taken place in consequence of them. If crime were arrested by these means, there would be some satisfaction, both to the House and the country; but even by these high-handed proceedings, contrary to law, crime was not stopped. The crimes went on as before. Persons were locked up, against whom they had no charge, and these persons being locked up, the same crimes went on, and they had no sort of means of knowing that by locking these persons up they either stopped the crime, or that they had been guilty of inciting persons to commit crime. That was unsatisfactory to the country, and it pointed, in his opinion, to that which he trusted to have heard from the Government, and which he should have been glad to have heard suggested by his right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition—that which had been recommended by a Committee of the House of Lords, presided over by a noble Marquess who had been a Member of Her Majesty's Government—namely, the suspension of trial by jury in Ireland. It seemed to him that after they had heard the statements of the Judges, there was but one logical conclusion to the statement of the Prime Minister, and that was that trial by jury should be suspended in Ireland. But his right hon. Friend the Member for North Devonshire and the Prime Minister said it was not the time for making any further suggestion for the government of Ireland. He should not hesitate to indicate the course which he had indicated elsewhere. He might be told he was not responsible. In one sense he was not; but he was responsible as a Member of the House, who had voted for the Protection of Person and Property Act for the government of Ireland. It seemed to him, in the first place, that they should recall the Lord Lieutenant, that they should abolish the system of governing Ireland from Dublin Castle, and that they should govern it through the Home Office as they governed Scotland and the Isle of Man. So long as they maintained the Government at the Castle, such as it was, it seemed to him that so long would they have dissatisfaction in Ireland, and they would have Ireland misgoverned, as it had been for generations. With regard to the process by which it should be governed, in his opinion they should give the military authorities power, with the enormous force they had in Ireland, to maintain law and order there; and they should appoint a Committee of Irish Judges to proceed through the country, under the protection of the military authorities, to try every person who was in prison, and acquit those who were found innocent, and punish those who might be found guilty of breaches of the law. It seemed to him that unless some exceptional course such as that was taken by the House and the Government, the state of Ireland would continue a disgrace to civilization, and a disgrace to Europe. It might be said that, in addition to that, Irishmen would not be satisfied until they got some measure of Home Rule. He would give them some measure of Home Rule. He would allow Ireland to continue to have a qualified representation in this House, and to have, in their respective Provinces, such Parliament—if they pleased so to call it—or Local Government Board, as might be settled by Parliament, for the administration of law and government in Ireland. He did not hesitate to suggest this, because he believed it had already been suggested by a great statesman—Lord John Russell. There they would find a sufficient mode of governing Ireland, with some satisfaction to those who were within its borders; and, after all, that was what was already admitted in one part of Her Majesty's Dominions—the Isle of Man—the best governed part of the Empire. The Islanders had their Local Parliament, and full control over all their local affairs, yet the Central Government retained within its hands the Customs Revenue, the Postal Revenue, and the Army and Navy. There would be no difficulty in introducing a like system in Ireland, where already the greater part of the Inland Revenue charge was excused, as were also the Land Tax, the Inhabited House Duty, and the Railway Passenger Duty. Under such a system, the internal affairs of Ireland would be much better conducted than they were now. Imperial affairs might well be managed through the Home Office, as was the case with Scotland. But, in his opinion, no measure dealing with Ireland would be satisfactory unless large provision were made for emigration. He saw with regret that the slight increase and improvement in the harvest in the last year had considerably diminished emigration from Ireland. In 1880 the number of emigrants was 95,857, whereas in 1881 there were only 78,719. It seemed to him that unless they encouraged, and, in some degree, almost compelled, the reduction of the population of Ireland, it was impossible to look for good government in that country. They had had it stated in Returns that there were in Ireland 200,000 tenants living on patches of ground under five acres, and 200,000 more on patches under 10 acres. There was a total population of 2,000,000 living on these patches under 10 acres. He knew something of land of that kind in the part of Scotland in which he lived, and knew that it was utterly impossible for a man to live on less than 20 acres. If 1,500,000 persons were removed by emigration there would not be the destitution and crime which existed at present in Ireland. No doubt objection would be raised on the score of expense. Each emigrant would cost £9 or £10; and the total amount required would be about £18,000,000. But that would only represent an income tax of one-third of a penny in the pound; and if we had given £20,000,000 for the abolition of slavery in our West Indian Islands, £18,000,000 was hardly too high a price to pay for order and contentment in Ireland. That sum of money given to Ireland would benefit our Canadian and other Colonies, and would at once relieve the plethora and congestion of population, which was the main evil from which Ireland suffered. As a Scotch Member, who had himself done something in the reclamation of land, and as an employer of Irish labour, he ventured to make that recommendation to the House; and he ventured to think that he could do so with some degree of authority. There was another suggestion he wished to make. He was no supporter of the Land Act; but as it had interfered in the relations between landlord and tenant, he saw no reason why a like interference should not be made between the unfortunate tenant and the usurers who kept them in a state of perpetual poverty. Why should not so much of the old Usury Law be re-enacted as would prevent exorbitant charges of interest, and its accumulation on the heads of these unfortunate persons, or some similiar measure be passed for their benefit? He ventured to make these suggestions for the consideration especially of his right hon. Friend the Member for North Devon and his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, that the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government had, in his speech that afternoon, again displayed his masterly policy of evasion. The right hon. Gentleman was the patron and promoter and admirer of the Land League until it had ceased to serve his political purposes. The right hon. Gentleman had tried to shuffle off some of the responsibility which attached itself on to the shoulders of some Members of that House, who were dimly hinted at, and who, in some mysterious manner, were supposed to have subsidized outrage. In the whole course of his experience in that House, he never before heard anything so remarkable from the lips of a person upon whom so much depended for the promotion of harmony, or for the dissemination of discord and distrust, as the suggestion of the Prime Minister that because counsel were feed, or alleged to have been feed, for the defence of accused prisoners, therefore American money was being employed to subsidize outrage. Why, if it was Lamson, the poisoner, or the most wretched criminal that ever appeared at the bar, and there was any question as to whether he would receive fair play, was there an honourable man who would hesitate to contribute some mite to at least giving him an opportunity of placing his case before the jury who were trying him for his life? With regard to the trial of the miserable M'Lean, which was now coming on—why, the very Government that was prosecuting him had also furnished him with counsel to defend him. Were they to conclude that because Her Majesty's Government had feed the counsel that were to defend M'Lean, that, therefore, they were in favour of the detestable crime of which M'Lean was charged? If the right hon. Gentleman were to make such a statement before a meeting, not of Irish Americans, but even of Yankee Americans, he would be greeted with a torrent of hisses. Never had he heard so paltry and unworthy an insinuation from any responsible person. He was well aware that dreadful outrages had been committed in Ireland. He had never spoken without condemning them; and he was perfectly sure that if the Irish Members and others imprisoned in Dublin, and all the Land League agitators, had been fully and correctly reported, their speeches would be found to be full of denunciation of outrage. The opinion on the subject in this country was formed from the exaggerated and unfounded statements of the Dublin Correspondent of *The Times*, who was editor and part proprietor of *The Daily Express*, the rabid Tory organ. That man was denounced by the moderate Isaac Butt as a professional liar. Nine-tenths of the people of Ireland would endorse the declaration that the statements daily inserted in the London *Times* by Dr. Patton, who was a moral criminal, were inserted with the deliberate purpose of misleading English opinion and of blackening the character of the Irish people. No man in Ireland, he believed, within his opportunity and during his time, had done as much to set nation against nation as the Dublin Correspondent of the London *Times*. But he did not say that his conduct was of a much graver character than the officials of Dublin Castle. Irish Members had been blamed for not condemning outrage. The charge was untrue. But, he would ask, why did not Englishmen denounce the outrages innumerable—the violent assaults, murders, and nameless crimes which took place in this country? No English Members had spoken half so strongly against those outrages as Irish Members had spoken against Irish outrages. But he could not but remember that the same charges brought by the Prime Minister against Mr. Parnell and his Friends had been brought by him three or four years ago against the whole Conservative Party, whom he accused of indifference to the outrages which had been perpetrated in Bulgaria. But there were two classes of outrages—first, outrages of revenge; next, outrages of provocation. Irish Members deplored and condemned both classes; but English Members confined themselves to denunciation of the crimes of revenge. What could be expected when magistrates who were discredited and dismissed from English appointments were thought good enough for Ireland, and when Englishmen's ideas of Ireland were derived from such unscrupulous libellers of all classes in Ireland—from the priest in the sanctuary to the humblest peasant, as Terence M'Grath? He challenged the Government to deny was not Henry Blake, that little Cossack, despot of the West of Ireland? What could be thought of a Government which was driven to have recourse to a Statute of Edward III., framed for the punishment of "sturdy vagabonds and suspected bandits," in order to imprison a delicate girl, Miss Mary O'Connor, the sister of a Member of that House? It had been proved, and was admitted by the Castle authorities, that Miss O'Connor had steadily recommended an abstinence from outrage, and had counselled the people to pay a fair rent, and her definition of a fair rent was the one given by a Catholic Prelate, Archbishop M'Cabe. Why did not the Government, instead of arresting a girl of feeble health, strike high, and arrest the venerable Archbishop? But Miss O'Connor's definition of fair rent was not only identical with that of the Archbishop, but was virtually the same as that given by Mr. Justice O'Hagan himself, the Chief Commissioner under the Land Act, who defined a fair rent to be that under which a tenant might "live and thrive." And yet she had been imprisoned under an Act intended for sturdy vagabonds and suspected bandits. These were some of the outrages and provocations which stimulated outrages of revenge. At this moment Miss O'Connor's brother, the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), was addressing vast audiences of Irish-Americans; and the recital of this one cowardly act of the Government would be more certain to rouse a desperate and hostile feeling against them among all who sympathized with the Land League than 100 incendiary speeches from the Home Rule Benches. The Government were trying, under cover of a miserable failure of the ghastly Land Act, to introduce new measures of coercion; but he told them there was a spirit abroad which, in these days of civilization, defied the resources of Liberal civilization. So long as the Government continued the policy of brute force, most assuredly the present condition of affairs in Ireland would remain. He was still, as he had been two years ago, in favour of a fair settlement of the Irish agrarian question—a settlement which should be fair to the landlord as well as to the tenant. The suspension of the Constitution in Ireland had only resulted, as had been prophesied, in giving a great increase of power to Ribbon lodges and the midnight assassin. The Government would have to revert to a policy of justice to Ireland. He hoped it was not too late. He was glad to say that the policy sketched out from the Front Opposition Bench would be infinitely more favourable to the Irish tenant, and more conducive to the peace and harmony of Ireland, than the brutal and cowardly procedure of the so-called Liberal Government.

Mr. REDMOND said, he considered that the heavy indictment framed by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) lay entirely, not against the Irish people, but against the Government. All that had been said that afternoon pointed directly to the one great fact that the policy of the Government in Ireland had been a dismal failure. The Prime Minister had alluded to the Coercion Act; but from beginning to end his speech contained no fact or argument to show that the Act had succeeded. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had attempted to prove that it had been a partial success, in that it had defeated the "no rent" manifesto. But that manifesto was the direct result of the Coercion Act. Therefore, the argument of the Chief Secretary for Ireland was this—that the "no rent" manifesto having been created by the Coercion Act long after the latter became law, the "no rent" manifesto was now partly overcome by the Coercion Act. No one could fail to be impressed by the description of the condition of Ireland given by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham. But it seemed to have been forgotten that what had happened was only what had been directly and solemnly predicted by himself and his Friends. Up to the date of the arrest of the leaders of the Land League the land movement in Ireland had been carried on with less violence and outrage than any similar movement in any country of Europe. If an increase of crime had followed the recent action of the Government, it was certainly not the consequence of the action of the Land League, but of the action of the Government. When the Land League was first started it was an open organization, with every meeting open to the light of day; but the Government had stepped in and deprived Ireland of the only restraining influences which stood between the prisons and the wrongs of the people and the promptings of a terrible but foolish revenge. The course the Government had taken and were pursuing was one which would plunge Ireland deeper and deeper into a state which was a disgrace to any Government which professed to be civilized. Day by day, through the fault of the Government, the condition of Ireland was becoming worse. The police had been proved to be useless; they were unable to arrest the men who committed outrages; and then the Chief Secretary for Ireland came to their aid, and, acting upon their dark hints, took up and imprisoned, not the village ruffians who committed the crimes, but the most respectable men in the locality, whose influence had always been exercised to prevent outrage, and whose arrest increased the exasperation of the people. The Prime Minister had made an unjustifiable—he would say a brutal—attack upon the men whom he had under lock and key in the prisons of Ireland, when he charged them with complicity in the outrages which had been committed. And, having put them in prison, the right hon. Gentleman now turned to the Irish Members and asked them to assist in putting outrage down. If the Prime Minister considered any men on those Benches guilty of encouraging outrage he was acting a cowardly part in not bringing them into a Court of Law, and giving them an opportunity of dealing with the charge. It was said that the funds of the Land League were spent in encouraging the commission of outrages. That charge was not made by the Prime Minister, who evidently thought it was true, but shrank from making it. The sole foundation for such an insinuation was that a certain sum was paid to defend a certain prisoner. But an accused person was to be regarded as innocent until he was convicted; and, therefore, those who supplied money for his defence would be perfectly justified in doing so. The veriest criminal in this country, from the liberality of the English people or otherwise, found means for paying for his defence. But, in his opinion, there was a fund from which men who committed outrages were paid, and that was the Secret Service Fund. ["Hear!" *and* "No!"] He did not mean that the Government offered a man money for committing outrages; but the police went about the country asking people whether they knew anything about outrages which were to be committed, and then some designing fellow instigated some foolish or passionate man to commit crime, and, having done so, came and claimed the money from the police. He was glad that before the rising of the House allusion had been made to the arrest of Miss O'Connor, who had been sent to prison for six months. She was not the only lady who had been so treated. He held in his hand some Papers about the imprisonment of Miss M'Cormack, who, in bad health, was now in Limerick Gaol. Miss M'Cormack had the misfortune to carry on her operations in the district ruled by Mr. Clifford Lloyd. She was brought before him without warrant, and without any explanation given; no evidence was produced, and no opportunity for defence was allowed. She was charged with inciting to discontent—a vague accusation—and was immediately ordered to find security for her good behaviour for three months, or in default to go to gaol; and when she claimed to be sent to trial she was committed to prison under powers given to the magistrate by an old law of Edward III. Thus, the result was that a young lady of 20 was imprisoned without being heard in her own defence. Another lady was imprisoned for six months. It was to be borne in mind that although these ladies were not subjected to the treatment inflicted on male prisoners, they had, nevertheless, to suffer solitary confinement; and it was nothing less than inhuman for any Government to pursue such a policy as that. He drew the attention of the Solicitor General for Ireland to this matter, and would ask the Government what was to be their course of action in the future? The Prime Minister had said that he would not take from the hon. and learned Member for Chatham any directions as to the time when a new policy might be announced; but surely that time had nearly come. The English people were beginning to see that coercion had failed, and were asking when, where, and how it was all to end? If the Government had pursued one policy alone, either of repression or redress, they might have succeeded. He could understand, and even respect, the man who believed that Ireland could be ruled only by force; but was that the belief of the Government? If so, they must proceed by coercion, and hang and flog as well as imprison on suspicion; and as for the Irish people, he could only say that they had survived the attacks of men who had a greater capacity, if a less desire, for repression than the present Chief Secretary for Ireland. He believed, therefore, they would survive the force of oppression to-day. The only way, however, to bring Ireland back to a condition of peace, and quiet, and contentment, was by adopting a wise policy of conciliation; and if they had done this at first, and kept coercion as a stone in the sleeve with which to punish the Irish people if the Land Act failed, they would have succeeded far better than they had done. He asked the Government, in all seriousness, to abandon the hateful measures which had proved utterly useless for the suppression of outrages and agitation, and to substitute for them measures of conciliation, which was the only remedy for the present unhappy condition of the country. If they did not, they would be only hastening the day when the Irish people, freed from the oppression of England, would be able to legislate well and wisely for themselves in a Parliament of their own.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he wished to avoid saying anything that might in any way add to the difficulties of what the Prime Minister had just described as the "grave position" in which the Ministry now found itself with regard to the government of Ireland It was impossible for the Prime Minister to accuse Members of the Conservative Party of anything like factious opposition to the Government on this question. Hon. Members on that side of the House had loyally supported the Government of the Queen even in cases where their natural feelings were opposed to its action. The Conservative Party assisted the Ministry in passing the Act which they declared necessary for the protection of life and property in Ireland. When the Land Act was before the House—a measure which, in the opinion of hon. Members on that side of the House, was in the highest degree unjust and impolitic, and that view had been completely justified by the course of events since its enactment—they did not offer to that Bill an unreasonable opposition. The Conservative Party in the House of Lords had it in their power to reject the Land Bill altogether; but they refused to take a step which, they were told, in the judgment of the Ministry, would have been injurious to the interests of order in Ireland. But the right hon. Gentleman made certain statements which required immediate and complete refutation. The Prime Minister endeavoured to shift the responsibility for the deplorable state of Ireland upon the Conservative Party by statements which were absolutely inaccurate, as he would show. He said that the Land League had acquired overwhelming influence and power in Ireland before the fall of the late Government. He also ridiculed the idea that the abandonment of the Peace Preservation Act had led, in any way, to the present anarchy in Ireland, and that its maintenance would have preserved order in that country. Neither of these allegations of the right hon. Gentleman would bear examination for a single moment. The Land League had little or no influence in Ireland when the present Ministry came into Office. It had not been founded more than nine months. Lawlessness and crime had hardly begun to raise their heads, and they were at once checked by the firmness of Lord Beaconsfield's Government. Agrarian outrages of all kinds, which, in November, 1879, had reached a total of about 150, at once began to diminish after the arrest of Michael Davitt. Month by month they grew less, until in April, 1880—that was the month in which Lord Beaconsfield resigned—they only amounted to 69. The moment that the fatal impulse of the weakness and incapacity of the present Ministry was recognized in Ireland the tale of outrage steadily and rapidly increased, until, in December, 1880, it had swollen to the enormous total of 867—a number of crimes in one month exceeding the total which had been committed during the whole 12 months of 1879, when a Conservative Ministry was in Office. The agrarian offences, which numbered 863 in 1879, increased to 2,590 in 1880; six-sevenths of these took place in the last eight months of that year, when the right hon. Gentleman was in Office. In 1881 they had risen to the monstrous total of 4,713. During the first three months of this year the increase in number had been still more alarming, while the character of the crimes had been peculiarly atrocious. These facts were a complete answer to the statement of the Prime Minister; and they fixed the responsibility for the existing state of Ireland, beyond the possibility of escape, upon the Prime Minister and his Colleagues. The Peace Preservation Act, which he had treated with so much contempt, was originally his own production. It was considerably mitigated by Lord Beaconsfield; yet the late Government were able with it to maintain order and peace in Ireland. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India once compared that Act to a "garden engine;" but it was with this "garden engine" that Lord Beaconsfield governed Ireland well and peacefully for six trying years—years when the earth refused to return her fruits, and when the commercial and social distress that prevailed might have furnished an excuse for agitation and disorder. The present Ministry had had in their favour two bountiful harvests in Ireland; yet the stated of that country presented a terrible contrast to what it was under their Predecessors. The Prime Minister spoke in tones of supernatural gravity about the difference between "social" and "political" revolution. The agitation in Ireland, which began as a political movement, had acquired its present hold over the mass of the Irish people solely through the want of firmness shown by the Government in dealing with it. It was only "social" because it appealed to the greed and avarice of the people. It was Communistic in its aims and methods, which did not differ from similar movements that had been repeatedly set on foot on the Continent; these had been overcome by a statesmanship which had, unfortunately, been wholly wanting in Ireland. A revolutionary agitation in Spain had just been put down in three days by firmness, at the cost of but two men wounded, and this among the Catalans, a population more independent and difficult to govern than the Irish Celts. So much for the "social" revolution. But what a deplorable effect would it not have upon the propagators of disorder in Ireland when they read the Prime Minister's confession to-day—that the Government was at the end of its resources. The right hon. Gentleman told the Conservative Party that they did "not rise to the level of the situation," and did not "grasp the full gravity of the state of Ireland." The difference between the Ministry and the Conservative Party was this—that the Conservative Party grasped the gravity of the situation two years ago, when the right hon. Gentleman and his supporters were wholly unable to foresee to what mischief their blundering was inevitably leading. Not only did the illustrious statesman, who was now no more, warn the Liberal Party that their unpatriotic policy would produce "a state of things in Ireland worse than pestilence and famine," but every Conservative Member who spoke added his warning to the voice of his Leader. They warned the Prime Minister that the unnatural alliance with the Revolutionary Party, by which he gained Office, must have disastrous results. Over and over again, during the last six months of 1880—that fatal period in the history of Irish anarchy, when the tale of agrarian crime, unpunished and even unrebuked, was swelling week by week, until the "terror" had enveloped the whole country—did they warn the Ministry against their ruinous inaction. They knew, indeed, now, from the confession of the President of the Board of Trade, that "to have stifled the agitation then would have been to prevent reform"—that was the Land Act. But that disgraceful confession had not been adopted or approved of by other Ministers. After the Coercion Act was passed, the Conservative Party warned the Ministry that to be effective it must be administered with consistency and firmness. It was this mixture of extreme severity and almost servile coaxing which had been so fatal in the administration of the Government. They had run from the extreme of coercion to the extreme of bribery. They had aggravated Irish feeling, without intimidating the violent or repressing the criminal. Their failure to govern Ireland was now so conspicuous, and their plight was so desperate, that pity almost silenced our criticism. The Prime Minister, instead of addressing himself boldly and in a statesmanlike way to the pacification of Ireland, had given the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) no satisfactory reply to his convincing speech, but had endeavoured to call public attention from the failure of his policy in Ireland by charges against the Conservative Party which could not be substantiated. A few weeks ago he accused them of advocating the suspension of trial by jury in Ireland. He (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) did not know of any body of Members on his side of the House who had recommended such a step. It was a measure which, in his judgment, must be entirely left to the initiative of Her Majesty's Ministers, who had the best sources of information as to the state of Ireland, and who were responsible for its government. The Prime Minister said, in tones of apparent fervour—"Abolish trial by jury!" "Why, you would do away with one of the safeguards of Irish liberty!" What a mockery were those words in the mouth of the right hon. Gentleman. "Irish liberty!" What liberty was there in Ireland under his Administration? Was there liberty for the Irish popular Party? Over 700 of its principal members were in prison without trial. Many of these, no doubt, deserved even a severer punishment than the Capuan confinement in which they were kept. The condition of the Nationalists was not one of liberty. And, on the other side, what liberty was there for the loyal and the honest? There was absolutely none; a foul terrorism enshrouded the whole land in its demoralizing folds. The landowner who claimed that which was his due; the farmer who paid his just rent; the labourer who rendered the work he was bound to do, had not even bare security for their lives, much less anything that could be dignified by the name of "liberty." Let the atrocious murder at Lough Mask of that aged bailiff and his youthful nephew; let the assassination of Farmer Moloney before the eyes of his agonized family; let the terrible murder near Mullingar, on a peaceful Sunday afternoon, of an unoffending lady, testify what liberty the loyal inhabitants of Ireland of every class enjoyed under the present Ministry. The Prime Minister had denounced the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) for speaking of "the English in Ireland as brigands," and as encouraging disorder by his violent language. They all condemned such speeches as that of the hon. Member for Wexford; but he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) was somewhat surprised at the rebuke coming from the Prime Minister. He ventured to hope, with all respect to the right hon. Gentleman, that he would himself in the future be more cautious than he had been, in the use of expressions which had undoubtedly served as a stimulus to agitation and lawlessness in Ireland. His well-known reference to the "blowing up of the Clerkenwell Gaol," and to "the murder of the policemen in Manchester," as bringing Irish grievances "within the range of practical politics," were such incentives. His denunciations of what he called the "Upas Tree of Protestant ascendancy," and of the "English garrison" in Ireland, were but rendered by the Member for Wexford in language coarser and more blunt than that used by the Prime Minister. He had listened with amazement to the sneers and the attacks levelled by the right hon. Gentleman in that House at the "English garrison," which, as a statesman and an Englishman, it was his duty to maintain. He would not have entered upon this subject had not the Prime Minister, by his statements, challenged contradiction. The state of Ireland after two years of Liberal Government was "grave" indeed—it was appalling. The Prime Minister found that country peaceful and orderly. To quote his own expressive language, used in March, 1880—

> "There is an absence of crime and outrage, and a general sense of comfort and satisfaction such as was unknown in the previous history of the country."

The right hon. Gentleman went further than this. After he had taken Office as Prime Minister, he and his Colleagues also made repeated references to the satisfactory and peaceful state of Ireland. The Ministry went, indeed, far beyond words; they alleged that as a reason—in the Queen's Speech, and afterwards in Parliament—for not attempting to renew the Peace Preservation Act. How, then, could the Prime Minister, without completely stultifying himself, now turn upon the Conservative Party and say that "the Land League was firmly established in the land" when he came into Office; or that "the seat and source of this movement" was to be found before that date—namely, April, 1880. Such an allegation was opposed to the right hon. Gentleman's own declarations no less than to notorious facts. The power of the Land League rested on outrage and terrorism, as the Prime Minister had often told them. By that test, in April, 1880, when he came into Office, its power did not exist, for agrarian crime was at its minimum. The Minister and his Colleagues had, in a brief space, reduced Ireland to a state which, again, in his own words, spoken 16 months ago in the Mansion House of this City, and practically repeated to-night, was a "shame and disgrace to England in the eyes of the civilized world."

Mr. HEALY did not intend to have taken any part in this debate, but for the association which had again attempted to be established by the Prime Minister between the Members of the Irish Party and those who committed outrages in Ireland. The policy of the Government was to fix the blame upon them for everything that occurred in Ireland, and on the principle of throwing plenty of mud, in order that some of it might stick to the occupants of the Opposition Benches, repeated day after day the most ridiculous charges against the Irish Members. With regard to the quotation which had been made from his letter, he thought they heard much and saw little of what would have been shown if the whole of the extract had been published without alteration or emendation. The following was the letter which he forwarded to his constituents, in acknowledging the resolution sent to him:—

> "With regard to the second resolution which you have forwarded Mr. Forster, it was impossible for me to point out to that gentleman on the occasion in question (as I had already spoken) that the constituency which he invited me to lecture respecting outrages was a good deal freer from crime than his own town of Bradford. The outcry which the English raise about outrages in our country must be considered hypocritical. When a few exasperated peasants, driven by want and oppression, retaliate by the commission of regrettable disorders, a howl is instantly raised in England; but when outrages are committed upon the people themselves there is not a single word of protest, as the eviction of tens of thousands and the ruin and enfeeblement brought upon hundreds of persons imprisoned without trial continually witness. Yet this same nation, within a year or two past, has, unprovoked, slaughtered thousands of Afghans in cold blood, has blown up Basutos and Zulus with dynamite in their caves, have been the curse of every country they have invaded; and now, in admiration of its own virtues, hold up it hands in pious horror at the proceedings of a small section of the oppressed classes in Ireland. Of course, we can only regard such conduct as worse than Pharisaical. For myself, I look upon the English in Ireland simply as a gang of brigands, whose rule has degraded, and whose exactions have impoverished our country. The captain of the gang, the Right Hon. W. E. Forster, invites me, as your Representative, to convey certain English moral lessons to the town of Wexford, a town in whose market place his predecessors slew scores and hundreds

> of women and babes, and upon whose fields an English soldier plucked out your priest's heart to grease his boots. Such audacity on the part of this impudent foreigner might well excite indignation amongst your justice loving-people; but it would be a mistake, I think, on our part, to allow ourselves to be moved by any expressions of opinion of the English. We should merely ignore them.—Faithfully yours,
>
> "T. M. Healy."

The ground on which he described the English in Ireland as a gang of brigands was taken entirely from a speech delivered some time ago by the President of the Board of Trade. On the 25th of October last the right hon. Gentleman, in his celebrated speech at Liverpool, used this expression—

> "We know that for the whole time to which I have referred [that was, the 700 years during which the English had been in Ireland, unfortunately] the Irish people have been constantly dissatisfied. There has not been one single year during which the removal of the English garrison would not have been a signal for the instant uprising of the people, and for a declaration of their independence. Is it not humiliating to Englishmen that now, after 700 years' rule, it takes 50,000 soldiers and police to keep Ireland?"

The House would see from this extract that the description of brigands given by him was only putting in a condensed form what the President of the Board of Trade stated on a larger scale. If it took 50,000 soldiers to maintain British rule in Ireland, and if their withdrawal would, as the President of the Board of Trade believed, be a signal for the instant uprising of the people, what moral sanction or claim had the English to remain in Ireland except the claim of brigands? That was a proposition which he was willing to argue with any hon. Member. If, according to one of their own Cabinet Ministers, it took 50,000 paid mercenaries to maintain their rule in Ireland, and if the people of that country abhorred and despised them, he would like to know what better were they than a gang of brigands; and if he and other Irishmen were invited by Gentlemen like the Chief Secretary for Ireland to denounce crime in their country, they would tell those Gentlemen that they regarded them simply as foreigners, and they treated their counsels as so much impudence, which they declined to notice in the least degree. The English people themselves were far more brutal than the Irish. The most disgraceful outrages occurred week after week in that country. He ventured to say that more outrages occurred in one month in England than occurred in Ireland for a year. He could easily prove that statement by a reference to the latest Report of the London Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, which related by the hundred such outrages as tarring and burning dogs, pulling the tongues out of horses, starving donkeys to death, and mangling cats with turning machines—a resource of civilization quite unknown in Ireland. The statistics published in this Report, although they numbered thousands of cases every quarter, represented but the work of a small Society in London. He ventured to say if a similar record was kept all over England, the total would reach 20,000 or 30,000 cases every year, a figure which should make the mock Pharisaical English turn their attention to their own country, and cease to declaim about Ireland. It would be far better for them to take the mote out of their own eyes than operate upon the beams of the Irish people. The Irish Members sitting on that side of the House repudiated in the strongest manner not merely outrages themselves, but they told the House that, so far from these outrages being a service to their cause, they hindered and impeded it in the most material degree by bringing down coercion upon the Irish people. Outrages were a distinct damage and a distinct disadvantage to the cause in which the Irish Party were engaged. He had been frequently asked in letters, and in the newspapers, why he did not say in Ireland what he said in the House of Commons with respect to outrages. The reason was very simple. If he went to Ireland he would be handed a warrant the moment he landed on Carlisle Pier and sent into Kilmainham. Under these circumstances, he might be fairly excused from going to Ireland at the bidding of the London newspapers. The political education of a large portion of the Irish people was not so complete as the political education of the English people, and they were not guided to the same extent by the declarations of their leaders; therefore, there was not that quick connection between speeches delivered in that House and the subsequent acts of the people. By the benevolent operation of English statesmanship, the masses of the Irish people had been kept ignorant. Not very long ago a price was set upon the head of a schoolmaster in Ireland as it would be upon the head of a wolf. Quickness of perception in political matters was retarded, and to-day it was impossible to suppose that if those who committed outrages could see, as the Members of the Irish Party saw, that, so far from benefiting their cause, they were imposing a distinct hindrance to its advancement. It was impossible to suppose that if they read the speeches of their Representatives in Parliament they would not have long since ceased to commit outrages. The Irish Party told the Government that if the Coercion Act was passed it would most surely lead to the commission of outrages. Well, so it had, and the explanation was not taken from the prophecy of the Irish Party, but from the fancied connection between them and those who perpetrated the outrages in Ireland. In the Land League there was a large number of men who viewed Parliamentary action with the greatest jealousy; they were men who believed Parliamentary action to be entirely useless; and, therefore, when the Government attempted to fix upon the Irish Parliamentary Party, who were but very small agents in the matter, any responsibility, they were doing them a great injustice, and exhibiting the ignorance and misconception of Irish affairs which so charmingly distinguished Englishmen in general. The Prime Minister triumphantly repeated some statement as to £100 having been subscribed by the Land League for a certain purpose, and said it had never been denied. Were they to deny everything that came from the Treasury Bench? The occupants of the Treasury Bench did not deny many of their allegations; and if the Irish Party laid themselves out for contradicting every slander heaped upon them and their country they would have constant occupation. For his part, he had never any connection with the Executive of the Land League, or with the apportionment of its funds. If he had an offer of the kind, he should decline with thanks, for the gentlemen of the Land League were well able to conduct their own affairs. The connection between the Land League and the Irish Party simply amounted to this. The latter were engaged as the champions of a particular scheme of agrarian reform which was similar to that advocated by the Land League; but there the connection ended. He himself could say faithfully that he had as little to do with the political working of the Land League as any Gentleman on the Treasury Bench. ["Oh!"] That was absolutely a fact. He challenged anyone to deny it. Of course, when a great crisis came in Ireland, and when the people of Ireland needed, as he believed, to be instructed, he went from town to town expressing his views; and he hoped, when the present Government went out of Office, to go again and give his views to the people of Ireland. Selections were made from their speeches as specimens of incitement to outrage by the Prime Minister; but if this sort of constructive interpretation was placed upon words, there was no man worse in this respect than the Prime Minister himself. The Clerkenwell outrage, said the Prime Minister on one occasion, had no more to do with pulling down the Irish Church than the tolling of the bell had in bringing people to worship. What was that but an incitement to outrage—an invitation to the Irish Members to toll the bell if they wished to have their grievances redressed? But he would not pursue the subject. The Prime Minister sought to throw on them responsibility for the outrages. But he, for one, begged to repudiate any responsibility in that matter whatever.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, that he had listened to the debate in the hope that some hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench would supplement the speech of the Prime Minister, and tell the House something more definite than that which had fallen from him. The Prime Minister had assumed that the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had endeavoured to fix the day on which the Government should announce some further measures for dealing with Ireland. That was a misapprehension. The hon. and learned Member had made a statement to the House with regard to the condition of Ireland, which was of the gravest and most alarming character. That was either a true statement or it was not. If it was not true it ought to be contradicted at once by the Government. If, on the other hand, it was a true account of the state of things in Ireland, there could be no doubt that the question was one which did not admit of delay. They could not wait to suit the convenience of the Government until further shocking murders were committed. At the commencement of the Session the Chief Secretary for Ireland told them that matters were so far improved that a few weeks previous he had thought he should be unable to meet Parliament without having to ask for further powers. It was clear, therefore, that the Government had it in contemplation to appeal to Parliament for additional powers. The Government ought now to give the country some definite assurance that they would deal without delay with the very grave state of affairs existing in Ireland; and he trusted that the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India would rise and give the House that assurance, and then the House would separate for the holidays with less alarm. The most despairing speech which had been made that day by the Prime Minister would be read with deep concern by the country.

Mr. CALLAN said, he believed there was no Member of the House who did not view with regret the brutal murder perpetrated in Westmeath on Sunday last; but while viewing the murder with abhorrence they should draw some lesson from it. Where was that murder perpetrated? Not in a distressed district in Ireland, but in one of the most prosperous and richest portions of the country. It was well known that for the last 30 years in Ireland the condition of affairs in that district had not been healthy. Ever since a packed jury convicted an innocent man who was charged with an attempt on the life of Sir Francis Hopkins, a feeling of dissatisfaction, of mistrust of the law had prevailed in that district, and they should learn from that lesson not hastily to abrogate the rights of citizens, and to enact what was tantamount to martial law—namely, trial by some resident magistrates and justices. He represented a county which the blundering incapables who regulated the Executive in Dublin Castle had recommended the Chief Secretary for Ireland to have proclaimed. In this county six "suspects" had been arrested; two of them had been lately liberated. He felt a peculiar interest in these "suspects." If they were all supporters of his at the late Election, they were not all Land Leaguers, but they were the victims of the police. Captain Keogh, presiding in Dundalk, on the 4th of February, said it was all nonsense to speak of keeping arms for protection in that country. There was not a quieter spot in the whole world than the county Louth. He must express his regret that the Chief Secretary for Ireland was not in his place to hear the observations which might have been made upon his political conduct. The right hon. Gentleman ought to be removed from his present position and replaced by someone who was more capable of governing Ireland, and who, from his antecedents, was more likely to promote satisfactory results in that country. The Government ought to state whether, if Irish Members visited their constituents to consult them about the Land Act or other matters, they would be placed under arrest on what the Chief Secretary for Ireland called "reasonable suspicion." If he himself went to Ireland and addressed his constituents, even although he was not a Land Leaguer, and never would be one, and even although he might denounce outrages, he might become a victim of the suspicions of the police, and, no doubt, his Radical Friends on the other side of the House would say that it served him right. It would be unwise for Irish Members to rush within the toils of the hunter. They should remain where they could be of most service to their country, and where they could strike the heaviest blows at the common enemy.

Motion *agreed to.*

Resolved, That this House, at its rising, do adjourn until Monday 17th April.

House adjourned at five minutes
before Seven o'clock till
Monday 17th April.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 17*th April,* 1882.

MINUTES.]—Select Committee—Ecclesiastical and Mortuary Fees, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. George Russell, and Mr. H. Davenport *added.*

Supply—*considered in Committee*—Army Estimates.

Public Bills — *Second Reading* — Artillery Ranges * [125], *discharged.*
Second Reading—Referred to Select Committee— Electric Lighting [122].
*Committee—Report—*Army (Annual) [105].

QUESTIONS.

ARMY ORGANIZATION—COLONELS OF THE ORDNANCE CORPS.

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he has considered the case of the Lieutenant Colonels of the Ordnance Corps who will be placed on half-pay on the 1st October next, and whether he proposes to take further steps to retire the pre-warrant Colonels and Lieutenant Colonels of those Corps, so that the half-pay Lieutenant Colonels junior to them may be employed, instead of being compelled to retire from the Army; and, if it is not the case that the actuarial calculations prove such future steps would produce an economy in pensions, and that the efficiency of the Service will be increased by the retirement of the seniors instead of the juniors?

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to my hon. Friend, I have to state that this case has been under my consideration for nearly two years. Lord Morley's Committee on Promotion and Employment in the Royal Artillery and Engineers specially dealt with it, the result being that a large number of colonels and lieutenant colonels promoted before October, 1877, have been retired; but I do not think that I could offer better terms to those who remain (that is to say, three colonels holding ordinary district commands, and 15 lieutenant colonels) than the terms offered in the recent Warrant, of which they did not avail themselves. The last words of my hon. Friend's first Question implied that an officer is compelled to retire from the Army when unemployed. This is not so, those officers having the option of going to half-pay for five years with the chances of re-employment. In reply to the second Question, I can only say that I am not satisfied that economy would be the result of any feasible plan extending the retirement of lieutenant colonels of Engineers. Such an extension would have to be very large if any additional boon were to result to their juniors.

ARMY—THE REVISED ARMY WARRANT—ARTICLE 23.

Lord EUSTACE CECIL asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to the difference of wording of Article 23, recently inserted in the Revised Warrant of the 25th of June 1881, and Article 22 of the same Warrant, which provides that General and Field Officers, exceptionally promoted for distinguished service in the Field, shall be selected for promotion on the recommendation of the Commander-in-Chief, and that their service shall be published in the London Gazette; and, whether he proposes, in any future revision, to alter the said Article in accordance with established and constitutional precedent?

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, my noble Friend's Question appears to me to be based on two misconceptions. In the first place, by Article 27, all promotions are made upon the recommendation of the Commander-in-Chief, approved by the Secretary of State. Secondly, Lord Cranbrook's Warrant of May, 1878, Articles 18f, 21h, and 23f, established promotions for captains, majors, and lieutenant colonels on account of distinguished service of an exceptional nature ot herthan in the field; and the present Warrant only allows such promotions, using precisely the same words, for colonels and officers of higher rank. I presume, however, that the real suggestion of my noble Friend is that the reasons for these promotions should appear in *The Gazette*. Hitherto service in the field has been the only service mentioned in a *Gazette*, and with the object solely of doing honour to the officer; and I am disinclined to weaken the effect of these notices by extending them to promotions for other causes.

Lord EUSTACE CECIL gave Notice that he would take an early opportunity of calling attention to the subject.

ARMY ORGANIZATION—UNIFORMS OF SCOTCH REGIMENTS.

Colonel MILNE HOME asked the Secretary of State for War, What compensation will be given to officers in the Royal Scots and other regiments where the present uniform is to be changed into doublet and trews?

Mr. CHILDERS: Yes, Sir; the regulated compensation will be granted on the officers' application.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. PARNELL.

Mr. LEWIS said, that, seeing the Attorney General in his place, he would now ask him the following Question, of which he had only given the hon. and learned Gentleman private Notice—namely, Whether Mr. Parnell, M.P., having been arrested on the 13th of October, under the provisions of the 44th of Victoria, cap. 4, sec. 1, and having been released from custody on the 11th of April, can be lawfully re-arrested and detained in custody under the original warrant; and whether, if a new warrant is necessary, it must not be issued in virtue of a new offence?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): The hon. Member said he gave me private Notice of this Question; but I received no Notice whatever until I entered the House. I must, therefore, ask him to put his Question on the Paper, to be answered by myself or the Irish Law Officers to-morrow.

Mr. LEWIS gave Notice that he would ask the Question to-morrow. As it related to the liberty of the subject, he thought that no great Notice ought to have been required under the circumstances. He had left the Notice in the room of the Attorney General nearly an hour ago.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): What is that?

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.—[Bill 105.]

(*Mr. Secretary Childers, The Judge Advocate General, Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 to 3, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Mr. SEXTON said, he wished to put a question to the Chairman on a point of Order. He had given Notice of his intention to move the insertion of two or three new clauses at the end of Clause 3, and he wished to know at what stage of the Bill he was to move them?

The CHAIRMAN said, they must be moved at the end of the Bill.

Clause 4 (Correction of misprints in 44 and 45 Vict. c. 58).

The JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. Osborne Morgan) moved, in page 3, after line 31, to insert—

> "(5.) In section one hundred and forty-five of 'The Army Act, 1881,' the words 'when any order or decree' shall be substituted for the words 'when any order, decree' in the second sub-section."

He explained that the Amendment had been rendered necessary by the addition of the word "or" after "order."

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. SEXTON rose to move the insertion of a new clause to provide that there should be paid to every soldier engaged in special service relating to the recovery of rents, ejectments, and evictions in Ireland, a daily sum, by way of extra allowance, over and above his regular daily pay, equal to the daily extra sum allowed for similar service to each member of the Royal Irish Constabulary.

The CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) that this clause and the clause which follows, relating to the rates to be paid to carmen, are not in Order, because they propose to increase the sums considered to be necessary by the Crown in the Estimates for the Army, and, therefore, they cannot be put. The third clause of the hon. Member is in Order.

Mr. HEALY, on the point of Order, wished to ask if the Chairman was aware that the late Chairman of Committees (Mr. Cecil Raikes) allowed the hon. Member for Galway to move an Amendment of a similar character? Was the ruling which the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair had just given, given with a knowledge of the course taken by his Predecessor?

The CHAIRMAN: I have not, at the moment, been able to read the ruling to which the hon. Member refers; but I have a distinct recollection of it. The Rule then laid down, as I recollect, rendered it possible to move such an Amendment in a Bill which had not any force in law, but which required an annual Act of Parliament to bring it into force. But the present Bill is of a different character, because it becomes an Act which is in itself law; and, therefore, the ruling to which the hon. Member (Mr. Healy) has referred does not apply.

Mr. SEXTON remarked, that the gross sum involved was not a very large one, and the expense was one which was under the control of the War Office.

The CHAIRMAN: Whether the sum be large or small, as it is larger than is considered by the responsible Minister of the Crown to be necessary for the Public Service, it would be an increase; and, being an increase, it would be quite out of Order for a private Member to move it.

Mr. BIGGAR said, the second of the proposed clauses raised a question of very considerable importance—namely, whether very gross cruelty was not practised in the way in which the cars were used by the police and the military? It might be that there were outrages and cases of cruelty to animals in certain parts of Ireland; but he was prepared to contend that much greater cruelty was practised by persons in the pay of the Government in putting the law into force.

Mr. SEXTON observed that, if it would be in Order, he should be glad to move the latter part of the second of the proposed new clauses, which merely related to the manner in which the cars were to be used. He was personally acquainted with the fact that a great deal of cruelty was practised towards horses in Ireland, and that the property of the car owners was very much damaged. The only object of the latter part of the clause was to impose regulations upon the police and military in regard to the use of private property in Ireland, so as to prevent, in future, not only cruelty to horses, but damage to property. He should be glad to know whether it was competent for him to move the latter part of the clause?

The CHAIRMAN: That portion of the clause, I think, would be in Order.

Mr. SEXTON said he would move, then, after Clause 3, to insert the following Clause:—

> "No car shall be used for the conveyance of more than four soldiers, and shall not be driven upon any one day, unless a change of horses be provided, more than eight miles out and eight miles back, and shall not be driven at a pace exceeding six miles per hour."

At present, in some parts of Ireland, it was no uncommon circumstance to find a car crowded with six or seven soldiers, who were driven great distances, often by inexperienced persons and sometimes by the soldiers themselves. The consequence was that the horses were frequently rendered useless to their owners for any further work for a considerable time. The horses were driven at a headlong speed and were often covered with foam. In the present excited state of Ireland, when the direction of affairs was presided over by persons at a distance, he considered that it was desirable for Parliament to interfere, in order that there might not be added to all the other elements of confusion, excitement, and ill-feeling, cruelty to animals, and the wanton injury and destruction of private property by persons in a subordinate position. He simply asked that when a magistrate or other officer took a car for the purpose of serving evictions, he should see that the horse and car were used in a fair and proper way. Of course, the regulations which were submitted in the clause would be subject to modification at the discretion of the Committee. He simply threw them out as the basis of a rational settlement; and if the proposal were accepted, he felt sure that it would be received with thankfulness by the Irish people. He was also satisfied, from the courtesy which was always displayed by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, that the proposition would receive fair consideration.

New Clause—

"No car shall be used for the conveyance of more than four soldiers, and shall not be driven upon any one day, unless a change of horses be provided, more than eight miles out and eight miles back, and shall not be driven at a pace exceeding six miles per hour,"—(*Mr. Sexton,*) —*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

Mr. CHILDERS: I do not think that it is either expedient or necessary that I should enter at length into a discussion of the question; but I think I can give the hon. Gentleman very good reasons why I object to the clause, when

I say that, as a matter of fact, the cars which have been employed in Ireland have practically been obtained by the ordinary process, and not under the compulsory clauses of the Act. In one case, where complaint arose, the circumstances were considered by myself on an appeal at the War Office, and that which was deemed to be just was done. I think, therefore, that the clause, as proposed to be altered, would really only apply to the employment of cars in Ireland in a manner in which they have never yet been employed, and would, therefore, be entirely nugatory. I would suggest that it would be much better to leave the matter as it is now, so that any complaint as to the unfair use of cars may be dealt with by the authorities at the War Office. They have only hitherto been employed when necessary. What I promised the other day, on the second reading, was that I would look into the matter carefully before next year, and I added that if any complaints were made in the meanwhile I would consider them, and they would be dealt with on principles of justice. I cannot, therefore, give my consent to the introduction into the present Bill of a clause which would not affect the general practise, but would only deal with cases which have not hitherto occurred, and which are not likely to occur. For these reasons I hope the hon. Member will not press the clause.

Mr. HEALY thought that his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) was placed in a position of considerable disadvantage in having had his clause curtailed. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to be unaware of the fact that a considerable number of seizures of cars had been made by the military authorities under the compulsory clauses of the Act. The right hon. Gentleman said there had been no seizure by soldiers.

Mr. CHILDERS: What I said was that no complaints had arisen except in one case. In the particular districts in which it has been necessary to employ cars the Government have not taken advantage of the powers of the Act, and we have been very careful to see that no injustice was done.

Mr. HEALY said, that that being so did not do away with the opposition of the Irish Members, nor in the slightest degree alter their position. Their contention was that when cars were seized under the compulsory clauses of the Act there should be due compensation awarded; that care should be taken that no unfair use was made of the cars; that the horses should not be over driven, and that the cars should not be crowded. He had read in the papers the other day an account of a case in which the use of cars having been refused, the soldiers and police seized them, and drove them at such a rate that the knees of the horses were cut and broken. In every instance the car used was improperly crowded. He was not in a position to state that the facts reported in the papers were absolutely true; but he thought some inquiry ought to be made into them. What he desired now to obtain from the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War was an assurance, in the event of injury being done to the horses, or where there was a complaint of overloading and damage to the cars, he would at once cause an investigation to be made, and see that the person who made the complaint was properly compensated. He presumed that, as far as the clause moved by his hon. Friend was concerned, he could scarcely expect the last part of it would be inserted, seeing that the first portion had been ruled by the Chairman to be informal. All he desired was that an assurance should be given by the right hon. Gentleman that whenever a compulsory seizure of cars was made, and it could be proved that the horses had been driven unfairly and the property damaged, the owners of the cars should have a claim for compensation.

Mr. CHILDERS: I have no hesitation in giving an assurance to that effect, inasmuch as that is the principle upon which the War Office has already acted.

Mr. BIGGAR said, it seemed to him that the assurance of the right hon. Gentleman was not altogether satisfactory, as it only went to a certain length. The right hon. Gentleman promised that compensation would be made in all cases in which it could be shown that the horses or cars had been unfairly treated. In such cases, of course, the owners would be entitled to be paid for the damage done; but the right hon. Gentleman made no provision whatever for the unfortunate horses. It was, unfortunately, the custom in Ireland, when evictions were to be carried out, to drive the horses over heavy roads, at an unreasonable pace and for an unreasonable distance. In fact, the amount of cruelty perpetrated in this way was very much in excess of anything that had taken place in the cases which had been cited in the House as instances of cruelty to animals.

Mr. CHILDERS: Of course, I cannot undertake to compensate horses; but I will see that justice is done to owners, where exceptional arrangements have to be made.

Mr. SEXTON said, his object in moving the clause was to obtain an assurance that the owners would be compensated for any injury inflicted upon them. He had every confidence, after the statement which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman, that when a well-founded complaint was made to him the owners would receive due compensation; and he would therefore, with the leave of the Committee, withdraw the clause.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *withdrawn.*

Mr. SEXTON said, he had now to move a clause relating to the liability of a soldier to maintain his wife and children. He proposed in page 3, after Clause 5, to insert the following Clause:—

(Liability of soldiers to maintain wife and children.)

"Whereas it is desirable that the liability of a soldier or Marine to maintain his wife and children should be real and better defined, and it is expedient to provide for the same: Be it therefore enacted, as follows:—

"That section 145 of 'The Army Act, 1881,' shall be construed—

"(1.) As though the word 'shall' stood in the place of 'may' in sub-section 2, Clause 6:

"(2) As though all the words after 'commanding officer of such soldier,' in sub-section 3, were omitted."

The object of the clause was to interpret the 145th section of the Act of 1881 in such a manner as to compel a soldier to maintain his wife and children, whether such children were born in wedlock or otherwise. The existing law was, in his (Mr. Sexton's) opinion, seriously defective. Several years had passed since a clause was inserted in the Mutiny Act, declaring that every soldier belonging to the Regular Forces was liable to contribute to the maintenance of his wife and children to the same extent as a civilian. But although several years had passed since that provision, declaring that the soldier should be made liable for the first of his natural obligations, was inserted, it was nevertheless the fact that the provision had been rendered altogether nugatory by the stipulations with which it was surrounded. It had been stated, that in the first parochial year following the insertion of this provision in the Mutiny Act, the total amount paid by the Secretary of State for War to the wives and children of soldiers, and towards the maintenance of children whose mothers were not married, amounted to £1,500. He had since learned, however, that this statement was altogether inaccurate; and he was informed by a leading member of an association which took an interest in the question that the total amount paid by the Secretary of State in the first parochial year, instead of being £1,500, was only £58. He thought that fact was amply sufficient in itself to show that the provision which had been inserted in the Act, which professed to place a soldier on the same level as a civilian, had totally failed. He would explain in a few words what the present position of a soldier was. If a man deserted his wife and children and enlisted into Her Majesty's Army, what steps had the wife to take in order to obtain proper support for herself and family. In the first place, she was obliged to go to the Union and obtain relief; and then she was required to procure a summons to be served on her husband's commanding officer, wherever he might happen to be. It was a shameful fact that the organization of the British Army was conducted in such a way that before a man became liable to these obligations care was taken to remove him from the town in which he was likely to become liable, before the woman could take any steps to assert her rights. But that was not all. The wife had, in the first instance, to go to the workhouse; in the second place, to apply to the Board of Guardians for a summons against the commanding officer; in the third, she was required to serve the summons at the place where the soldier was quartered; and, fourthly, she was required to deposit with the summons a sum of money sufficient to take the soldier from the place where he was quartered to the place where the case was to be heard, and then to take him back again. In the case of a mother who was not the wife, the same regulations were enforced. She had to apply for a summons to be served on the commanding officer of the soldier wherever he happened to be quartered, and to deposit a sum of money sufficient to bring him to the place of hearing and take him back again. The Committee would see that such a requirement amounted, in many cases, to a total abnegation of justice. He was informed that the effect of the regulation was to make it necessary for a poor woman who had any claim upon a soldier to deposit a sum of money that was never less than £2, and which often exceeded that sum. A poor woman was often unable to procure such a sum; and the enforcement of the regulation, therefore, amounted to a total denial of justice. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War dropped an observation on the second reading of the Bill which seemed to have some force—namely, that if the mere issue of a summons was all that was required to bring a soldier from his quarters, there would be cases of collusion with a view to enabling the soldier to desert. Of course, that danger would exist; but he (Mr. Sexton) thought the resources of the law would be sufficient to guard against it. But even if it did occur, was it to be said that because in one case out of 100 there might be collusion between a soldier and a woman in order to enable the soldier to desert from Her Majesty's Service, that in the 99 other cases defenceless women having a legal claim upon the soldier should be deprived of the means of asserting their claims to the maintenance of their children and themselves? He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War would not attempt to maintain that contention. It had also been pointed out that the soldier, at the time the summons was served, might be with his regiment ordered for foreign service. He (Mr. Sexton) did not think the mere fact that the man was ordered for foreign service should amount to a plenary indulgence. Surely the Service of the Queen had not come to such a pass that every individual soldier under orders for foreign service must be protected against his civil liabilities. If any class of Her Majesty's subjects deserved commiseration at the hands of the Committee it was these unfortunate women, whether they were wives or otherwise, who were abandoned by the men who were morally bound to protect and maintain them. He should be surprised if the Government, desiring and affecting as they did to be considered a moral Government, should take upon themselves to say that Her Majesty's Army was to be a refuge for every abandoned man who desired to desert those who had a natural claim upon him. He did not address this complaint in particular to right hon. Gentlemen now in Office. The matter was not new to the House of Commons, and there were more than one hon. and right hon. Gentleman sitting on the Treasury Bench who had, on a previous occasion, voted for an Amendment identical with that which he was about to submit to the Committee. It was, therefore, no new affair. Among those who had already supported a similar Amendment were the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Charles W. Dilke), the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson), the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Fawcett), the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. W. E. Forster), the hon. and learned Solicitor General for England (Sir Farrer Herschell), the noble Lord the Member for Haverfordwest (Lord Kensington), and the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council (Mr. Mundella). All of those hon. and right hon. Gentlemen had already voted for the Amendment, and he trusted that he should have their support on the present occasion. When, however, a woman had gone through all the various preliminary stages which he had described—after she had gone into the workhouse, obtained a summons, and deposited a sum of money necessary to bring the soldier to the place where the case was to be heard, and take him back again, she could then obtain in her favour a reduction of the soldier's pay. But even then the discretion of the Secretary of State for War was interposed, and she was likely to be deprived of the small sum awarded to her. The Act of Parliament said that the Secretary of State "may," at his discretion and good pleasure, order a portion of the pay not exceeding 6*d*. per day in the case of a sergeant or non-commissioned officer above the rank of an ordinary soldier, and of 3*d.* a day in the case of a private, to be appropriated in liquidation of the woman's claim, "in such manner as the Secretary of State may think fit." It was unnecessary to point out to the Committee that the sum authorized to be deducted from the pay of the soldier was in all conscience small enough without the interposition of any discretionary power on the part of the Secretary of State. In the case of non-commissioned officers and sergeants it was only 6*d.*, and of a private 3*d.* He (Mr. Sexton) presumed that these sums were fixed upon, in the first instance, because they were sums which could be deducted from the pay of these persons without disorganizing the internal economy of the regiment to which they belonged or interfering with the efficiency of the Army. Nobody would be prepared to say that when a soldier had left his wife and children destitute, or a mother and child, although the mother might not happen to be his wife —nobody would say that in such a case the payment of 6*d.* a-day by a non-commissioned officer and 3*d.* by a private was too much for the purpose of maintaining them. What he (Mr. Sexton) claimed was this—that when the woman had laboriously put the law into operation, and obtained a decree from a regularly constituted tribunal for this miserable sum, she should not be further embarrassed and handicapped by the exercise of the discretionary power of the Secretary of State. His first Amendment—for there were really two contained in the clause he was about to submit—was to abolish the discretionary powers of the Secretary of State; to render the provisions of the Act honest instead of illusory, and to do away with a discretion which, if really exercised at all, could only be interposed between a soldier and his natural obligations and liabilities. The second provision contained in the clause was to abolish the regulations which obliged a mother, on obtaining a summons, to deposit a sum of money necessary to defray the cost of bringing the soldier to the place where the case was to be heard and taking him back again. He based the clause upon the broad ground that a soldier, as well as a civilian, if he rendered himself liable to the law for the maintenance of a woman and child, who were among the most helpless classes known to the law, the public funds, if necessary, should be used in conveying the soldier to the place where he was called upon to answer for his default. It was intolerable, discreditable, and disgraceful to a country like this that military discipline should be used to shelter a man from claims against him which the law would sternly require him to answer if he were a civilian. He took his ground upon the language of the Statute, which said that a soldier should be equally liable with a civilian; but he contended that, as the Act now stood, he was not equally liable. He asked that this delusive discretionary power should be removed. A regiment could not lose much by the temporary loss of the services of such a man. If it were necessary to alter the Regulations of the War Office, and to make a rule that when a soldier upon whom such a claim was made was ordered upon foreign service, he should not, as at present, obtain practical immunity by going abroad, but should be detained to answer the charge, and should follow his regiment by another steamer, or be drafted, if necessary, into another regiment. At any rate, let justice be done to the woman and her children wherever they might be scattered. This was not an Irish question; Irishmen formed only a comparatively small portion of the British Army, and he did not believe that of that infinitesimally small proportion any large number ever deserted their wives and children. It was essentially an English question, and he now moved the insertion of the new clause, leaving it for the English Members and the Government to say how it was to be dealt with.

New Clause (*Mr. Sexton*) *brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) said, the clause proposed, as the hon. Member (Mr. Sexton) had pointed out, really involved two different Amendments. The first related to the exercise of a discretion by the Secretary of State. The hon. Member had complained of the very small amount of money paid over by the Secretary of State under this section of the Act of Parliament; but he seemed to forget that that was owing to the peculiar conditions under which alone the liability could arise. The cases of unrecognized marriages were very rare indeed, and for this reason. When a man desired to enlist in the Army and was attested, he was asked, in his attestation paper, if he was a married or a single man; and if he replied that he was married he was not accepted. If he stated that he was single, when in reality he was married, he rendered himself liable to be proceeded against under the 33rd section of the Army Act; and he might be sentenced to two years' imprisonment with hard labour. The result was that exceedingly few married men entered the Service; and as the bulk of the men who entered the Army were unmarried men, no large claim in respect of legitimate children could arise. The provision in relation to the wives and children of soldiers was introduced into the Act by Lord Cardwell in 1871, after the most careful consideration; and Lord Cardwell addressed himself to the subject with the express desire of arranging matters in such a way as to meet the exigencies of the Service, and, at the same time, to do justice to the soldiers' families, and those who might have a claim upon them. The first section of the Army Act which the hon. Member sought to amend was the 145th, which gave a discretionary power to the Secretary of State. He (Mr. Osborne Morgan) did not see how they were to do away with the exercise of this discretionary power altogether. He had never yet heard of any complaint having been made against the exercise of the power; and that being so, to do away with all discretion whatever, and to tie up the hands of the Secretary of State and make it imperative on him to make an order in every case, would be most objectionable. There could not be the slightest doubt that wherever an order ought to be made it would be made. So much with regard to the first part of the hon. Member's Amendment. In regard to the second question raised by the clause, the hon. Member must surely be aware that, for a purpose like this, there existed a vast difference between a soldier and a civilian. In the case of a civilian, the father and mother of the child probably resided in the same parish, and there would be nothing to take the father away. But in the case of a soldier, he might be ordered with his regiment to the furthest part of the Kingdom, or perhaps out of the country altogether. If, therefore, some woman took out a summons for the making of an affiliation order upon him, he would be obliged to go all the way at his own expense, or at the expense of the public, when it might not be certain that the charge was well founded. Anyone who had any experience of magisterial inquiries knew that these cases were constantly trumped up; and it was necessary to require the woman to deposit what might be looked upon as caution money as a proof of the *bona fides* of her claim. In common justice to the soldier and for the requirements of the Service, it was absolutely necessary that some such provision as this should be maintained with the view of preventing unfounded charges from being recklessly made. For these reasons he should certainly oppose the Amendment.

Mr. BIGGAR said, it seemed to him that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General altogether failed to meet the case established by his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). The case of his hon. Friend was a most rational one. The law, as it stood at present, amounted to this—all that a woman could get from a private soldier was 3*d.* a-day, which amounted to a little over £4 10*s.* a-year, or 6*d.* a-day from a sergeant or non-commissioned officer, which amounted to a little more than £9 a-year. The amount was so exceedingly small that a person must be in a very poor position in life to make it worth while to obtain it; and it was absurd to suppose that she would have sufficient means at her command to enable her to deposit the sum of money which the law now required her to deposit. Therefore, unless the Government were prepared to contend that the woman should have no redress at all, it was most desirable that the law should be altered. He would suggest that, instead of a sum of money being required to be lodged by the woman upon instituting proceedings, it should be competent for the preliminary Court—namely, the magistrate—to receive evidence from the soldier in the shape of an affidavit, which the Court might consider for what it was worth.

If the Court were of opinion that an order should be made, and the soldier still disputed the claim and thought he could establish a stronger case, then let him attend the place of hearing at his own expense. It certainly appeared to him that if a wife made a claim for the maintenance and support of herself and her children, she should not be required, as a preliminary step, to deposit a large sum of money, especially when it was taken into consideration that, after all, it was competent for the Secretary of State to refuse his assent to the judgment of the magistrate. Certainly, if the money were actually deposited by the woman, it should be in the power of the magistrate who heard the case to deliver a final judgment without the Secretary of State having any discretionary voice in the matter. At present the woman was placed in a most unfortunate position. She had not only to make out her case and establish her claim under circumstances of extreme hardship and difficulty, but she was liable to have any judgment in her favour revised by a tribunal before which she could not be heard. It appeared to him, as the matter now stood, that the provision made on behalf of the woman was entirely illusory, and that she was altogether without the power of obtaining redress. There was nothing whatever, as far as he was able to see, to justify the opposition which was given to the clause by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General.

Mr. RYLANDS said, he was quite aware that on former occasions, when this question had been brought before the House, there was a feeling on that side in the direction of the Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). But it did seem to him, upon the present occasion, that the form in which the proposal was now made was such that it was quite impossible for them to accept it. There were two distinct propositions contained in the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman. The first appeared to him to be a reasonable one. He thought the substitution of the word "shall" for "may," in the 145th section of the Army Act, would be altogether an improvement. He differed from his right hon. and learned Friend the Judge Advocate General (Mr. Osborne Morgan) that the effect of the alteration of this word would be to leave the Secretary of State without discretion in the matter. The Secretary of State would still have a wide discretion, and the Committee must bear in mind that the action of the Secretary of State did not take place until after the matter had been before a judicial tribunal. Before the matter could come under the notice of the Secretary of State at all there must be some order or decree under the provisions of the Common Law for the payment by a soldier or a non-commissioned officer belonging to the Regular Forces for the maintenance of his wife or child, or of any bastard child, of which he was the father. When the case was decided according to the legal requirements the order was sent to the Secretary of State, who had power to direct it to be enforced, and to make a reduction from the pay of the soldier for the support of his wife and legitimate or illegitimate children. Then the Act went on to say that the Secretary of State may—

> "Order a portion of the soldier's pay, not exceeding a certain amount, to be appropriated for this purpose."

It therefore seemed to him that a discretionary power would still remain with the Secretary of State in this way. The word "shall" in the place of "may" would only require the Secretary of State to make such an order as, in his judgment, would be necessary to meet the necessities of the case; and, therefore, there was clearly a discretionary power to settle the amount within the very small sum fixed by the Act. Supposing, in the very improbable case that the circumstances were such as to induce the Secretary of State to make a small order, it was clearly within his power, under the clause, to make a very small order indeed. But, while that appeared to be perfectly reasonable, he understood that the Secretary of State undertook that this particular point should be reconsidered before the introduction of the next Continuation Bill. He had no doubt, in his own mind, that practically the Secretary of State did, under such circumstances, make an order, and that, therefore, the matter might safely be left to the Secretary of State for the present year after the discussion which had taken place, with the understanding that he would consider the propriety of making a change next Session. With regard to the other part of the Amendment, he must say that, in its present form, it was quite impossible for the Committee to assent to it. If they were to allow a soldier stationed at a considerable distance, on an *ex parte* statement, to be brought up at his own cost to defend himself against such a claim, everyone would see that, under such circumstances, it would be altogether unfair to place the soldier altogether at the mercy of any woman who chose to prefer a charge against him. He believed there would be very great difficulty in altering the law in that respect; and, although he had every desire to meet the wishes of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), if the hon. Member pressed that part of the Amendment to a division he should feel bound to vote against him. At the same time he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War would carry out the intention which had been announced, and that he would deal with the matter on a future occasion.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, it had been his duty in former times, on several occasions, when this question was raised by the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. P. A. Taylor), whom he saw opposite, to consider it; and he hoped, therefore, that he might be allowed to say a few words. In regard to what had fallen from the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), he hardly agreed with the hon. Member that there was any material difference between the proposition of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) and that which was formerly made by the hon. Member for Leicester. Before the new Army Act was passed, the law was administered under the Mutiny Act and under the Articles of War; and if hon. Members would read the provisions contained in those Acts together, they would find that they did not differ very materially from the present proposal. It was quite clear, therefore, that his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley was only anxious to find some salve to apply to his conscience for the vote he was about to give; and as it was not the first time that such a thing had been done, he presumed that his hon. Friend would follow his ordinary practice. He wished, however, to point out to the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General (Mr. Osborne Morgan) had omitted to state one of the most material objections to the present proposal, and one which he (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) had always brought forward in times past. In his opinion it was the most material objection of all—namely, that if any provision of this kind became law, it would interfere with the well-recognized principle that the Crown had absolute power and command over the Army and over the soldiers' pay. No doubt, when the money was voted, the Crown could not apply it to its own use, or to any other purpose than paying the soldier; and as the soldier, who had the primary and original claim to that pay, could not proceed against the Crown or against the Secretary of State in regard to it, so it would be utterly impossible, and contrary to all reason, that secondary claims, such as that of a wife or child, whether legitimate or illegitimate, should be allowed to prevail. Moreover, he could himself assure the hon. Member that when he held the position now occupied by the right hon. and learned Gentleman, he took a great deal of trouble, by personal inquiry at the War Office, to ascertain whether any injustice whatever was committed towards these women; and the opinion of his right hon. and gallant Friend then at the head of the War Office (Colonel Stanley) was that, whenever there was the case of a wife not of a bad character, the War Office almost invariably made an order in her favour, without there being any necessity at all that she should take out a summons, or attempt by legal means to enforce her claim. That was certainly the case during the period he held the Office, and he had never heard any complaint of a substantial kind. Indeed, he had never heard of any complaint whatever. Therefore it seemed to him that when the system was working so well it was undesirable to interfere with it. He remembered that on a former occasion he was ruled out of Order for referring to a second Amendment before it had been proposed; and, therefore, he should be only right in adhering strictly to the Rules of Debate, especially at a time like the present, by reserving any observations on the second point raised by the hon. Member for Sligo. But he was bound to say that, if the existing power was enlarged in the manner proposed by the hon. Member, it would, in his opinion, lead to a great deal of fraud on the part, not only of women, but of soldiers. The question raised by the hon. Member for Sligo was of considerable interest and importance, and one which it was highly desirable to have settled once for all; and, that being so, he thought the hon. Member was entitled to the thanks of the Committee for bringing the matter to an issue, and affording them the satisfaction of knowing what was the real opinion of the Members of Her Majesty's Government with regard to it. The reference which had been made by the hon. Member to a number of hon. Gentlemen who voted on a former occasion when the Bill was before the Committee he regarded as very interesting; and the point which it illustrated was, he thought, most important, as showing the opinions held by hon. Gentlemen on the opposite Benches on the occasion referred to. He (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) had himself looked into the list, and found that there were 13 Members of the present Government who voted with the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. P. A. Taylor) when he last proposed to amend this clause of the Act, and amongst them the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General, and the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, who voted on both divisions, and by his vote seemed to have dissented from the great Constitutional doctrine that the Crown had absolute command of the soldiers' pay. It was to be regretted that the hon. and learned Attorney General was not then in his place, because, otherwise, the Committee might have listened to a recantation of the opinion which he formerly held, and the reasons which induced him to alter his views. He (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) would not take up the time of the Committee by referring in detail to the other Members of the Government who voted for the Amendment of the hon. Member for Leicester, beyond mentioning that amongst them was one noble Lord who acted as Political Secretary to the Treasury, and another who otherwise assisted in that Department. With the exception of his noble Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, who was always sound in his doctrines and logical in his arguments, there was no other Member of the present Government who voted against the Amendment. He trusted that the hon. Member for Sligo would proceed to a division, and that the result would show that Members of the Cabinet were united upon this question.

Mr. P. A. TAYLOR said, he thanked the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) for having brought forward his Amendments on the present occasion. He (Mr. P. A. Taylor) had himself taken great pains with the subject, and had brought forward a similar Amendment in previous years. He had not done so that year, because so many promises had been made on the subject by Ministers that he really believed the obnoxious clauses would be removed. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General contended that it was always usual to place discretion in the hands of magistrates and other officers. But in this case discretion should only have relation to the fact. If the money was proved to be due from the soldier, it could not be within the discretion of the officer to say he should be exempted from its payment. From a Return which he had obtained, it appeared that in 1874 only £58 0*s.* 11*d.* was paid under Clause 107 of the Mutiny Act. The right hon. and learned Gentleman was hardly correct in accounting for this by the small number of cases that arose, for it appeared by the same Return that 629 women, the wives of soldiers, and 1,241 young persons who were their children were in receipt of parochial relief, a fact which in itself was sufficient to show how difficult it was for women to get any effectual remedy. In the year 1837, a clause was inserted in the Mutiny Act, declaring absolutely the non-obligation of the soldier for the maintenance of his wife and children. But public attention became aroused, and was directed to the matter; and about the year 1872 the then Minister of War (Mr. Cardwell) promised that the clause should be expunged. That was actually done; but the alteration was made in such a manner as to render utterly nugatory the nominal advantage which had been gained. He feared that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on those Benches were becoming very moderate in their liberality; and not only did things appear to move very slowly, but, from the arguments which had been advanced on that side of the House, it would seem that they were likely to become retrogressive. His hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), for instance, now expressed the opinion that the second Amendment of the hon. Member for Sligo went too far, and was unreasonable; yet that Amendment was identically the same that he had supported when he (Mr. P. A. Taylor) brought it forward some years ago, and its object was to repeal a qualification which Earl Cairns declared in the House of Lords rendered the provision absolutely nugatory. He (Mr. P. A. Taylor) should support the Motion of his hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Sexton), who, he trusted, would proceed to a division.

Mr. CHILDERS said, he had already expressed the opinion, on a former occasion, that this subject was well worthy of careful consideration by the Secretary of State for War. In his opinion, as at present advised, there ought to be some discretion given to the Secretary of State, who was responsible for the Army; but, notwithstanding that opinion, as he had before said, the subject was a very fair one for inquiry, and he could promise that it should be carefully looked into at the War Office, and the result stated to the House in the course of the year.

Mr. SEXTON said, he would admit that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War had met this matter in a spirit of courtesy and conciliation. Nevertheless, having regard to the many futile efforts that had been made to restore considerations of humanity to the Act, and the many pledges which had been given by right hon. Gentlemen formerly occupying the position of Secretary of State for War, he was obliged to confess that he regarded all promises made in connection with the Act with a considerable amount of apprehension. He certainly could not congratulate the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) upon the speech he had just delivered, in which he became the advocate of the Government in resisting the claims of women and children. The hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. P. A. Taylor), on the other hand, had dealt with this matter as might have been expected; for they all knew that no Party considerations, or the mere fact that he now sat on the Ministerial side of the House, could change the aspect of the case in his mind. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Judge Advocate General had defended the discretion given to the Secretary of State for War on the ground that some discretion must be given; but he (Mr. Sexton) would point out that some discretion would still rest with the Secretary of State, even if his (Mr. Sexton's) Amendment were adopted. Was it just to say that because the magistrate had discretionary power, and because it had been exercised in favour of the applicant upon public grounds, another discretion having reference to military discipline must be likewise piled up upon the appeal of the woman? The discretion of the magistrate was relevant to the case; but that of the Secretary of State was not so. He proposed that the word "may" should be struck out and the word "shall" substituted. That proposal still left it to the discretion of the Secretary of State to fix the amount to be paid by the soldier. It did not say that he should order the payment of 6*d.* or of 3*d.* per day; it meant simply that the Secretary of State should do something; and he (Mr. Sexton) claimed that his discretion remained complete, inasmuch as he could, if necessary, cut down the amount to ¼*d.* For those reasons he appealed to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War not to allow the present opportunity to pass without taking some practical action in the matter. He was obliged to express his surprise that the hon. Member for Burnley should discover such a difference between the present Amendment and that which he supported two years ago. As a matter of fact, the Amendments were identical; and the speech of the hon. Member for Burnley was a proof of the inutility of opposing the principles of justice and humanity to the interests of Party in the House of Commons. Had the hon. Member still sat on that (the Opposition) side of the House, he would, no doubt, have been the foremost champion of the cause, and would have described the wrongs of these unfortunate women and children in language sufficient to stir the hearts of the most fossil Tories. Although 13 Members of the present Government, when they were in Opposition, had voted for the amendment of the Act, they could now only oppose the charge of vagueness to this demand for justice. The right hon. and learned Judge Advocate General defended the deposit of the soldiers' expenses on the ground that many cases were trumped up, and that the result of the summons was uncertain. But that applied to all charges, and it was impossible to say whether anybody was guilty or not until the case was finished. Were they to be told that because one dishonest woman in 100 might make a claim against a soldier, as wife or otherwise, for some contribution, 99 honest women were to be shut out from redress? With regard to the removal of soldiers before they became liable, he maintained that this shameful practice ought to be put an end to; that the Queen's Service could very well afford to do without the assistance of such men for a month or two; and that where a man had deserted a woman he should be kept in the country until his case was disposed of. In conclusion, he could not but express regret that the change from one side of the House to the other had wrought such an alteration in the opinions of right hon. Gentlemen opposite.

Mr. HOPWOOD said, he was disposed to support the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) in his endeavour to amend the Act. According to his reading of the section, it must appear, in the first place, to the satisfaction of the Secretary of State for War that the soldier had deserted, or left without reasonable cause, his wife, or children under 14 years of age. It might seem a very small matter to retain the word "may" in the clause; but the word "shall" in this case would make all the difference, and its adoption would convey to a great many people who took an interest in the matter certain evidence that the House of Commons would act upon the view that justice should be an imperative demand upon the Secretary of State, to the full extent which the Act of Parliament allowed. For these reasons he should support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Sligo.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 49; Noes 116: Majority 67.—(Div. List, No. 63.)

House *resumed*.

Bill *reported*; as amended, to be considered *To-morrow*.

Mr. Sexton

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

SOUTH AFRICA (ZULULAND)—CETEWAYO (RELEASE FROM CAPTIVITY).

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

Mr. GORST, in rising to move—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that Her Majesty will be graciously pleased to release Cetewayo, the Zulu King, from the unjust captivity in which he is now held,"

said, he felt quite sure that the Government would understand him when he stated that he did not bring forward this Motion with the intention of inaugurating any Party attack on the policy of the Government in South Africa, for on the question of the Zulu War he had always been a supporter of the present Government. He might even say that he believed there was no difference between the two great Parties in the State in reference to this policy, because neither the Conservative nor the Liberal Party would maintain the justice of the War which was waged against the Zulus. The late Government did everything to stop it, and refused the reinforcements which were asked for by Sir Bartle Frere for the purpose of commencing the War, and sent him direct Instructions on the subject; but he was, unfortunately, so anxious to carry out his policy that he commenced the war before he had received the Instructions of Her Majesty's Government. There was no one in that House who would defend the celebrated Ultimatum which he sent to the Zulu King—an Ultimatum which, in the first place, he had no right to send; and, in the second place, one of which it was quite impossible to fulfil the conditions. Moreover, the Ultimatum did not reach the Zulu King before the War commenced, so as to allow him to fulfil the conditions of it, or even to consider it, though it had reached John Dunn; and there was no doubt that it was merely devised for the purpose of throwing dust in the eyes of the philanthropic public at home. In the debate which took place in 1879 no one attempted to defend the justice of the war; and he did not think the position of the late Government could be better summed up than in the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach). On the 23rd of January, 1879, that right hon. Gentleman, who was then Secretary of State for the Colonies, wrote to Sir Bartle Frere, saying—

> "The terms which we have dictated to the Zulu King are evidently such as he cannot refuse even at the risk of war."

After such a statement as that no Minister could say that the War waged was just. He did not propose to trouble them with an argument to show that that War was unjust; but he thought he should be assisting the House to understand the present aspect of the question if he were to point out two fallacies which were asserted and generally received in 1879. The first was that the Zulu King, at the time of the War, had framed an intention to invade the Colony of Natal. The report of that intention created quite a panic in Natal, and he believed that almost every Native war had its origin in a senseless panic of that kind. It was a curious fact that the alarm was most intense at the greatest distance from the boundary. Sir Bartle Frere had stated that farms of the Dutch and English settlers on the boundary were deserted in consequence of fear of the Zulus. But there could be no doubt that the real cause of that desertion was want of water. That had been proved by a gentleman who was travelling in the country at the time, who had also shown conclusively that it was not the intention of the Zulu King to invade the Colony. Even after the disastrous battle of Isandlana Cetewayo had no intention of invading Natal, though, if he had done so, a most dreadful disaster would have befallen that Colony. The Zulu operations after that battle were limited to an attack upon Rorke's Drift; and even that attack was undertaken against the will and against the direct order of the King, who would have killed the leader of the force which made it had he not been a Prince. Everybody recollected the story of the waggoners, fugitives from Isandlana, who, having crossed the Buffalo River, fell exhausted on the Natal shore. The Zulus who pursued them followed them across the river, and were about to kill them, when their officers compelled them to retire, as the King had given no orders that Natal should be invaded. The fact was that there never had been any invasion of the Colony of Natal until the 25th of June, when an attack was made on the Colony in retaliation for a great number of raids which had been made upon Zululand by the orders of Lord Chelmsford, and against the orders of Sir Henry Bulwer and of the Executive Council of Natal. All these facts were convincing proofs that it never had been the intention of the Zulu King to invade Natal. The second fallacy which the events of the Zulu War had entirely exploded was that the Zulu King was a cruel tyrant, who had so misgoverned his country that he was hated by his people, who wished to get rid of him. To show how utterly this idea was at variance with the truth he would refer to *The Cape Times* of September 11, 1879, in which it was stated that when the Zulu force was utterly broken and the King was a fugitive from the British force, which was hunting for him, not one of his people could be induced, either by fear of death, of the destruction of their homes, of the loss of their cattle, or by the offer of a large bribe, to disclose his hiding place. One Zulu, who appeared to have yielded to the inducements and the threats which had been held out to him, had led our forces into the bush, and had then given them the slip. These facts showed that, so far from hating their King and from regarding him as a cruel tyrant, the Zulus were devoted to him. What, then, was the position in which we now found ourselves? Here was a man who, according to the admissions of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, had done no wrong in resisting our invasion of his country in the course of a war which had been denounced by the great Liberal Party as wholly unjust, and who was yet detained in a sad and melancholy—he would not say a cruel—captivity. Could hon. Members realize to themselves what this captivity meant to this man? He would take the liberty of giving some account of that captivity from the small book published by Lady Florence Dixie, and which was published in September last. The statement first appeared in the columns of *The Morning Post* anonymously; but everyone knew by whom it was written. When visited by Lady Florence Dixie, she remarked how changed he was; his features had assumed in repose a sad and constrained expression, while his face had become wrinkled. It was said by those who were about him that he was fretting a good deal, and was subject to long fits of depression. "A little longer of this," he said, "and I shall die." He also said that his people wished to have him back in his land, where his heart was, that he was heart-sick and weary of waiting, and he asked—

> "When will England be just and let me return? Do they think that because I am a Black man I cannot feel, or that I suffer the less by this long and weary captivity? England has given the Transvaal back to the Boers, and Basutoland back to the Basutos, and all are free but me. . . . I am weary and sick at heart. I have applied to England, who, they tell me, is great and just, and I have applied to her Queen, who they tell me is merciful; but my prayer is unheeded."

That was the position in which we kept a man, who, the Secretary of State for the Colonies said, was perfectly justified in what he had done. He had been asked what arguments he relied on in demanding the release of Cetewayo; but the presumption was all in favour of such a demand. He, however, contended that it was not his duty to show reasons why the King should be liberated; but that he ought to ask the Government what arguments they were going to put forward to show that he should be still kept in prison. He wished particularly to call attention to this point; and he would assert that it was for the Government to prove that it was necessary that the King should be kept in confinement. It was said that the release of Cetewayo would spoil the settlement which was come to of Zululand; but was that a good reason for his continued captivity? He did not quite recognize the morality of keeping a man in unjust captivity because he might interfere with a policy which was being pursued elsewhere. He had fancied, until the Papers on Zululand were placed in the hands of hon. Members, that some argument would be used, to the effect that in the present position of Zululand people should hesitate before letting loose a source of disturbance like Cetewayo. He had, therefore, read with interest and curiosity the Correspondence relating to the affairs of Zululand lately laid upon the Table of the House. At the same time, he would warn the House that those Blue Books were, in a great measure, untrustworthy, because they never contained the whole truth. He did not attribute to the officers of the Government any intention of wilfully falsifying any statements which had been made; but in forwarding documents to the Colonial Office there was necessarily a selection made. In the selection nothing favourable to the Government was omitted; but sometimes those things which were unfavourable were left out, and the most favourable view was put before Parliament. Taking the Blue Book as an absolutely true statement of affairs as they were at present in Zululand, he would venture to say that if any man would read it through, separating the really important documents it contained from the mass of rubbish in which they were concealed, he would come to the conclusion that there existed in Zululand a most disgraceful and most alarming condition of barbarity and bloodshed, and that in the midst of that bloodshed the British Resident was absolutely incapable. Two or three particulars of facts, which would be found in the Blue Book, would show the condition in which Zululand was. He found that in two districts out of the 13 in which Zululand had been divided, there had been, from an early period, quarrels between the Chiefs appointed to rule over those districts and the inhabitants. It was singular that the malcontents and the disaffected against the Government were in the one case the man who had been Cetewayo's Chief Induna, or Prime Minister, and in the other case his brother, or half-brother. Those men appeared to have acted with such severity that even Sir Evelyn Wood appeared to have thought it was far beyond what ought to have been inflicted. In the despatch dated May 30th, 1881 (page 30), Mr. Osborne, the British Resident in Zululand, said, with reference to the punishment inflicted upon some of the malcontents, that he was certain the seizures, to the extent to which they had been made, were out of proportion to the gravity or nature of the offences for which the punishment had been inflicted. That was the sort of treatment to which the Chiefs whom we had established had been subjecting their fellow-creatures. In those two cases the High Commissioner, Sir Evelyn Wood, himself, had inquired into the history of the events, and had decreed that the two Chiefs should restore one-third of the cattle which they had taken from the people.

Up to the present day that distinct judgment and order of Sir Evelyn Wood had never been fulfilled by either of the two Chiefs in question; and one of the Chiefs, according to the Report of the British Resident, evidently did not intend to fulfil them. So much for the respect felt by the Chiefs towards the Government which had appointed them. Again, a stranger recently made his appearance in one of the districts in the character of a usurper. The Chief in possession abandoned his territory to the new comer, and took refuge with John Dunn, who proposed to interfere in order to reinstate him. Both the Secretary of State in Downing Street and the High Commissioner peremptorily forbade John Dunn to interfere. Nevertheless, John Dunn collected an army and marched into the disputed territory, completely destroying the forces of the usurper, who had agreed to submit his claim to the decision of the Resident, and capturing a large number of women and cattle. Some women also, it appeared, were killed. All this, apparently, was done in defiance of official instructions to the contrary. A few days previously —that was to say, on July 25 of last year—John Dunn, it was true, had a conversation with the Resident, as the result of which the latter agreed to "advise" the other Chiefs to "assist" in ejecting the usurper. It would be interesting to know whether any record of that conversation had been sent to the Colonial Office. The presumption was that John Dunn flatly told the Resident he would not obey orders. At all events, two days afterwards, the Resident did advise the other Chiefs to act; and as no one had a force ready but John Dunn the work fell entirely to him, with what result they heard from the Natives sent by the Resident to watch the proceedings. Such of the captured women as had relatives to ransom them were allowed to be ransomed; the others remained the property of their captors. That was the sort of thing done under the protection of the British Government in Zululand! The cattle taken were mostly divided among the victors, a large number being appropriated by John Dunn himself. That was the story told by the messenger whom the Resident had sent, and who would naturally not make the situation worse than it was. Then he said that in the course of conversation afterwards Dunn remarked that the people of Zululand would in future pay no regard to the Resident, because he only talked, and never did anything. Here, then, was the Chief Dunn, whom we had set up, deliberately despising the orders of the Government, marching into the disturbed territory, attacking the Chief, capturing women and cattle, distributing them as he liked among the people, and saying that the Resident was nobody. Was it surprising, then, that this man Dunn should announce his intention of annexing the territory and saying that the British Resident had ordered him to take charge of it? But that was not all. A traitor—one of Cetewayo's brothers— who had come over to us in the course of the War, and who was chosen as the Chief over one of the territories, attacked a neighbouring tribe against the distinct orders of the British Resident, and destroyed every male that could be laid hold of, and some women. A woman described what had been done. She said that the Chief arrived at the kraal at sunset, and seized the cattle. The women fled. When they had gone a certain distance they met three armed men, who at once charged towards them. The women ran, but were soon overtaken, and three of them were stabbed to death. Here was a Chief, under our protection, and who, but for our protection, would not have been able to do it, stabbing women to death. And now it appeared that the Boers were making a settlement in Zululand, and refusing to go away when directed to do so by the Resident of the British Government. On the 19th of September, 1881, two messengers came to the British Residency and said that they were sent by their Chief to inform the Resident that the Boers were located in his territory, and positively refused to go away in obedience to his orders. The Boers said if the Chief sent any more messengers ordering them away they would shoot them. The Boers had built three houses, and it was expected that more Boers would follow. Nor were the Boers without excuse. In a despatch written on the 16th of last January to the British Resident at Pretoria, the Boer Government said that in order to prevent further bloodshed and disorder in Zululand they begged Her Majesty's Government to release Cetewayo. They added that a number of Zulus had been driven within their borders, and they could not force them back without exposing them to a bloody death. Here, then, we had the Government of the Transvaal, which we had reproached for its inhumanity, retorting the charge upon us, and pointing to the murders committed by a Chief whom Her Majesty's Government had placed in power. He had not half exhausted the description of disorder and bloodshed contained in the Blue Book; but he thought he had said enough to lead the House to question whether the present condition of Zululand was satisfactory. What he wanted to point out was that the present condition of that country afforded no excuse for the detention of Cetewayo. If we left the people of Zululand to themselves, and washed our hands of any connection with the country, we might say that we were not in fault; but by keeping Cetewayo a captive we were interfering in the most positive manner with the affairs of Zululand. He did not enter into the question whether, if Cetewayo came back, he would be at once accepted by the people. If he had no following in the country, clearly no harm would be done by setting him free. But if his freedom would lead to his immediate restoration, then our keeping him in captivity was a manifest interference with the affairs of Zululand. There were two grounds upon which we might go. We might either wash our hands of the whole business, and then we should incur no responsibility; or, if we took responsibility upon ourselves, then we should put a stop to the effusion of blood that was going on. Let us either cease to interfere at all, or let our interference be such as would put an end to bloodshed and disorder. All our authorities were in favour either of restoring Cetewayo or of annexing Zululand to the British Crown. Lord Chelmsford said that the settlement we had made would be vain. Our Resident said it was necessary that Zululand should have one head. He pointed, probably, to annexation. Bishop Douglas and Mr. Robertson, while opposed to the restoration of Cetewayo, were in favour of annexation. He hoped Her Majesty's Government, if resolved to keep Cetewayo in captivity, would say why they did so. He begged to move the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Mr. W. FOWLER, in seconding the Motion, said he wished to show by his action with regard to it that this was in no sense a Party question, but simply an act of justice. The real question they had to consider in connection with that matter was the one which the Zulu King himself had set forth in the remarkable letter that he wrote to the Queen, which no one could read without emotion, and in which he wished to know what he had done to justify his being imprisoned for so long a period. Now, he (Mr. W. Fowler) owned that he had never yet been able to answer that question satisfactorily. In the Blue Books he found a great many statements, but no evidence that Cetewayo had done anything to justify his imprisonment. Much depended on the way in which they viewed the character of that man, and on whether they thought he could be trusted or not. In a clear and admirable letter, written by the Dean of Maritzburg immediately after the War, speaking of the Zulus, the Dean said that they never went to war with us; that they had always been excellent neighbours; that Cetewayo had defended his country bravely and had committed no excesses; that the War had been ours, not his; that he had never overrun Natal, and had never shown any disposition to do so, and that we were stronger than we had been willing to allow. A great deal had been said about the military ambition of Cetewayo, and the only argument which Lord Chelmsford used in his recent letter to the papers against the restoration of Cetewayo was that we should have a restoration of the Army of Cetewayo, and that Army would be a standing menace to Natal and that part of South Africa. But what was it that had led largely to the military ambition of Cetewayo? It was our vacillation, and the vicinity and the action of the Boers. That was no fault of Cetewayo; he was very anxious in regard to the Boers; but he had never shown a disposition to attack us, nor did he attack the Boers, because we persuaded him not to do so. Therefore, with regard to military ambition, it was a strange argument to be used by European Powers. Why, they were in far more danger from the vicinity of France and Germany than from anything Cetewayo could do. It was said that Cetewayo was cruel and violent.

He had seen a great many anonymous statements to that effect, but no evidence. He was regarded as a firm Ruler, but not as a cruel one; and, in his letter, he said that the great complaint against him was that he was not half as firm as his father. All the evidence went to show that the people loved him as a Ruler, and looked upon him with the greatest possible affection, as was strikingly shown by the way in which they concealed him when he was attacked and pursued by our troops. Anything more miserable than the story of the way he was caught could not be conceived. An hon. Member sitting beside him (Mr. W. Fowler) had visited the country six years ago, and his impression was that it was very quiet and peaceable. Then, again, the man who was described as a savage had evinced remarkable forbearance in the hour of victory. After the battle of Isandlana, he might have swept Natal of every White man in the place; but he did not. And why was that? Because, as he told them, he did not feel himself an enemy of England, or want to quarrel with her, nor did he wish to destroy the White people. All through he had shown good faith to us, and even when he had the opportunity he did not use his power to punish or injure White people. As to the character of the King, there was one incident which should be mentioned. One of the officers who had the custody of Cetewayo was killed in the Transvaal War, and when the King heard of it he ate no food for a whole week, so much was he affected by the loss. His conduct as a prisoner, moreover, had been extremely dignified, and worthy of a man of far higher origin. The opinions they had heard from the Bishop of Natal, who had had great experience of the Native races, as to the character of Cetewayo, could be placed against those of Sir Bartle Frere, Sir Evelyn Wood, and others, who did not know him half so well. As regarded the settlement of the country, he fully appreciated the argument that it was unwise to unsettle a settlement. There were 13 Kings at present, instead of one, and if that really was a settlement, he should be very much disposed to hesitate before interfering with it. But was it a settlement? The hon. and learned Member opposite had shown that it was not, but only confusion; and the Government might have expected confusion when they set up 13 persons in place of one. Last summer Sir Evelyn Wood had a meeting of the Chiefs, and shortly afterwards there were most serious disturbances, and the terrible massacre to which the hon. and learned Member opposite had referred. Great cruelty had been inflicted on those who desired to have the Zulu King back. In Zululand, under Cetewayo, there was, no doubt, a great Army; but the state of the country was one of comparative quiet. The King was not all that we might desire; but, at any rate, he did not interfere with us; and, although we professed to be very much afraid of him, the best evidence he could find was that the fear was needless. Sir Henry Bulwer said he did not consider there was the slightest ground for it. On the other hand, Lord Kimberley, in his Instructions to Sir Henry Bulwer on his new appointment, spoke in terms of entire dissatisfaction with the present state of things in Zululand. On that point he might read the following passage from a letter, dated October 27, 1881, from the Rev. R. Robertson, of Zululand:—

> "You have heard, no doubt, of the recent slaughter of the Abaqulusi. I am told that it was greater than that of Isandlana. I fear there will be more yet. In fact, I am expecting every day to hear that the Usutu (Cetewayo's own tribe) have broken out. Their patience has been sorely tried, and it needs just a little more provocation to bring about another crash. Maduna is strong enough to make mincemeat of Hamu and Zibebu any day. What he will end in doing I know not."

If we relied on the different Kinglets we had set over the country we should rely on a broken reed. On the other hand, if we depended on Cetewayo, we should, at all events, depend on a King who had had universal authority over Zululand, and not on the half-breed Chief who had been placed over a large part of that territory, and who had applied to the Government to be made supreme Chief, an application which had been, happily, refused. It seemed that these Chiefs had broken all the conditions on which they entered into power. Two of those conditions were that they were not to go to war with each other, and that they were not to have guns. It was quite evident that John Dunn had guns. The Correspondent of *The Daily News*, writing from Maritzburg, stated that to leave things as they were in Zululand was impossible; that the ultimate outcome of the present situation, unless something was done to cure it, was a combination between two or more of the most powerful Chiefs to exterminate the others; and there were only two ways out of the difficulty—either the country must be placed under British rule, according to Lord Kimberley's original intention, or Cetewayo must be sent back. He (Mr. W. Fowler) believed that if Cetewayo were permitted to return to Zululand the power of the other Chieftains would disappear like dew, and that he would be restored rapidly to full control over the country, for his character was such that if we placed him in power he would do right to his people. One great argument used by Lord Chelmsford was that if we restored Cetewayo there would be a danger of a renewal of the Zulu War. But if we restored him we could restore him on such conditions as would make it safe that nothing of the kind should occur. At present we had a Resident in Zululand, and we could have a Resident there then after restoring Cetewayo; and, at any rate, we might try to restore order through him. He saw an argument the other day that we must not put Zululand back again into the unmitigated barbarism in which it was under Cetewayo. He denied that there was unmitigated barbarism under Cetewayo. He believed that Cetewayo's rule was a remarkably mitigated barbarism, because it was a barbarism under the control of an eminently intelligent Ruler of remarkable powers, used, as far as he (Mr. W. Fowler) could discover, with judgment and discretion. They were told there was great danger of further unsettlement. He could not see how any unsettlement could be greater than the present one. Lord Kimberley fully admitted that in his despatch. He, further, did not believe there was anything in the argument that, as we had made an enemy of Cetewayo, it would be dangerous to release him, for Cetewayo not only was not vindictive, but had expressed his strong wish to be on friendly terms with England. Only a few months ago a gentleman in Cape Town went to see Cetewayo, who said that he had always been English, that his father had been English, that he (Cetewayo) was now more English than ever, for the English had spared his life, and if the English restored him to power he would never fight against England. Cetewayo had felt the power of England, and he would not be the man to fight with her again. Another argument against Cetewayo's restoration to power was that we should have to make compensation to the existing Kings. He did not think that because the Government had that difficulty to get out of was a reason for keeping the King in captivity. It was our fault if the power had been given to men unfit to use it, and we must settle the matter in the best way possible. It was said that the public opinion of Natal would be very much against a restoration of Cetewayo. He had seen all sorts of statements on that question. Sir Garnet Wolseley, speaking of the public opinion of Natal, said, on the 13th of February, 1880—

> "Their desire is to annex Zululand to Her Majesty's South African Dominions, if not by a straightforward declaration to that effect, at least by imposing taxation on the Zulu people, by placing British magistrates in every district of the country, and by making Her Majesty's authority paramount."

If that was the opinion of Natal, he did not think we should much regard it. There was another argument used against a restoration of Cetewayo to power, and that was that he was a nigger; but surely we ought to do justice to this man, whether he was black or white. There were, however, some English people who thought it was not of much consequence what happened to a nigger. He did not think that in modern history there were to be found more than two cases like this—one was the case of Napoleon, and the other that of Toussaint L'Ouverture. If Cetewayo could be trusted—as those who knew him well would testify—he ought no longer to be detained; and the Government should at once accede to all that was asked for on his account—namely, to liberate him, and to give to him the common rights of the commonest man. The more he had investigated this matter the more he was convinced there was no proof that this man deserved the great and cruel punishment that had been inflicted on him—a punishment that was more severe to him than it would be to an ordinary Englishman. The punishment was also severe because the Government had degraded him by turning him out of his Monarchy and putting him into a prison. He had done nothing against this country, and he had asked what was the right of every man—namely, a trial; and if we did not release him within a reasonable time we should not only be doing him great injustice, but continuing a state of things which was a disgrace.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that Her Majesty will be graciously pleased to release Cetewayo, the Zulu King, from the unjust captivity in which he is now held,"—(*Mr. Gorst*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, this question having been brought forward as an Amendment to the Motion that you do leave the Chair, we are not asked to meet the Motion of the hon. and learned Member by a direct negative. I am so far glad of that, because there is no reason why Her Majesty's Government should represent themselves as being at issue with him upon the question of principle relating to the matter which he has brought before the House. The contention I shall make is that the interference of the House in this matter would be entirely premature, and would lead to serious mischief; that the facts are not ripe for decision, even by the Government, much less are they ripe for decision by the interference of this House. One word as to the language used by my hon. Friend who has just sat down, which is to a certain extent sustained by the terms of this Motion. The hon. and learned Gentleman has moved that Cetewayo ought to be rereleased from the unjust captivity in which he is held; and my hon. Friend who followed him has entreated us to release him from prison, and no longer to permit him to be locked up. I will not deny that Cetewayo is under restraint; it is, perhaps, questionable whether he is detained in captivity, but it is a complete inaccuracy to say that he is in prison, or that he is locked up. He has been placed upon parole within certain local limits—that is an exactly true description of his present condition. I do not intend to represent that fact as one of a light character; it is a fact of a grave and serious character, but it is a different one from that which the case would present, if, as my hon. Friend supposes, he were locked up in prison. Let us consider the chief points which have been made in the two speeches we have heard. It has been truly said by the Mover of this Motion that this is no Party question. I frankly own that I am glad that such a strong sympathy with this individual does exist in this House, and that it is not confined to one side of the House. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) has founded himself in some degree upon the injustice of the Zulu War, which, he says, is admitted by both sides of the House. I know not whether that is so, though I am afraid the hon. and learned Gentleman is, perhaps, a little precipitate in that assumption. At any rate, I am not here to dispute the justice or the injustice of the Zulu War, though I have seen no cause to alter my opinion upon that subject; but I do not wish to dwell upon it at this moment—first, because it tends to introduce into this discussion topics of difference which we are willing to avoid; and, secondly, because it is not the question. Whether the Zulu War was just or unjust is not and cannot be, in point of right, the governing consideration in our minds with respect to the course we are now taking with regard to Cetewayo. Our business is to be governed by the interests of South Africa, and especially of Zululand; and nothing will justify us in diverting our view from the question of what is best to be done in the present state of the facts, and in the present state of our information with reference to the interests of that country. The hon. and learned Gentleman has stated that the War was unjust, and my answer is that, agreeing with him, I hold that that is not the point we have now before us, and that we must look to considerations of a different order. He has also dwelt very much upon another point, which I am not here to contest. If I were here to contest it, I should be speaking in entire contradiction to the despatches which have been sent out by the Government—namely, that the present condition of Zululand cannot be regarded as satisfactory. Though his description of the situation of the country as being that of anarchy and bloodshed is, perhaps, not perfectly accurate, yet that regular and suitable government has not been established there is undeniable, and that the results of the Zulu War—quite apart from the question of its justice or injustice, in substituting the present state of things for the rule of Cetewayo—have been unfortunate is also, in my opinion, undeniable; but none of these questions are before us. The question before us is—"What is the best to be done for the permanent welfare of that country?" How does the hon. and learned Member meet that vitally essential point? He proposes to us this dilemma—either Cetewayo has no friends at all, and releasing him will thus do no mischief, because if he is released no one will care for him; or, possibly, the Zulus are longing for his restoration, and, in that case, his restoration is the best thing that could happen. I think it is impossible for anyone to contend that Cetewayo has no friends in that country. If it should finally appear that the mass of the people in Zululand are for Cetewayo, so that something like unanimity should prevail, so far from regarding him as an enemy of England and wishing him ill, and so far from being disposed to take anything but the most favourable course that the welfare of the country would permit, I should regard the proof of that fact with great pleasure; and that would be the sentiment of my Colleagues. But, besides those two propositions which have been put by the hon. and learned Gentleman, there is a third, which is much more probable than the proposition that Cetewayo has no friends, for that I hold to be entirely opposed to the evidence we have now before us. It is quite evident that he has friends; and that he is, or would be, a power in the country were he free to take whatever measures he pleased, and to apply his own personal energies to the promotion of those measures. But, supposing, on the other hand, that, instead of an unanimous reception of Cetewayo, there should be a serious division of opinion, is it right for us, until we have taken every step in our power to obtain the best information and the best advice, to send Cetewayo into the country with the moral certainty we possess that he would be a power, and that if he were not the cause of pacification he would be a very serious cause of disturbance and bloodshed? Both the speeches we have heard tend to rest upon an undeniable premiss—a conclusion which has nothing whatever to do with it. Both hon. Gentlemen say, justly enough, "You cannot represent this as a satisfactory settlement." No, Sir, we have not so represented it. They say the authorities are opposed to it. They are opposed to it; but they are not at all agreed upon the alternative to which we should resort. On the contrary, there is a most serious difference among the authorities as to the restoration of Cetewayo. We are not justified in setting aside the opinion of the authorities who are opposed to the restoration, at all events, until we have satisfied ourselves that we have done the best in our power to acquaint ourselves with the actual condition of facts. The hon. and learned Gentleman has most fairly admitted that there was this difference of opinion, and that there are those who hold that the annexation of Zululand to the British Empire is the proper course to be adopted. I, for one, hope that that may not prove to be the case; but I am not prepared to say that we should be warranted in taking a course which assumes a full knowledge of the facts, when the very Papers we have laid upon the Table demonstrate that neither we nor the House are in full possession of the facts. At the same time, it is a patent fact that we have done the best that in us lies to obtain the very best information in our power; we have sent to a neighbouring Colony a gentleman in whose judgment, ability, and impartiality we have entire confidence, and we have called upon him to lose no time in applying his mind to the consideration of the affairs of Zululand. We have just heard of his arrival, and in the course of a few weeks we hope to be in possession of his opinion. We look to him—as he is well entitled, from his great ability and experience, to be regarded—as a mediator between the opposing opinions that have been laid before us. My hon. Friend who has just sat down made very light of the question, whether or not we are under any obligations to the 13 Chiefs who are now in actual or nominal possession of Zululand. But, Sir, these obligations are not to be got rid of—at all events, without something like definite evidence as to the unfaithfulness or the incapacity of those Chiefs. I admit that two cases have been quoted; but it would be absurd to say that those 13 men are to be condemned because two of them have proved unfaithful to their Government. It may be that the others are unfaithful; but we have not such distinct and detailed evidence and responsible judgment upon that point as is absolutely necessary to warrant us in coming to a conclusion. I may point out that the Motion is incomplete as well as premature. It puts one alternative before us; but it may be our duty to do more than release Cetewayo. To release him is simply to renounce all responsibility in the matter, and to leave him to do what he can towards establishing himself or towards disturbing the country, and to wash our hands of the affair. I doubt whether we have the right, in the present state of our information, to take that course; but it is quite possible that we may find the state of facts to be such that we may find it to be our duty to release Cetewayo, and do something more—to give him the moral support of this country in replacing him in his position. My hon. Friend who has just sat down has indicated that there are serious difficulties in this matter. He admits that great objections have been taken to the idea of a restoration of Cetewayo and his army. He says that we ought to release him and put him back; but put him back upon conditions—upon condition that he will not restore his military organization. My hon. Friend asks us to take this step without evidence from our own responsible authorities in the country. I say it would be a very grave resolution, indeed, to arrive at to bind ourselves to the opinion expressed by my hon. Friend—an opinion to which I do not object, but which I say is premature. We are asked to determine to release Cetewayo upon condition that he will not reinstate his military organization, and if that condition is broken we are to tell him that we shall invade his country again. I do think my hon. Friend, upon consideration, will see that we are not asking too much in begging him to refrain from pledging the House on the present occasion in a manner which would be precipitate, and might be dangerous to a definite opinion on the subject. Suppose the House gave a judgment adverse to Cetewayo. I am glad to say that a vote against the Motion would, in its nature, be more a vote for the Previous Question than a vote adverse to Cetewayo; but in the country it would be taken as a vote adverse to Cetewayo. I should, however, be very sorry that any vote adverse to Cetewayo should be placed upon record in this House. I should regret any vote which would hamper us in giving scope, should we find facts to justify it, to the views entertained by my noble Friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and which, I believe, would be found almost universal in this House. But, at the same time, if I were to contemplate an arrival at a vote in favour of the Motion which has just been made, I cannot anticipate any advantage from such a result. But suppose the Motion is carried, and the release takes place, I do not see that there would be any relief from the responsibility which we have already incurred. On the contrary, I think there would be a serious addition to that responsibility. But it will be urged that we are asked to decide in favour of non-interference, and are not asked to commit ourselves to a fresh policy. But I answer, we are dealing with facts as they are; we are dealing with a state of facts in which the essential circumstances are that Cetewayo is under restraint, and that an alternative system has been established in Zululand. No doubt, that system is unsatisfactory; but we are endeavouring to get at the best information and the best mode of dealing with the case. Under these circumstances, and before we know the best mode of dealing with it, to release Cetewayo, and allow to pass into Zululand one whose presence there might entirely fail in recalling the people to their allegiance—and if it did so fail, it would be a new cause of political disturbance and an extensive shedding of human blood—that is not a course which the House can wisely or justly be called upon to take. I do not think that it is necessary for me to go further into this matter. The hon. and learned Gentleman said that he declined to inquire whether Cetewayo would be accepted by his people as King or not. If he declines that inquiry, I beg him to go a little further, and not vote for his own Motion; for he certainly ought not to vote for his own Motion unless he has satisfied himself as to that inquiry. If he believes, upon evidence which we do not find sufficient, that Cetewayo will be accepted, he may consistently proceed with his Motion. But he declines to face that question. My hon. Friend the Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) says he will be accepted as King; but then my hon. Friend thinks himself in possession of evidence which Lord Kimberley does not find himself in possession of. My hon. Friend says it is difficult to find out the sentiments of the people, but yet that they would accept Cetewayo. My hon. Friend's convictions are a matter of great importance to himself undoubtedly, and ought to have great weight with this House. But until we are happy enough to arrive at similar convictions the Government will not be justified in taking measures for putting such convictions into effect. I venture to hope that upon information of this kind we shall not be called upon to exhibit a variety of opinion which can do no good, and may do very serious evil, and which, at any rate, would lead to the opinion that we are substantially divided upon matters as to which I was sanguine enough to hope there was a general agreement. I do not question —although I think my hon. Friend has a little exaggerated in his statements about the condition of Zululand—that the new settlement has done nothing as yet towards making good its title to our approval. I may refer to the despatch of my noble Friend to Sir Henry Bulwer of the 2nd of February, in which my noble Friend carefully and elaborately set out the various alternatives which were open to us, and suggested inquiries conceived in the largest sense into the entire subject. That course of inquiry is one that has, I have no doubt, by this time been put in force, and I hope that no long time will elapse before we shall probe the matter to the bottom, so far as it admits of being so probed. Then will be the time when we shall be in a condition to arrive at a judgment, and to act upon that judgment; and I assure the hon. Member and the House that they have not the slightest reason to fear that when that time arrives we shall approach the subject under the influence of any adverse prejudice towards the person on whose behalf he is so full of benevolent and patriotic intentions. It is impossible to think of the situation of Cetewayo without commiseration. Without any desire to resuscitate the debates of three years ago, I may say that the public opinion of the country is that Cetewayo has claims upon our consideration. But, on the other hand, it must be remembered that the peace and welfare of the country ought to be the dominant consideration. We hope that the interests of Zululand itself will lead in the same direction as the sympathy which we must all feel for one who has suffered so much. At all events, the spirit in which we shall approach the decision of the question will be one of which we are sure that the House will have no disposition and no cause to complain, and the time at which we shall be able to approach it is, we trust, very near at hand.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND said, that there was a great deal in what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) with which he agreed. This was no Party question. It would be in the recollection of many hon. Members that in 1879, in the debate on the Zulu War, he (Sir Henry Holland) had felt himself compelled to differ from the opinion of, perhaps, the majority of those with whom he ordinarily acted, and that he had denounced the war as unjust and unnecessary. He would not now take up the time of the House by a re-statement of all the reasons upon which he arrived at that conclusion, because, as was stated by the right hon. Gentleman, the question of the justice or injustice of the Zulu War was not directly before the House; but he would briefly refer to one principal reason, as throwing some light upon the conduct and character of Cetewayo, which formed an important element in the consideration of the question now before the House. He showed in that debate, from a careful examination of all the proceedings of Cetewayo from the time he succeeded Panda, that, with the exception of sudden outbursts of temper, Cetewayo had been uniformly friendly to the British nation. He constantly sought the assistance and advice of the Lieutenant Governor of Natal and of Sir Theophilus Shepstone; and he did what many who sought advice did not do—he almost invariably took that advice, though often very unpalatable to him. Thus, he over and over again, in conformity with the advice and wishes of the Lieutenant Governor, restrained his own strong desire, and that of his Chiefs, to attack the Boers and other neighbouring Tribes. He (Sir Henry Holland) urged, as a proof of this view, that Cetewayo did not invade

Natal when it was denuded of troops, and when we were engaged in the troubles of the Transkei War; and this at a time when we were asked to believe that he was bitterly hostile to us. He (Sir Henry Holland) desired to express his entire concurrence in the remarks made by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) as to the treatment of Cetewayo shortly before war was declared. There was no doubt that for some months before the war Cetewayo was irritated at the apparent unfairness of the English Government in not settling the boundaries between Zululand and the Transvaal. That irritation was not unreasonable, for he (Sir Henry Holland) felt bound to admit that the final settlement was unduly delayed; and it was not unnatural that Cetewayo should believe that, after we had annexed the Transvaal, we did not care to decide the matter. Again, there was no doubt that Cetewayo was alarmed and uneasy at the movement of troops towards the Natal Frontier—a movement which Sir Henry Bulwer had strongly deprecated as likely to cause that very alarm and uneasiness which it did, in fact, create in the minds of Cetewayo and of his Chiefs. But that irritation and uneasiness could have been removed by the exercise of a little tact and judgment. There was a fair opportunity for doing this when the award, by which the boundaries were defined, was sent to Cetewayo. But what was done? Instead of sending that award as a message of peace, untrammelled by any conditions, conditions were attached to it which were unfair and unreasonable. And more than this. With the award was sent an ultimatum, with the terms of which it was impossible for Cetewayo to comply. Acceptance of those terms would have amounted to an extinction of Zulu government and power, and to the practical dethronement of himself. It followed, from what he (Sir Henry Holland) had said, that he regretted the necessity — perhaps unavoidable after war, however unjust, had commenced—of taking Cetewayo prisoner, and of detaining him as a prisoner of war. It was only just to the Cape Government to say that, acting in accordance with the wishes of the Imperial Government, they had done all they could to alleviate his captivity and to make it as little irksome as possible; and he should be glad to learn that any further alleviation could be granted, or any restrictions removed, consistently with Cetewayo's remaining in the Cape Colony. But the Resolution of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham advocated an immediate release without any conditions; and both his speech and that of the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) pointed to the desirability of his being restored to Zululand. Now, he (Sir Henry Holland) was certainly not prepared to take any step towards restoring Cetewayo to Zululand, or even towards settling him upon any location near Zululand. Whether, after the conclusion of the war, Cetewayo might have been left as paramount Chief under certain conditions, and with limitations of his power, he would not now stop to inquire. But the House was now asked to form a judgment upon a totally different state of things. Zululand had been partitioned out among certain Chiefs, and solemn engagements had been entered into with those Chiefs, which would be most flagrantly broken if Her Majesty's Government were of their own free will to allow Cetewayo to return to power in that country. The whole nature of the arrangement was inconsistent with such return; and, if not in express terms, they had impliedly bound themselves not to adopt such a policy. It had been contended that the present state of Zululand was deplorable. Without accepting all the reports—many made by Natives on hearsay—as to the state of things in that country, he would admit it to be probable that the arrangement made at the conclusion of the war had not worked in an altogether satisfactory manner, and that acts of bloodshed and cruelty had been perpetrated; but sufficient time had not yet elapsed to satisfy us that, with modifications, that arrangement might not practically work well. If the state of things described by the hon. and learned Member continued, it would undoubtedly be the duty of Her Majesty's Government to interfere and put an end to it—by deposing those Chiefs who behaved in this outrageous manner; by strengthening the hands of the British Resident; and by appointing, if necessary, more Residents and Magistrates. But how would the state of Zululand be improved by the return of

Cetewayo? He would ask the House to consider in what capacity Cetewayo could be restored. Was he to go back as paramount Chief? This would be a clear and distinct breach of our engagements with the Chiefs, by which we had vested in them certain defined powers. It appeared to him that Cetewayo could only be so restored at the unanimous desire and request of all the Chiefs—a contingency which had not happened, and he thought was not very likely to happen for some years to come, if at all. Was Cetewayo, then, to return as a subordinate Chief, and to have a district allotted to him? In the first place, no district was vacant, and we could not, consistently with our engagements, now insist upon a forced sub-division of a district for the purpose of fixing Cetewayo there. And even if there were a vacancy, he questioned whether we could properly appoint Cetewayo to such vacancy. He was not sure whether, under the arrangement made at the conclusion of the war, a Chief had the right to appoint his successor, or whether such right was vested in the people of the district; but such right, whether vested in the Chief or people, would be infringed by the forced appointment of Cetewayo to fill the vacancy. And, further, he would ask the House to consider whether it would not be highly undesirable to place Cetewayo in a position of equality with Chiefs over whom he so lately ruled? If, then, it would be dangerous to restore him as paramount Chief, or as a subordinate Chief, would it be less dangerous to allow him to go back and settle there as a private individual? It would be very difficult to prevent him from plotting to regain power if he were so inclined. There were now in Zululand many members of his family and household, and many who held high position under him when in power, who were disaffected, and would gladly assist him to regain that power, by which they would profit. Here would be one source of danger. But assuming that he would not be inclined to intrigue for power, would not his mere presence in the country tend to intensify any quarrel that might arise between two Chiefs, and to increase any disaffection or ill-feeling that might arise between any Chief and his followers? He (Sir Henry Holland) would have hesitated to have pressed so strongly this opposition to Cetewayo's return to Zululand had this view been only held by himself. But he must remind the House that the people of Natal had most strongly protested against Cetewayo's restoration; and great attention should be paid to that opinion, as the people of that Colony were most deeply interested in the welfare of Zululand, and would be most directly affected by disturbances there. He had within the last week also had the opportunity of seeing a letter from John Dunn, in which the danger of allowing Cetewayo to return was most strongly pressed. Of course, it would be said that John Dunn was an interested party. That was true, but that very interest made him alive to the danger; and whatever might be alleged of John Dunn, no one could deny that he was a very shrewd observer, and that he knew the Zulu Natives better, probably, than anyone else in South Africa. As he had mentioned the name of John Dunn, he would venture to say a few words on behalf of a man to whom he thought scant justice had been done, and who certainly had been assailed that evening in very strong language. John Dunn rendered most loyal and important services to the British after the war broke out. Without those services our success must have been delayed, the war must have been prolonged, and many valuable lives must have been lost. Upon this point he might, without hesitation, refer to the evidence of Lord Chelmsford, Major General Crealock, and Sir Garnet Wolseley, and others in command. John Dunn had been accused of treachery to Cetewayo; but he was at a loss to see upon what grounds. Before the war John Dunn had used all his great influence with Cetewayo to prevent that war. When the war was imminent, or just after it was declared, Cetewayo informed John Dunn that he was unable to protect him, and, therefore, he crossed the Frontier with the full knowledge of Cetewayo, and quite openly, Since the conclusion of the war John Dunn had governed his district with great ability and judgment. He had passed Liquor Laws to prevent the introduction of spirits into his district; he had facilitated and improved the administration of justice; and had introduced a simple and effective Criminal Code based on the Native Laws. Not only this, but he interfered most usefully when a quarrel broke out between two Chiefs; he localized that quarrel, and prevented a general disturbance. Upon this point they had the high testimony of Sir Evelyn Wood. Returning again to the question before the House, he (Sir Henry Holland) desired to state one more reason which should make the House pause before passing a Resolution in favour of Cetewayo's return to Zululand. They must consider the character of Cetewayo. Now, no doubt, since he had been in captivity, he had given expression to many dignified and humane sentiments, though he (Sir Henry Holland) could not help thinking that the reports of his speeches were somewhat highly coloured, and he had certainly impressed a great many people in his favour. But dignity in captivity was quite consistent with cruelty when in power. There could be no question that Cetewayo was cruel when in power, and that by his acts he had alienated many of his followers. Had those who now so highly praised him forgotten that in 1876 he coolly put to death a very large number of innocent young persons and children, and thus drew down upon himself the indignant and strong remonstrances and rebukes of Sir Henry Bulwer. And this act he committed in distinct contravention of most solemn promises which he openly made with Sir Theophilus Shepstone and the Zulu people, when he was proclaimed King. When remonstrated with, he replied by a letter, in which he said that he would kill—that it was the custom of his nation, and that his people would not listen to him unless he killed.

Mr. COURTNEY said, it was not a letter, but a message.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND: At all events, those were the actual words of the Chief who delivered the message, and they were never denied by Cetewayo. Indeed, the only defence raised for them was one raised in this House by the hon. Member for Gateshead (Mr. James), in 1879, that they were attributable to rum, or a sudden outburst of temper. He would ask the House to consider what security we could have against a return of like acts of cruelty if we replaced Cetewayo as paramount Chief. In conclusion, he would ask the House to allow him to refer to one matter, very directly bearing upon the question before the House, but to which no allusion had been made. A few days before the House rose, the Under Secretary of the Colonies, in reply to a question put by him (Sir Henry Holland), announced that Her Majesty's Government had decided to bring Cetewayo over to this country. Now he, for one, trusted that Her Majesty's Government would reconsider that decision. He could not see what possible good could arise from Cetewayo's coming here; unless, indeed, it was decided that he should be restored to Zululand. In that case, it would be desirable that he should go back fully impressed with a sense of the greatness, of the power, and of the resources of England. It was, doubtless, for this reason that, in 1731, Governor Oglethorpe brought over from the newly-founded Colony of Georgia several Creek Indian Chiefs, whom he took back with him after their visit here. And the address of the head Chief, when presented to the King, George II., showed that he thoroughly understood the position and force of the reason. The Chief was reported to have said—

> "This day I see the majesty of your face, the greatness of your house, and the number of your people. I am come in my old days. Though I cannot expect any advantage to myself, I am come for the good of the children of all the Natives of the Lower and Upper Creeks, that they may be instructed in the knowledge of the English and of their power. O great King, whatever word you shall say unto me, I will on my return faithfully tell them to all the Kings of the Creek Natives."

But what good would be gained by impressing his mind with a sense of the greatness of this country, unless he was to return to Zululand—a step which he trusted he had convinced the House would be highly inexpedient? It had, indeed, been urged that he should be allowed to plead his own cause here in England. But with whom was he to plead it? With Her Majesty's Government, or with the people of England? Surely not with the former. The Government knew all the bearings of the case, and were not likely to alter their views upon it by seeing Cetewayo in person. Was he to plead with the people at public meetings? Those who were already interested in his case had full knowledge of it from the Papers presented to Parliament, and from the very full reports of the many interviews that he had had at the Cape, and they could gain no further information by statements made in public through an interpreter. As to the rest of the public, they would, no doubt, rush to see him, as they would to see Jumbo, or any other unusual sight; but what weight would their opinion, if favourable to Cetewayo, have with the Government, seeing that they had not studied the rights of the case, and merely taken his statements without testing their force or accuracy? If, indeed, Cetewayo had signified any desire to settle down in this country, the case would be different; and, he (Sir Henry Holland), believing as he did, that the war was unjust and that his detention was to be regretted though unavoidable, would be disposed to meet his wishes in every way. But he was not aware that Cetewayo had ever expressed any such desire, and the Government had not put it forward as a ground for their decision. He should, therefore, feel bound to oppose the bringing over of Cetewayo to this country, because no good could come of it, unless Cetewayo were to be restored to Zululand, which he thought would be a course fraught with danger, and inconsistent with the engagements we entered into at the conclusion of the war. He hoped the hon. and learned Member for Chatham would not press the Resolution to a division; but if he did, he (Sir Henry Holland) would be obliged to vote against it.

Mr. GORST said, it would, perhaps, be for the convenience of the House if he said at once that, after the very satisfactory statement which had been made by the Prime Minister, he had no desire whatever to do other than follow the advice which the right hon. Gentleman had given on this occasion, regarding him as his Leader in this matter. If the House would allow him to follow the right hon. Gentleman's advice, he would be most happy to do so.

Sir DAVID WEDDERBURN said, that, after the speech of the Prime Minister, there remained very little for a friend of Cetewayo to say in this House, and he would only allude to one particular point. Having very recently returned from South Africa, he would say a few words upon the local public opinion on this matter, and he would deprecate its being misunderstood in any way by Her Majesty's Government, who had yet to form a final opinion on this important question. If they went to Cape Colony, they would find that the Cape Colonists considered themselves to be a good way off from Zululand, and that they did not take a very keen or practical interest in Zulu affairs. In fact, if Cetewayo himself did not happen to be a captive within their limits, he thought they would take very little interest in the question at all; and as far as he could gather public opinion there, it was very much divided. Some said, "Oh, he had better go back to his own country;" and others seemed to think he should be retained in prison. But when they came to those countries which were nearer to Zululand, and which were, therefore, more closely interested, they found opinion among the public at large to be very definitely felt and expressed. To begin with the Transvaal Boers; it was evident that they, so far as they had expressed themselves through their Government and Rpresentatives, were in favour of the return of Cetewayo, not merely of his release, but of his restoration, and the ground they put it upon was, that it would be a pacific and peaceful solution of the difficulty. In Natal opinion was somewhat different. While he was in Natal a large public meeting was held at Durban to discuss the question of the restoration of Cetewayo. No doubt, by a large majority it was decided that it would be dangerous to the prosperity of Natal if Cetewayo were restored; but the meeting was not unanimous, and it had been undoubtedly brought together by the un-friends of Cetewayo, and those whom he might call, perhaps, the friends of John Dunn. Apart from this, he would point out that the public opinion of meetings such as that held at Durban ought not greatly to influence Her Majesty's Government or the decision of this House. Meetings in such a place as Durban upon general political questions would be as worthy of respect and attention, and perhaps more so, than any meetings held in a town of the same size in this country. There was an intelligent and an educated public opinion, no doubt; but if they came to ask how much those gentlemen who attended a meeting of that sort knew about the Zulus, they would find that their knowledge was probably limited to acquaintance with a few who had come to seek service in the town. Not one in 500 of them knew anything of the Zulu language, of the Zulu people, or of their country. If they consulted those few, the select few, who had travelled through Zululand, who were familiar with the language, and had obtained a certain amount of the confidence of the people, they would certainly find that opinions differed even there. No doubt many missionaries, who were well entitled to speak, deprecated the return of the King; but against that he would set the opinions of many others—he should think, on the whole, the majority—though, as to that, he was perhaps not able to speak with confidence — the opinion of many others that the return and the full restoration—because he did not think the mere release of the King would be a satisfactory way of dealing with the matter—that the restoration of Cetewayo would tend to the pacification of the country. It ought to be borne in mind that war, as it had hitherto been conducted in Natal, had no great terrors for the Colonists—indeed, the palmiest days of Natal were during the late Zulu War. Enormous sums of Imperial money were spent there. Everybody who had anything to sell got about double price for it. Spirited and energetic young men found good pay and employment as Volunteers; and he would venture to assert that a war which would result in the annexation of Zululand would be an exceedingly popular war now in Natal. Therefore, he would not infer from the fact that the population of Natal deprecated Cetewayo's restoration that on that ground they greatly dreaded a war. Then, as had been justly said by an hon. Member opposite (Sir Henry Holland), the Chief John Dunn was one of those who thoroughly understood the affairs of Zululand. He could not tell with certainty what John Dunn's opinion was as to his probable position were the rightful Monarch to return. He only knew that he had been taking measures to put a certain amount of his property beyond the reach of danger. While he was in the Colony, it was believed that John Dunn had brought on one occasion £5,000 to place in the bank at Durban. He certainly had brought a large sum of money. He would only infer from that that he did not consider his position there a very secure or permanent one; and, from all that he had been able to learn from those who knew the Zulus best, whatever other matters might be in doubt, there seemed to be no doubt whatever of the steadfast devotion of the great bulk of the Zulu community to their former King; and it was more than probable that a great number of the present Chiefs would at once resign their authority into his hands if he were to return with the moral support of this country. The difficulty with some of them, no doubt, would be that they were not Zulus—one was a Basuto, and another was, as they well knew, a Scotchman. He was inclined to think that in their case it was only just to give a certain amount of compensation. If two or three of them were compensated, he believed the others would willingly accept Cetewayo. He was only making these remarks because he had had some means of ascertaining what the local opinion was; and he trusted that Her Majesty's Government, in making up their minds, would accept these expressions of public meetings with some caution, and that, in finding out what the real truth was, they should only consult those who spoke the Zulu language, and were familiar with the country.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, he also had been to South Africa, and could confirm the remarks of the hon. Baronet. In the Blue Book issued before the House rose for the Holidays there was a reference to a despatch to the British Resident at Pretoria. He wished to ask whether that despatch could be laid on the Table of the House? He listened with gratification to the remarks which fell from the Prime Minister. He thought the course recommended was the best they could pursue. He was glad to hear the Prime Minister speak with a kindly feeling towards the unfortunate Monarch. He hoped the Government would take his case into their consideration. It seemed to him that there were only three courses to adopt in dealing with Zululand. They could restore Cetewayo. They could adopt the suggestion advocated by John Dunn, and nominate him paramount Chief or King of Zululand. They could adopt the plan advocated by Mr. Osborne, our Resident Minister, and annex the country. He thought they might dismiss the last-named course, although it was advocated by so high an authority. He did not apprehend that the Government were prepared to annex Zululand. That course had been repudiated by the late Government, he believed; and it had been equally repudiated by the present Government. If submitted to that House, he was convinced it would meet with little support. A point had been made with regard to the justice due to the 13 Kinglets established by Sir Garnet Wolseley. It appeared to him, after a perusal of the Papers, that the settlement of Sir Garnet Wolseley had completely broken down. The setting up of these 13 Kinglets had turned out a great mistake. To introduce anarchy into the country was unworthy of England, of its honour and its name. The principle of the present system must come to an end. It was evident that John Dunn thought that the best course would be to appoint him paramount Chief—in other words, King. He (Mr. R. N. Fowler) strongly deprecated making John Dunn paramount Chief. Whatever were Cetewayo's faults, he preferred a native Zulu to a renegade Englishman or Scotchman—for he understood the hon. Gentleman (Sir David Wedderburn) claimed John Dunn as a Scotchman. At all events, he preferred Cetewayo to a renegade Britisher—a man who had renounced the virtues of civilization. He thought the best proof of Cetewayo's friendly disposition towards England, and the absence of any intention on his part to invade our Colony, was the fact of his abstaining from any attempt at attack when Natal lay at his mercy after the battle of Isandula. He had heard many stories in Natal of how Lord Chelmsford frightened the Colonists by leaving his Army after Isandula, and coming down to superintend the fortification of Maritzburg and Durban. But, whatever the faults of Cetewayo were, he acted on the principle of defending his own country. Cetewayo informed him, at an interview he had with him, that he and his family wished to maintain friendly relations with England. Those relations commenced some 50 years ago, when his Predecessor rescued a British ship on the Coast of Natal. His hon. Friend the Member for Midhurst (Sir Henry Holland) deprecated bringing Cetewayo to this country. He could not agree with him. Considering the injustice which had been done to the unfortunate man, it was only right that they should accede to his wishes, and give him an opportunity of laying his Petition before the Queen and Government of this country. By bringing Cetewayo over to this country, the Government would pursue a wise course, and he hoped it would be carried out. The best course, in his opinion, would be the restoration of this unfortunate Prince to his native country, and then they would get rid of the anarchy which at present prevailed there.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

FIRES IN THEATRES (PREVENTION).

RESOLUTION.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND, in rising to move—

> "That in view of the great danger to the Theatre-going public from the insufficiency of powers under existing Acts relating to Theatres, and the laxity with which such powers, conferred by various Acts of Parliament, have been exercised, and that any day, unless some steps are taken to insure proper exits and necessary appliances against fire, a calamity may happen which may cause as terrific a loss of life as that which lately occurred at the Ring Theatre at Vienna, a Select Committee be appointed to investigate the state of the exits and what appliances exist for the prevention or extinction of fires in Theatres and Music Halls, and to report the result of their investigations and recommendations thereon,"

said, that the frightful calamity which occurred at Vienna, by which 700 lives were sacrificed, succeeding the catastrophe at Nice, where 300 lives were lost, naturally led him to consider whether the theatres of England were liable to these calamities from fire. In looking into the subject he found, so far as London alone was concerned, that there were 472 places of amusement. The great difficulty in dealing with the subject consisted in the conflicting jurisdictions in which they were placed. They had first the Crown, under which there were two Patent theatres, holding about 8,000 persons; secondly, they had the Lord Chamberlain, who had under him 45 theatres, holding 80,000 persons; thirdly, they had the Divisional Magistrates, with 10 theatres, holding 31,800; fourthly, the Middlesex Magistrates, with 347 music halls, holding 136,700; fifthly, they had the Surrey Magistrates, with 61 music halls, holding 32,800 persons; sixthly, they had the City of London Magistrates, with two music halls, holding 1,400 persons; and, lastly, they had five unlicensed places of amusement, holding about 5,000—making 472 places of amusement, holding about 300,000 persons. They had no less than six different jurisdictions, and, to make the confusion even worse confounded, there was the authority of the Metropolitan Board of Works overriding some of these authorities, and another authority—that of the Home Secretary—was also brought in. He thought it was perfectly scandalous that the law should be in such a state that even the authorities themselves probably did not know their own powers, and that one authority could be pitted against another, and all put at defiance by anybody whose interest it was to do so. As he said, 300,000 people could be accommodated in these places of amusement, and probably on Saturday and Monday nights this number was nearly reached. The subject was one, therefore, which concerned a large class of Her Majesty's subjects. To bring the matter practically before the House, he might say that it concerned 1,500,000 of the people of London alone each week. He thought it was shameful that people should be allowed to go to our theatres, not only unprotected, but without the slightest knowledge of the risks which they ran. He had asked the Home Secretary, in view of the great danger to which the public were exposed, owing to the inadequacy of protection against fires in theatres and music halls, whether he would introduce a Bill dealing with the matter? The Home Secretary had replied that special legislation had taken place in 1878, and that the Board of Works had power to deal with the old and new theatres. He (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) had been astonished at the answer; because, if he had read the Act of 1878 aright, the powers of the Metropolitan Board of Works were insufficient to deal with the old theatres. He had then, again, turned to the Act, and had found that the only part of it which dealt with the old theatres was in Section 11. There it said that where a theatre was so defective in its construction as to be dangerous to the public, the Board might order the defects to be remedied, provided it could be done at a moderate expense. Therefore, the greater the risk the greater the difficulty of providing against it, for where the risk was great the structure must be very defective, and the cost of improving it consequently large; and the Board only had power to interfere when the expense incurred would be moderate. It seemed to him that this principle set the interests of the owners and managers above the safety of the public; and this at a time when the occupation was most lucrative—when new theatres were being opened every day, and when the public were paying a larger sum for admission to them than had ever been known before. The prices of admission to the stalls had been raised from 5*s.* to 10*s.* 6*d.* To be sure he (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) had made no mistake, he had next questioned the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works as to his powers, and the answer of the hon. Gentleman, however much he might decline to admit it, satisfied every reasonable person that his Board could be put at defiance, and structural defects could only be required to be remedied if they could be done at a moderate expense. On receiving that admission, which, in his (Mr. Dixon-Hartland's) opinion, was an admission that the Board had no powers, he had, on January 16, again questioned the Home Secretary on the subject, and from the answer given he had been satisfied that the Home Secretary was not satisfied with the powers which he possessed. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that neither he nor any other authority had power to close any theatre, however dangerous to the public. He only hoped that the right hon. and learned Gentleman would not have the misfortune to be in a London theatre if it should happen to catch fire, else he was afraid that he should never have the honour of receiving an answer from him on the question he was then referring to, or upon any other question. The Board of Works was a body which had shown a great public spirit, and had done a great deal of work of great public merit. But it was also a body very jealous of its authority and whenever it had any power to take steps it took them. Therefore, he (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) wished to know why they had not taken action upon the provisions of the Act of 1878 if they had not been perfectly aware that the powers it had conferred upon them were valueless? Since they had received the Home Secretary's letter last Christmas, they had, however, made the rapid and astounding progress of appointing two Deputy Inspectors at a salary of three guineas per week each, and of also, on the 13th January, instructing their Fire Brigade Committee to make a Report on Drury Lane, Covent Garden, the Gaiety, the Vaudeville, the Strand, the Lyceum, and the Opera Comique. No Report, however, was ordered on a well-known underground theatre—on a theatre which could only be approached, so far as the public were concerned, through a private house—and on another theatre built entirely of wood, and which were, no doubt, three of the most dangerous structures in the Metropolis. The order to Report upon the theatres had been given on January 13; but on the 20th March — two months afterwards — the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works had been obliged to confess that he had not received the Report. That Report had only been received by the Home Secretary two or three days before the House rose for the Easter Recess; and the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, in the absence of the Home Secretary, had said that it was of such a serious character that he must decline to give its contents before the Home Secretary had had an opportunity of consulting the Lord Chamberlain upon the subject. Having brought the subject before the House and the country, he had considered that it was his duty to become practically and personally acquainted with the state of the theatres in London; and had, therefore, by the kind exertions of a gentleman well known in matters relating to the extinction of fires in London (Captain Shaw), who had formulated the best rules he had seen for the extinction of fires in theatres, been enabled to visit a great number of theatres and music halls. He regretted that the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works had not been with him on the occasion of his inspection, because it would have been probable that that hon. Gentleman would have altered the opinion that he appeared to possess, that the theatres were not unsafe, and would have found that many of our theatres, in cases of fire, would be perfect death-traps. From what he had seen, he had been surprised that accidents had not more frequently occurred, partly from the faults of construction, partly from the materials used, and partly from the necessity of shifting large scenes as dry as tinder in the midst of flaring gaslights. To those dangers should be added the utter carelessness caused by the familiarity with danger, which had been well brought before the public by Madame Marie Roze-Mapleson, in a letter to *The Times*, in which she had said that many artists went behind the scenes nightly at the risk of their lives. In one theatre that he had inspected he had found a workman reading a newspaper by a flaming gaslight close by the scenes that he was waiting to move. When spoken to upon the subject, the man had merely said that he could not read with a shade on the light, and had taken it off. The fireman of the theatre even had not seemed to think that there was anything unusual in the practice. As it was impossible to do away with carelessness, it was also impossible to do away with accidents, as was proved by the fact that between 1861 and 1877, 187 theatres had been destroyed by fire, the number so destroyed being 13 annually—the average life of a theatre being under 23 years. Even in that day's paper there were reports of the destruction by fire of two theatres. The subject divided itself into two parts. One was the safety of the public, and the other was the safety of the house. The safety of the house could be guarded by properly-qualified firemen, from any well-known brigade, always at their posts, and by the employment of hose and hydrants attached to the main service. The proper order and the proper inspection of the apparatus might be left very much to the owners of the house. The safety of the public was a very different matter indeed, and depended, in his opinion, greatly upon their means of getting away, and not upon appliances which, as a rule, were never in working order when wanted. To secure the safety of the public there should be proper exits, every door should be unlocked continuously during the performance, and every door should open outwards. Every part of the house should, in his opinion, have a separate staircase, and no two parts of the house should be served by the same stairs so as to cause a block. The exits ought to be opened and used every night, so as to habituate the public to them; and the result would be that the public, knowing that they could leave the building with perfect ease in a certain number of minutes, would cease to be liable to those panics, which were the cause of greater danger in theatres than fire itself. Proper authorities should be appointed to see that the necessary exits were made, and theatres which did not possess them should be closed, as in Rome, St. Petersburg, Paris, Vienna, Marseilles, and other cities. All Inspectors appointed should have some knowledge of their work, and should see that the exits and fire appliances were in proper order, continuously reporting direct to the Home Secretary. He was told that he was raising needless alarm in bringing this subject before the House; but when it was known that two of the largest London theatres had been burnt three times, and one four times, he did not believe that the public would think that was the case, or that they would be satisfied unless some legislation took place which would practically make them safe. At present nobody was responsible if a calamity occurred. Though he did not wish to make the Chairman of the Board of Works or the Home Secretary criminally responsible, as the Viennese were trying to make their authorities, still, after the question had been brought before them in a practical way, he thought they would incur a very large amount of moral responsibility if no notice was taken of the question by them. Hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House had been taunted that they gave up too much of their time to the consideration of foreign affairs, and that they did not bring forward any question of benefit to the people. He had now brought forward a question which was of very great importance to large classes of Her Majesty's subjects, and which had no political aspect whatever; and he called on Members on both sides of the House to support him in saying that some legislation should take place before we were some morning horror-stricken at the loss of life caused by a fire in a theatre. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Mr. WARTON seconded the Resolution.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in view of the great danger to the Theatre-going public from the insufficiency of powers under existing Acts relating to Theatres, and the laxity with which such powers, conferred by various Acts of Parliament, have been exercised, and that any day, unless some steps are taken to insure proper exits and necessary appliances against fire, a calamity may happen which may cause as terrific a loss of life as that which lately occurred at the Ring Theatre at Vienna, a Select Committee be appointed to investigate the state of the exits, and what appliances exist for the prevention or extinction of fires in Theatres and Music Halls, and to report the result of their investigations and recommendations thereon,"—(*Mr. Dixon-Hartland,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he entirely recognized the importance of the subject which the hon. Member had brought under the attention of the House, and thought that the hon. Member had performed a very useful task in devoting consideration to this matter. He was very sorry that his hon. Friend the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works was absent—he was sure from a want of knowledge that this subject was going to be brought on to-night. But, of course, the hon. Member knew very well that the persons primarily responsible in this matter were the Metropolitan Board of Works. He (Sir William Harcourt) had stated more than once in the House that the powers given by the Act of 1878, if they were used, were sufficient—and until the contrary was proved, he should continue to be of that opinion—to enable the Metropolitan Board of Works to insist on such security as they deemed to be necessary; and he had stated it more than once in that House that it was useless, therefore, to pass another Act when an Act already existed which, if properly worked, would be perfectly efficient. What was wanted was not a new Act, but the efficient working of the one at present existing. The 11th section of that Act provided—

"That, when any theatre or other place of public resort was so defective in its structure that special danger might result to the public, in every such case the Metropolitan Board of Works, with the consent of the Lord Chamberlain and of the Secretary of State, if such structural defects could be remedied with moderate expenditure, might require the owner of such places to make such alterations as might be necessary to remedy such defects within a reasonable time."

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND: With "moderate" expenditure?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Well, he thought that every expenditure would be regarded as moderate which was found to be necessary to make a theatre safe; and, therefore, what the Metropolitan Board of Works had to do, when they received reports with reference to the defects of a theatre, was to call upon the owner of such theatre to make such structural alterations in the edifice as were deemed essential to the security of the public from fire. If the reasonableness of those demands were disputed, the question then went to arbitration. He had written to the Metropolitan Board of Works that, having received a Report with reference to the theatres, it was their duty to make such requisitions upon the owners of the edifices to make such alterations as, upon the advice of Captain Shaw, the Head of the Fire Brigade, they considered necessary; and if the owners demurred, then let them go to arbitration. The arbitrator was to be appointed by the First Commissioner of Works. The arbitrator would decide whether the demand was reasonable or not, and if reasonable the owners would be bound to make the required alterations under a penalty much greater than any under the Act, because he would be bound by the operation of public opinion, which would prevent anybody going into his theatre unless he complied with the conditions of the arbitrator. But what he maintained was, that the existing machinery was perfectly effective if it were only properly put in force. It was not his business either to condemn or defend the Metropolitan Board of Works. As soon as this subject was brought to his attention by the calamity at Vienna, he wrote to the Metropolitan Board of Works, and called their attention to the subject. He did more; he saw Captain Shaw upon it. Captain Shaw said—"Call for a Report from me, and you will see what I think about it." He accordingly called for a Report, and insisted that there should be a Report upon every theatre in London, in order that he might see it and that the Metropolitan Board of Works and the lessees of the theatres should see it. Reports had been made with regard to 18 theatres, and inspections were now in progress with regard to the rest, preparatory to being reported upon. He had written to the Metropolitan Board of Works to say that the Reports should be communicated to the lessees and the Lord Chamberlain, and that the Board might take it for granted that the consent of the Lord Chamberlain and himself would be given to any alterations which, under the advice of Captain Shaw, were deemed to be necessary for the public safety. Therefore, he said that this matter was in course of being dealt with as quickly and as efficiently as possible, because the hon. Member opposite knew there was no man fitter on this subject than Captain Shaw. Whether the Metropolitan Board of Works had been remiss or not was not for him to say; but, at all events, it was not negligent now. It had been called upon publicly to put these Reports in the hands of the owners of theatres, and he advised the House to leave the responsibility in their hands. What would happen if the Motion were agreed to? They would have to wait for some new Act, and the matter would be taken out of the hands of those who were now dealing with it. He did not think that would be for the public advantage. He thought that now the matter was being pressed in the manner he had mentioned by the Metropolitan Board of Works, now that the Reports had been made, now that they had been communicated to the lessees of theatres, and that they knew the Reports would have to be acted upon, we had got as good a security for the safety of theatres as we were likely to obtain. He hoped the hon. Member would be satisfied with this explanation, and would not press his Amendment.

Sir HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON said, he was inclined to agree with the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he recommended that the responsibility ought, if possible, to be left entirely with the Metropolitan Board of Works to carry out the recent Acts, especially as their attention had been called so urgently and distinctly to the powers which they possessed under the Act for the protection of the public; but he must also, at the same time, confess that he thought he should like to see a little pressure put upon them to do their duty with regard to the matter, as to which they knew there was a good deal of public anxiety. In the Act of Parliament to which reference had been made there were so many things referred to, besides that of the construction of public buildings in the Metropolis, that the Metropolitan Board must have been hindered in dealing with that question. He supposed they might separate the responsibility, to a certain extent, between the Metropolitan Board and the Licensing Authority, because there was no doubt that if the Lord Chamberlain refused to grant his licence where there were defective safeguards for the public, that would be the most efficient way of putting pressure on the proprietors of theatres. Thus, whilst the Metropolitan Board were taking their time for the inspection, and in getting the required alterations executed, if the opinion of the Lord Chamberlain or the Home Secretary was that the public were in danger in any particular theatre, then they could bring the authority they possessed into force, whereby the protection to the public would be more effective than by the dilatory action of the Metropolitan Board. He could not but think that the Board had been dilatory in the matter; and now that prominent attention had been called to the subject, additional responsibility would rest upon them. He doubted very much whether the Board had ever considered that the recent Act had vested them with great and novel powers until the Reports referred to by the Secretary of State for the Home Department had been sent to them. There were certain points which struck the Committee which sat on the question, with regard to existing theatres and the changes required in them. One was that there should be more numerous exits. Although it was shown that many theatres possessed sufficient exits to be easily emptied in two or three minutes, yet it was also shown conclusively that the public were absolutely ignorant of them with the exception of the door by which they entered. When the inspection by the Lord Chamberlain was made, which was always made with notice, every entrance was in proper order; but on other occasions bars and other obstructions were placed against them, which prevented their being used on an emergency. That was one of the reasons why there should be a more constant inspection of theatres, without any notice being given, so that the public might be sure that every precaution for their safety was being taken. He quite agreed with the remark of his hon. Friend (Mr. Dixon-Hartland), that it was important that the public should be made aware that the exits provided were sufficient, and were kept in such a condition as to be available on a moment's notice; and not, as was usually the case, fastened up or used for some other purpose more convenient to the lessee. The existing means of exit should be generally used, instead of, as at present, the public being driven to one or two of the main exits, the other exits being kept only for occasions of danger. The result of that practice was that the public were not accustomed to the various exits, and when danger occurred and panic arose, and when the audience had less coolness and were less capable of thinking of what ought to be done, they naturally all rushed to the main exit, which consequently became blocked. Those were the main points to which the attention of the Metropolitan Board should be directed, with the view of their exercising properly their duties as regarded them. He trusted that while the discussion might go far to rouse managers to a due sense of their duties to the public, his right hon. and learned Friend would not be satisfied with throwing the responsibility on the Metropolitan Board, but that he would continue to urge on them the necessity of using the powers they possessed, and establishing a proper system of inspection, on which the public could rely with certainty. The safety of the public required that no time should be lost in ascertaining what the dangers really were, and putting into force the powers that already existed under the Act, and which had hitherto been so much neglected.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN said, that, in his opinion, the House was under an obligation to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Evesham (Mr. Dixon-Hartland) for bringing the subject so pointedly before its attention. But he (Mr. Cowen) thought the hon. Gentleman had confined himself too much to theatres. It was, no doubt, important; and, whether a Committee was appointed or not, the expressions of opinion that had been elicited from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department could not but have a favourable effect upon the owners and lessees of Metropolitan theatres. He (Mr. Cowen) wished, however, to say that there were other places of public resort the means for entrance to and exit from which were just as deficient and as dangerous as in theatres. The construction of some of their public halls was as faulty as the construction of the theatres; and even their churches and chapels were not free from difficulties and dangers. Doubtless, the accident at Vienna was a serious one; but, if he recollected right, that which occurred in the church at Santiago was as disastrous, and even more painful, and was entirely due to deficient exit accommodation. He had had unpleasant experience himself as to the difficulties of getting into a public hall, as at the last Election he got an uncomfortable squeeze in crushing into a crowded meeting. He would urge, therefore, that, as regarded remedies, attention should not be given to one description of public buildings alone. After the accident at Vienna, the Provincial authorities in the North of England had instituted inquiries as to the condition of the theatres within their jurisdiction, and he believed that generally the reports had not been unfavourable. The provision for letting an audience out of a theatre was usually sufficient. In some places it was excessive — more than was required. The chief danger arose from panic. If the people would simply leave the theatres quietly, there was scarcely any place that would not allow them to get out easily. It was panic that caused the loss of life. The way people acted in a panic was most extraordinary. He remembered Mr. Boucicault, who had probably had as much experience in theatrical management as any man living, say that when he built a theatre in New York he made unusual provisions for the audience leaving along both sides of the building. He had big folding doors placed, and on them painted in conspicuous letters the announcement that if the audience simply pressed these doors they would open, and egress would thus be obtained without difficulty. Notwithstanding the existence of these doors and the announcement, on the very first occasion of a panic the people did not avail themselves of that provision, but crushed out at the ordinary doors, causing some considerable injury and some loss of life. It was not sufficient, therefore, to provide means of exit. These should be regularly used, and the people should become accustomed to their use. People in a panic were always selfish, and it was all but impossible to provide for the unreasonable exhibition of that feeling. All they could do was to make the best provision possible, and trust to the good sense of the public.

Mr. MACFARLANE said, he agreed with the reasons given by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department against the appointment of a Committee, because the question was urgent, and the only effect of the appointment of the Committee would be to postpone the matter for a year. Long before the Vienna catastrophe there was a disastrous fire in a theatre at Nice, and it was astonishing to him that the Metropolitan Board of Works let such a question as the one under notice slide, as it had done, until the Vienna accident occurred, when they found that four years ago an Act was passed which conferred on them ample powers if they would only put them into force. The Report of Captain Shaw, which had been referred to, mentioned particularly eight theatres. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department was naturally reluctant to lay that Report upon the Table of the House, because he knew that if he did so those eight theatres would be empty in future. He (Mr. Macfarlane) ventured to think that if the public in this City realized the risk they ran when they went out to amuse themselves they would never enter a theatre. To show what little attention was paid to the orders of the Lord Chamberlain, he might refer to the fact that a few years ago it was the custom to fill the various gangways of theatres with chairs for the accommodation of extra people. But he (Mr. Macfarlane) called the attention of the Lord Chamberlain to the dangerous practice, who at once issued an order that it should be discontinued. But what was the effect of the Lord Chamberlain's order? It was simply not obeyed. On going to a theatre within a week after the prohibition was issued, the stalls being full, he (Mr. Macfarlane) was offered a chair in the gangway, and, on his reminding the boxkeeper that the Lord Chamberlain had forbidden chairs to be placed there, the man simply laughed and did no more. The dangers were due, he contended, to the laxity of the authorities, and, first of all, to the Lord Chamberlain. If the latter were to suspend the licence of a single theatre for the space of six months on account of infraction of his regulations, he believed that all structural dangers and such obstacles as he had mentioned would disappear the next day. The fact was that an idea was prevalent that the sole duty of the Lord Chamberlain was to regulate the length of the skirts of the ladies of the *corps de ballet*, and that he had nothing whatever to do with looking after the safety of the public. The last Act, which transferred a considerable portion of the authority of the Lord Chamberlain to the Metropolitan Board of Works, was passed in 1878, and yet they were only now discussing the question whether that Act should be put in force. He hoped that steps would be immediately taken to insure the safety of the public in this matter. There was no way of allaying panic except by convincing the public mind that there were efficient means of escape. He thought the assurances of the Secretary of State for the Home Department were sufficient, and hoped the Motion would not be pressed to a division. The Metropolitan Board of Works had sufficient powers in the matter; and it was not creditable to them that they had not put them in force. He admitted it was hard on lessees of theatres, who were not proprietors, to spend a lot of money on structural alterations, and thought in such cases the owner should be made the responsible person.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND said, that, after what had fallen from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department, he should ask leave to withdraw his Motion. If no steps, however, were taken in the matter by the Metropolitan Board of Works, he should be obliged to bring it forward again.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

WOODS AND FORESTS—FIRES IN WOOLMER FOREST.

OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH, who had given Notice of his intention to call attention to damage recently caused by fires originating on the Government property in Woolmer Forest, and to move a Resolution thereon, said, that he would not then detain the House by going into the subject. The fires were said to be caused by the keepers in charge of the forest setting fire to the heather for the better preservation of the game. He had to complain, however, that the Papers relating to the subject, which had been moved for seven or eight weeks ago, had not yet been placed in the hands of Members.

Mr. CHILDERS said, he must apologize for not having hurried on the printing of the Papers in question; but he had no idea that there was any particular hurry for them, and the demands on the printer were very heavy. Instructions, however, should at once be given that they should be taken in hand promptly.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—ARMY ESTIMATES.

Supply—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £2,966,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Provisions, Forage, Fuel, Transport, and other Services, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883."

Sir ROBERT LOYD LINDSAY said, he thought those interested in the Refreshment Department of the Army Estimates would be pleased at the manner in which the charges were presented on this occasion, inasmuch as the absolute expenditure on the Services was shown. The probability was that some economy would result from the new system which had been adopted. As he understood it, the extra receipts which had hitherto been handed back to the Exchequer, and there, so far as the Army was concerned, lost sight of, would now be available, under the direction of the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Childers), for promoting such minor changes as did not, perhaps, form part of the Estimates, and which could not be effected were it not for economies brought about. It had often struck him that the officers of our Army had not those inducements to study economy which it was very desirable they should have; and this was probably due, in a great measure, to the system which had been in vogue. Hitherto, the result of economies effected had been handed back to the Exchequer; therefore, military men had had no particular interest in studying economy; but, under the present system, if general officers commanding districts were enabled to effect certain economies in those districts, he hoped that, under the direction of the Secretary of State for War, they would be able to lay out certain sums which they had never had the opportunity of laying out before, and the non-application of which had been, in the past, a great disadvantage to the Army. He trusted they might now look forward to the period when the Army was passing out of that transition state in which it had been for so long. They might say that for the past 12 years the Army had been in the hands of the reformer. Mr. Cardwell first brought forward many changes which, as was well enough known, were not received with much favour on that (the Opposition) side of the House; but following Mr. Cardwell came Mr. Hardy—the present Lord Cranbrook—who stated, in the first speech he delivered as Secretary of State for War, that at that period he was not able to say that he would reverse the policy of his Predecessor; and, on further consideration, he announced that it was not his intention to do so. Since that three Secretaries of State had had charge of the War Office; and he could say, without fear of contradiction, that in no case had there been anything like what they might call a serious reversal of policy. His right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Lancashire (Colonel Stanley) followed after Mr. Hardy; and he, impressed with the belief that continuity of work in carrying out the system was of the utmost importance—although, no doubt, he might have thought that many things might with advantage have been done in a different way—went on in the spirit of his Predecessors with many changes, improving here and there; but still moving in the one direction. Without pretending to go through all the improvements his right hon. Friend introduced, he must allude to one very advantageous reform which the right hon. Gentleman effected in the Pay Department. This had been a matter of great difficulty. They remembered that at one time it was thought that the officers of the Army, capable as they no doubt were to lead our soldiers, were not sufficiently instructed in such matters to be able to deal satisfactorily with accounts; but the right hon. Gentleman took a different view, and persevered in that view, and carried out a considerable change in the Department, which change he (Sir Robert Loyd Lindsay) hoped to hear from the Secretary of State for War was working well. For his own part, he believed it was working remarkably well. He was assured that competent officers now had charge of the Pay Department, and were performing their duties to the satisfaction of all classes. Another reform which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Lancashire carried out, and which the House must remember hearing a great deal about, for it took considerable interest in it at the time, was connected with the Medical Department. The subject was one of great difficulty, and at that time, when these difficulties were before them, it was almost impossible to find medical men to enter the Army, so unpopular had the Service become. Now, however, in consequence of the useful reforms carried out by the right hon. Gentleman, medical gentlemen readily entered the Army, and were anxious to compete at the very difficult examinations through which Army medical officers had to pass. These were two points on which great improvement had been effected by his right hon. Friend. He would allude to another proposal, or rather scheme, which was formulated at the War Office by the right hon. Gentleman; and he must say that the right hon. Gentleman had considerable cause to regret being obliged to leave the War Office when he did, as he had at the time in hand some improvements which, if they had been carried out, would have redounded to the credit of the Administration. The right hon. Gentleman formulated the scheme which had subsequently been carried out by the present Secretary of State for War; and it must be a consolation to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Lancashire to see the plan which he and those who worked with him so carefully matured carried out so fairly and loyally by his Successor. It seemed to him (Sir Robert Loyd Lindsay) that perhaps the most important point which was raised by the present Secretary of State for War, in the speech which he delivered just previous to the Easter Recess, was that which related to the formation of a First Army Corps. They were in the habit in that House of referring to the opinion of the intelligent foreigner; but he would not go beyond quoting the opinion of the intelligent Englishman. His opinion was this—not, perhaps, always expressed, for they did not very often find Englishmen taking an active interest in the Army, believing, as they did, that everything was going on smoothly—but when the opinion of the intelligent Englishman was expressed, it was this—that for the large sum which was annually spent on our Army, we ought to have one fit to take the field at a week's notice, without disarranging and dislocating the whole of our Home system. The right hon. Gentleman, in coming to the War Office, had observed how essential it was that we should have an Army of this kind, and had set himself the task of giving it to us. He had, apparently, advanced a considerable distance in the direction of affording us such an Army, surmounting all the difficulties and obstacles which stood in his way. Now, what appeared to him (Sir Robert Loyd Lindsay) to be one of these difficulties, and perhaps the chief difficulty, in the way of having a complete scheme by which we could send the troops forward without dislocation, was that we had not a sufficient number of men; 10,000 more men were required. He did not, on this occasion, venture to recommend such a large addition as that, or any addition at all; but he wished to point out that if we had for our Home Army 71 battalions and a fixed number of men—without taking the depôts into consideration, 42,000 men—if the men were divided equally amongst the battalions, the result was that when they were ordered on service not one of them was fit to take the field. The result was that immediately a battalion was ordered on service it had to be made up to its full strength, and the method that had naturally suggested itself of doing that was by volunteering. As to the system of volunteering, it had fallen greatly into discredit. He did not altogether disagree with its use; but it was objected to, and the main objection taken to it was this. Supposing volunteers were called for, they were furnished from some other regiment, and that regiment in turn became weakened, and probably, a little later, that regiment itself was ordered on service, then they might have these two regiments serving together, the result being that because men from the first had gone into the second the officers of the first were well acquainted with the men of the second, as they had served with them, but were not acquainted with the men of their own regiment. But, for his own part, he thought there were great advantages in volunteering, and he trusted it would not be altogether dropped, because they could fairly use it as a proper mode of strengthening their companies, and they might take it for granted that it was not unpopular. Twenty shillings was about the sum that represented the objection which a lad had to changing his battalion. For that small sum of 20*s.* a soldier was generally perfectly ready to go into another battalion. Now, this necessity which he had spoken of in connection with the First Army Corps would not arise in a great emergency. It was only in a small war that it arose, because in a great emergency they had their machinery, which was well understood—calling out the Reserves and embodying the Militia, and so on. But, whether for a large or small war, he hoped we should soon be able to say that we had an Army Corps fit to take the field at a week's notice. The right hon. Gentleman proceeded by means of a sort of system of selection. He selected 12 regiments at the head of the Roster, or rather it could be said that these regiments, in a certain sense, selected themselves. They rose by a gradual process until they became the first regiments on the Roster. They were composed of about 12,000 men, and these, with the eight battalions in the Mediterranean—making about 18,000 men—and the three battalions of Guards formed the First Army Corps. Looking at the Return "The Army (Variation of Numbers)," which the right hon. Gentlemen had placed before them, a very curious similitude occurred to his mind. It really appeared as though the right hon. Gentleman had divided his 71 battalions at home after the manner in which Dante divided the spirits of those who departed into another world. Twelve battalions were raised to a most perfect state—it might be said that they were in a state of beatitude. But then, if they cast an eye down the Return, they found 37 battalions which, if the others were in the *Paradiso*, were certainly in the *Inferno*. The condition of the 37 was as unfortunate as that of the 12 was happy. They were in a state of attenuated shadows. Then, as an intermediate state between these two conditions, they came to 24 battalions which were eminently in the *Purgatorio*. They were rising gradually from the lower condition until they could venture to hope to reach the higher regions. It seemed to him rather unfortunate that whilst there were only 12 battalions in *Paradiso* there were 37 in *Inferno*. He would venture to say two or three words about these 37 battalions. First, as to the officers, the commanding officer of each was really in a very unfortunate position. Perhaps he had looked forward all his life to the time when he would have the great distinction of commanding his regiment; but, unluckily for him, he rose just at the time his regiment was in this transition state. The battalion would rise again; but then his five years would probably have elapsed, and by the time his regiment became complete he would have run out his period. What he (Sir Robert Loyd Lindsay) wished the right hon. Gentleman to consider was, what could be done for these officers, because, undoubtedly, their case was a very hard one? They deserved that some means should be found of mitigating the hardship of their condition. Their duties were very important, and the officer who trained a young regiment up well deserved all the credit that could possibly be given to him. As to the regiments themselves, he wished to lay some stress upon this—that, as he had said, they were nothing more than shadowy regiments made up of recruits. It must be so—it could not be otherwise. They were not merely regiments half made up of recruits; but, as he understood the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman, they would be more than half made up of recruits. By far the greater part of the regiments would be recruits; therefore nothing more should be expected of them than they were able to show, which would be very little. We should make up our minds to consider them nothing more than nurseries for the training of recruits; and, above all things, in his opinion, they ought not to be sent to Aldershot or any of the camps where they constantly came under the notice of their own countrymen and of foreigners. They should be kept as much as possible out of sight. Obviously the proper place for these regiments, the officers of which had nothing to do but drill a parcel of boys, was the county towns to which they were territorially attached. Their drill would be nothing more than recruit drill. They did not need to go through the higher courses of tactics which were taught at Aldershot. Nothing but the simplest matter, the alphabet of warfare, would be taught them; and he should, therefore, be glad to see them sent to their own localities. This led him to a remark he wished to make in regard to an item of expenditure in the Estimates, which, he observed, related not to buildings, but to repairs at Aldershot. He was under the impression that at Aldershot and at Shorncliffe there was already plenty of accommodation for the regiments the right hon. Gentleman proposed to put into the First Army Corps; and, if that were so, obviously what should now be done, if further money was to be expended, should be to improve the barracks distributed throughout the county towns, in order that they might be rendered efficient for the purposes for which they were required. Three millions of money had been spent on these depôt centres, and still they were not in that condition in which they ought to be. A slight further expenditure on them, however, would make them fit and proper places to receive the territorial regiments that belonged to them. It was not proper to run the two things together—the Aldershot scheme and the territorial scheme, which provided that regiments were to be quartered in the county towns amongst the people from whom they were recruited and amongst the officers, whom, he trusted, would all one day be drawn from the counties to which the regiments they joined belonged. He hoped, if there was further expenditure on buildings, it would be in the direction he had indicated rather than on the improvement of Aldershot, which they knew had swallowed up an enormous sum—much more than anyone in the House had anticipated. An enormous amount had been spent, and, to his mind, mis-spent, on Aldershot. Aldershot seemed to be a place fitted for a camp of instruction, where troops should go in the summer months and have instruction in the open air—under canvas if necessary. Buildings had been erected at Aldershot, as he said, at enormous expense, and further expenditure was going on there. This was the place the right hon. Gentleman ought to fix his eye on. He ought to take care that no further amounts were spent there. On the contrary, he should rather endeavour to make the territorial scheme more efficient by rendering the barracks fitted for the reception of battalions. Passing to the Report which was made to the Secretary of State for War by the officers in charge of recruiting, he was very glad to see that the pledge that was given last year —namely, that men of 19 years of age, or the equivalent of 19 years of age, should be the only men enlisted for the future in the Army, had been carried out, and was answering as well as could be expected. He observed that the right hon. Gentleman was sanguine of being able to say some day that he would limit the age to 20. If that was so, so much the better; but we must remember this—that we might not always be able to recruit as readily as we did now. At present we enlisted between 19,000 and 20,000 a-year; but agriculture and trade were a little slack at present, and we must bear in mind that a day might come when we might not be able to recruit with the same facility. He hoped, therefore, that nothing would be done to tie the hands of the recruiting staff; and that they should be allowed, if necessary, to take the men as best they could. He observed that the standard of height was rather reduced, and he did not understand how that could be, whilst, at the same time, the standard of age was increased. One would have naturally supposed that as they took men of older years, so the stature would have been increased; or, at any rate, that it would not have been reduced. Another point to which he wished to draw attention in the statement made by the Inspector of Recruiting was that which related to the physique of the recruits who came into the Army. He certainly thought it was a matter for congratulation to see the remarkably good physique of our troops compared with that of the troops of foreign nations. On looking at the Return, he saw that the English recruit, as compared with the French recruit, had the advantage in height of about 3 inches, and almost a similar advantage in chest measurement. Then they came down to Austria and Germany, and in both those countries the recruits were inferior to the English recruits by about 2½ inches in height, and the same in chest measurement. That was a point which ought to be noticed, because they frequently heard remarks made on public occasions as to the miserable condition and physique of the British recruit. Statements of that kind were frequently made in the Press, and were available to anyone who chose to cast their eye over them; and when such a reply as this was possible it should be given. The right hon. Gentleman had held out some hopes of being able to do something for the Volunteers; but he did not find in the right hon. Gentleman's statement that he proposed to do much for them at present. He spoke of issuing capes to them, and it was to be hoped that would be done. It was really most essential — he (Sir Robert Loyd Lindsay) could not say how important he deemed it—that protection should be given to our Volunteers, who had been exposed from time to time to most inclement weather. He was surprised they had not frequently found many of the Volunteers on the sick list, in consequence of the way they were exposed. He understood that the Volunteers were to be brought, to a certain extent, within the territorial system; at all events, the names of certain regiments would appear as forming the fourth battalions of certain territorial districts. He highly approved of that plan. There was no more territorial force in the Service of the Crown; indeed, he thought it was the most territorial force; and it was very desirable that we should be able gradually to draw the Volunteers into the system. Then, with regard to what the right hon. Gentleman had said as to warrant rank, hon. Members were perfectly satisfied. Non-commissioned officers might rise to have their names in *The Army List* associated with the names of the right hon. Gentleman himself, the Commander-in-Chief, and the many distinguished people connected with the Army. It would, he was sure, be a great inducement to young men to join the Army to think that by good conduct they could rise to warrant rank, and have their names in *The Army List.*

But he wished to call attention to the fact that the right hon. Gentleman had left out the quartermaster sergeants. That was an unfortunate omission, as the quartermaster sergeant was a most important person, as they all knew. He was a more important person even than the sergeant major; not at home, perhaps—the sergeant major there being an officer, it was desirable to magnify and make as much of as possible—but on active service. The quartermaster sergeant had charge of the stores, had to face many difficulties, and was thrown into many temptations. His position was most responsible, and it would, no doubt, be to the benefit of the Service that he should be included in warrant rank.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR thought the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War was doing his best to give effect to all those measures which were calculated to be to the good of the Army; and the right hon. Gentleman was doing so with a liberality which could not fail to meet with success. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would deal properly and liberally with the many officers who suffered by the changes in their military system. It was heart-breaking, in many instances, for officers who were in the prime of life to be now put aside and placed on the Retired List. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to compensate those officers to the utmost extent. Of course, the officers who entered the Army hereafter must take the chances of service according to the new rules. Several changes of great importance had been made in the mode in which the Army Estimates were framed, one important change being to use the funds derived from the sale of stores, and hitherto paid into the Exchequer as Civil Receipts, in diminution of the Army Charges; but, whilst cordially approving of those receipts being so used, having been advocated whilst employed in the War Office, at the same time, those changes deprived them of the facility of comparing the present with the past Army Expenditure. He was perfectly well alive to the financial dangers and difficulties which might attend the appropriation of the extra receipts in diminishing the expenditure of the Army; and to guard against abuse it was necessary the greatest care should be taken by the Secretary of State for War, as well as by the Public Accounts Committee, in having a public record made of all the extra receipts distinct from the Appropriation in Aid. He was not yet satisfied that they had taken all the possible precautions to guard against abuse; but the Financial Secretary to the Treasury had supplied him (Sir George Balfour) with all the information on the subject which was at his command, and he would carefully go into the matter and see if he could not make some acceptable suggestions. Another change had been made of showing the pay drawn by Staff officers in lump sums, including regimental and Staff pay. That was a right course; but it wholly deprived Members of the power of comparing the past payments with present payments. There was one point to which he earnestly hoped the right hon. Gentleman's attention would be drawn, and that was the employment of our Army in Ireland. He looked with great apprehension upon the present employment of troops in Ireland. Judging from his experience in India, nothing had tended more to produce the Mutiny in the Bengal Army than the employment of troops very much after the way our soldiers were now being employed in Ireland. They were scattered in small bodies, and often detached under young subalterns, and they were charged with duties which soldiers ought not to be called on to perform. Military and Constabulary duties were of a different character, and yet our soldiers were used for the duties which police ought to perform. He earnestly hoped the Secretary of State for War would, as soon as possible, withdraw the troops from Ireland, and collect them in places where the discipline might be properly looked after. He could not express in words too strong the danger there was to the discipline of the Army by the employment of soldiers in the manner they were now employed in Ireland. There was another point to which he also desired to draw attention. They had long had doubts with regard to the efficiency of the troops in the field in the matter of firing. A Committee had inquired into the subject, but the Report of that Committee had never been made public; indeed, the Secretary of State had refused to make it public. He presumed that the very reason which existed to prevent the publication of the

Report ought to induce the Secretary of State for War to see to the efficiency of the troops in regard to firing. In the interest of the Army one essential point was that the men should be withdrawn from every duty which interfered with their efficient training as soldiers—for instance, every guard which could be dispensed with ought to be done away with, because it was well that, as far as possible, soldiers should be kept together in bodies, and day by day subject to military training under their regimental officers. In this country we had never attended to that with sufficient care; but in India, when he (Sir George Balfour) had the honour of being connected with military finance there, the guard and sentry employment of every kind by which soldiers could be taken away from their regiments was, with the approval of Lord Canning, done away with. Even the ordinary military guards for Commissariat and other Stores, treasure, and other minor purposes, were abolished, and watchmen employed, wherever it was practicable. Then, as regarded the formation of the regiments of Cavalry and Infantry. First, concerning the Cavalry, he wished to point out that 12 years ago a very important change was made under the administration of Lord Hampton, on the advice of the late Sir Hope Grant, by which the Cavalry was formed into squadrons. After the lapse of two years, however, Mr. Cardwell thought fit to change the system, and to return to the troop formation, mainly on account of the difficulty of reconciling the Purchase system with the squadron formation. That difficulty no longer existed. He (Sir George Balfour) regretted the retrograde step at the time, and he regretted it now. He would not at present express any opinion as to the recently proposed formation of Cavalry into brigades; but he thought that squadrons ought to be adopted at once. As to the strength and efficiency of battalions being improved, as supposed, by organizing that body in companies 10 in number, as formerly, and now in eight companies, he thought that a blunder, unless each company had at least 100 privates. But with battalions of 800 privates and under, he thought a six-company formation was the utmost that ought to be practised, and that, instead of having small companies of 30 or 40 men, no company should be composed of less than 100 up to 150 men. In that formation there would then be a captain and three subalterns effective with each company, and the Regimental Establishment should provide for having the officers and non-commissioned officers needed for that strength thoroughly effective. He approved of all the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir Robert Loyd Lindsay) had said with regard to warrant officers, and he was proud that the Secretary of State for War had created that rank. Whilst at the War Office that rank was earnestly urged; but the opposition of the Horse Guards' Branch prevented its creation. But by its creation the Secretary of State had effected a great improvement in the Army in this respect. He was confident that great good to the Army would result from the formation of the rank of warrant officers, inasmuch as a number of young men would now be induced to enter the Army who would not otherwise think of doing so. There was no part of the Indian military system that had been of so much benefit to the Army as the creation of warrant officers. At the time when every branch of the Imperial Army was in want of recruits, the Indian Army obtained an unlimited supply, and mainly because promotion to warrant rank could be secured. He spoke from experience when he said that the warrant officers in the Indian Army had behaved themselves fully as well as the commissioned officers. He would even go so far as to say that they would find fewer courts martial in regard to warrant officers than in respect to officers of the Army. Any distinction that the right hon. Gentleman could make with regard to warrant officers would have his warm approval. Another subject on which he (Sir George Balfour) wished to speak was in connection with the responsibilities and division of work at the War Office. No doubt the Secretary of State was wholly charged with every duty; but there existed a division of work of a rather curious character. Under the present system the Commander-in-Chief, the Financial Secretary, and the Surveyor General of Ordnance acted under Orders in Council issued 10 years ago during the administration of Lord Cardwell. Their responsibilities and duties were defined by those Orders, which ought to have been specially laid before Parliament in a direct and formal manner, instead of becoming known through a Select Committee. It was fully admitted that no duties assigned to those officers by the Orders in Council could be performed except under the distinct control of the Secretary of State. But in order to show that those officers, charged, as they were, with such important duties in this special and formal manner, had an appreciation of their duties, and that they did attend to them, it was essentially necessary that they should be required to present an annual Report on all the heads and duties detailed in the Orders in Council. For instance, his hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the War Office should submit a Report concerning the whole of his Department to the Secretary of State for War. So, also, the Surveyor General of the Ordnance and the Commander-in-Chief should report on the working of the several branches assigned to them in the Orders; and the Secretary of State, in turn, would be enabled to lay a full and ample Statement before the House, as well as the Reports in question. There were many points connected with the administration of the Army with which it was impossible for the Secretary of State for War, in his Annual Statement, to deal. Able as the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman were, they were usually confined to generalities. The Reports, however, to which he (Sir George Balfour) had referred would supply a great deal of the required but omitted information. He thought that the right hon. and learned Judge Advocate General should also be called upon to report upon the administration of justice in the Army, and generally on the working of the Army Act. And now he would ask the Secretary of State for War if he would be good enough, when making his Statement next year, to compare the present expenditure on the Army and Navy with the expenditure under those heads in the year 1869-70? In the latter year the Army Expenditure was brought down to less than £14,000,000, being a lower sum than it had stood at since the Crimean War, and since that time it had been increasing yearly, and now it was upwards of £16,000,000. Of course, if they wished to have efficiency, they must expect to have a heavy expenditure; but still he could not help thinking that if they were to compare the details of the present expenditure with that of 1869-70, some mode could be shown by which economy might be effected. The right hon. Gentleman had said he was going to make some saving by a reduction in the number of general officers. He (Sir George Balfour) heartily approved of the suggestion, for he was satisfied a smaller number of officers of this rank would be quite competent to perform the necessary duties. He had also again to complain of the mode in which the military expenditure was swollen by the charges on account of the guns, projectiles, ammunition, and warlike stores needed for the Navy. In the present Estimates the sum of £616,000 was charged to the Army, which really belonged to the Navy. That was a higher amount for their Supplies than hitherto charged in any year before. Surely the Navy could take that expenditure which was incurred by the re-organization of the Naval Ordnance upon their own shoulders. These re-organizations were constantly occurring. During the last 20 years there had been four or five Naval re-organizations of guns, and probably before they had paid the money necessary for the purpose of carrying out the present re-organization they would have another re-organization, so that there would never be an end to the Army military expenditure bearing a new charge. All these changes in a degree flowed from the erroneous course of making the Army Estimates bear the cost of the Naval Stores. But he (Sir George Balfour) was fully willing to admit that the like mistaken course was followed in making the Naval Estimates bear the cost of the Transports required for the Army. Both practices caused carelessness in regard to the expenditure. But as he saw there were other hon. Members who wished to take part in the debate, so he would reserve whatever else he was inclined to say till a future occasion.

Colonel ALEXANDER said, there were one or two points in connection with these Estimates upon which, with the permission of the Committee, he would like to address a few observations to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War. In the first place, he would remind the right hon. Gentleman that in his recent speech at Pontefract he said that the compulsory retirement of officers at the early age of 40 was an evil the most dangerous to the efficiency of our officers that could possibly be imagined; and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether this danger was not likely to occur shortly in the Brigade of Guards unless steps were taken speedily to stop the present stagnation of promotion which prevailed in that corps? The causes of that stagnation were not far to seek. When, in 1871, the privileges of the Guards were prospectively abolished, the intention was expressed of assimilating the Guards in every respect to the regiments of the Line; but, in one very important particular, that intention had never been fulfilled—namely, no second lieutenant colonels were appointed to the battalion of Guards, as was the case in the Line; and, consequently, promotion which would result from those appointments was seriously affected. In the Line two lieutenant colonels retired within a period of six years; but in the Guards there were only two retirements in eight years. It appeared to him that the only remedy for this evil was the immediate appointment of second lieutenant colonels to the battalion of Guards. Certainly, unless some steps were taken, and that speedily, to remove the present block of promotion, the professional prospects of many promising young officers who entered the Service immediately after the privileges of the Guards were abolished would be seriously endangered. He made this appeal to the right hon. Gentleman, not so much in the interest of the officers themselves, but in the interest of the efficiency of the Brigade of Guards, which, as all would admit, ought to be maintained so long as the brigade itself was maintained. Passing to the important subject of recruiting, he heartily congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on the large number of recruits which he had at present obtained. He had correspondents in the recruiting districts who fully bore out the statement of the right hon. Gentleman in that respect. What was the cause of this sudden development of martial ardour? The right hon. Gentleman, in his speech at Pontefract, attributed it to the advantages which he recently conferred on the non-commissioned officers. He (Colonel Alexander) did not wish to underrate in any way those advantages. On the contrary, he thought that in conferring them the right hon. Gentleman had established a lasting claim to the gratitude of the Army; but he was bound to say, for the information of the Committee, that the Inspector General of Recruiting, in his Report, assigned other reasons for the exceptionally large influx of recruits at the present time. The Inspector General of Recruiting said that the result was due partly to the lower standard of height prevailing in the Infantry, and partly to the localization of that arm. Now, it did appear to him (Colonel Alexander) somewhat strange that in the long and interesting speech of the right hon. Gentleman in explaining the Estimates—a speech to which he (Colonel Alexander) listened with the greatest attention—the right hon. Gentleman passed by, as if beneath notice from him, the fact that last year the standard of height in the Infantry was reduced to a lower point than it had touched at any period since the year 1870, when short service was first introduced. If the right hon. Gentleman was obtaining such a large number of recruits—almost more than he wanted (as Sir John Adye boasted at the Guildhall)—why, then, by reducing the standard of height, did he disregard the advice given last year by the Inspector General, who, in his Report, said—

> "That the standard, once fixed, ought never to be disturbed, and that the conditions of recruiting ought always to be as simple and as permanent as possible."

The Inspector General, in his present Report, took very good care not to revert to this extremely inconvenient subject; but he made a casual remark which went far to explain the reasons which actuated the right hon. Gentleman in reducing the standard for the Infantry last year to 5 feet 4 inches. The Inspector General remarked, in his Report, that the minimum age of recruits was raised last year to the physical equivalent of 19 years, and that the standard of height for the Infantry, was at the same time, reduced to 5 feet 4 inches. Now, the Committee would recollect that last year the right hon. Gentleman took great credit to himself for raising the minimum of age to what he called the physical equivalent of 19 years, adding that he hoped, after a time, to make the minimum 20 years. The right hon. Gentleman never said at that time that the carrying out of his scheme would involve a reduction of one inch in the standard of height for the Infantry. The right hon. Gentleman evidently felt that he owed some apology for making this reduction in the standard of height, for the Inspector General of Recruiting, in an Appendix to his Report, said that, even with a standard of 5 feet 4 inches, our Army would still be taller than any other Army in Europe. That the large influx of recruits was almost entirely due to the reduction of the standard of height was conclusively proved by the remark of the Inspector General that neither for the Guardsmen or gunners of the Royal Artillery the recruiting came up to the standard required, because both for the Guards and gunners of the Royal Artillery superior qualifications were required. He understood that within the last few weeks the chest measurement for gunners of the Royal Artillery had actually been reduced from 35 to 34 inches. It was all very well for the right hon. Gentleman to talk of the increasing popularity of the Service; but if the Service was so popular as he alleged it to be, how did it happen, as mentioned by the Inspector General in his Report, that so large a number of men purchased their discharge just before the completion of their period of service? Now, in his Report last year, the Inspector General reckoned the discharge by purchase as part of the waste of the Army; and it was now proposed to diminish, or rather to utilize, this waste by allowing men who would otherwise have purchased their discharge to pass into the Reserve after three years' service with the Colours. It appeared to him that this artificial increase of the Reserve was strongly to be condemned, for the men who would thus pass prematurely into the Reserve, and who would otherwise have purchased their discharge, would, in his opinion, and, he knew, in the opinion of many competent officers, be amongst the discontented spirits of the Army, and would have, moreover, nine years in which to forget the little they had learnt. He was surprised to see in *The Times*, a few days ago, a rumour—he believed it was something more than a rumour—that a certain proportion of the First Class Army Reserve were to receive an immediate discharge on the condition of taking military service in South Africa. He must confess it passed his comprehension how the right hon. Gentleman, after laboriously building up the First Class Army Reserve at the expense of the active Army, could, with so little consideration, recklessly disperse it. The right hon. Gentleman had told the Committee that he was getting not only more men, but better men, and that characters were now required with recruits. He was very much astonished by that statement, because a commanding officer of Infantry and an adjutant of Cavalry had both assured him that under no circumstances whatever was a character required with a recruit; and the commanding officer of Infantry had added that, under such circumstances, the number of recruits obtained would have been infinitesimally small. The fact was, the less that was said about character the better. *The Police Gazette* of a very recent date contained the names of no fewer than 319 deserters; and, until the right hon. Gentleman succeeded in materially reducing that very ominous list, it was absolutely idle to talk of a better class of men now pervading the ranks of the Army. He regretted that the hon. Member for Hackney (Mr. John Holms) was now gagged. Hon. Gentlemen who sat in the last Parliament would remember how eloquently that hon. Member used to descant upon this theme. He did not deny that a considerable number of recruits now presented themselves for enlistment, and it was said that the territorial system was the cause of the increase. The Inspector General, in his last Report, admitted that there was a great variation in the recruiting capabilities of the various districts, and that, so far, the territorial system had been interfered with; and he expressed a hope that, in the course of time, the recruits required for each regiment would, in the majority of cases, be found in their own districts. Except for the principle that "hope springs eternal in the human breast," the foundation for this expectation appeared to him extremely slender, for surely it was obvious that in maintaining so many districts varying in their recruiting capabilities there must always be a surplus in one district and a deficit in another; and where there was a surplus, that must be got rid of, either by passing men prematurely into the Reserve, or by transferring them into other regiments. The Committee would see that the latter course was not likely to conduce to the popularity of the Service, for men, instead of being allowed to serve in their own local regiments, would be forced to enlist for general service. Would not the right hon. Gentleman do much better to get rid of some of those recruiting districts? What possible use could there be, for instance, in maintaining the 32nd District, which produced last year exactly 40 recruits? This territorial system was avowedly based on the German system; but in Germany the conscription was the keystone of the arch, and without conscription the territorial system was like the play of *Hamlet* with the part of the Prince of Denmark omitted. If the system was the success which the right hon. Gentleman asserted it was, how did it happen that no fewer than 20 territorial regiments, including the Regiment of Pontefract, were now without any fourth battalion, while one regiment had neither the third nor fourth battalion? Did the right hon. Gentleman ever expect to raise another battalion of Militia in Cornwall, where, as the hon. Baronet the Member for West Cornwall (Sir John St. Aubyn) told the Militia Committee, the population preferred either the Navy or the Marines? The fusion between the Line and the Militia was little more than nominal, for if it were real officers would be interchangeable. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he was aware that at Hamilton, which, in answer to a Question he had put last year, the right hon. Gentleman had prophesied would be the great recruiting ground for Highlanders, had gained, between the 1st of July last year and the 1st of January this year, exactly five Highland recruits for the two battalions of Highland Line Infantry? The fact was that Hamilton was much too near Glasgow, and Glencorse too near Edinburgh, to make those stations of any practical use for recruiting under the present system. One-third of our Infantry consisted of attenuated battalions of, perhaps, 450 men, and great fault was often found with commanding officers, because they did not like these attenuated battalions. But why did not they like them? Not because, as was alleged, of their poor appearance on parade, or because of the absence of the "pomp and circumstance of war," but because those attenuated battalions offered no adequate means of instruction to officers or men. A general officer commanding a district had told him that, with two of its battalions, he could not place more than 80 men on parade. Our case was very much like that of the French Army, as described a few months ago by the Correspondent of *The Times*, who stated that for many months to come tactical instruction in the French Army would be practically in abeyance, for, after making some necessary deductions for sick, guards, and employed, there would not be a dozen men per company for parade. Before Easter the right hon. Gentleman had stated that in each of the 71 battalions stationed at home there would be, on an average, 270 recruits—in other words, that nearly one-half of the forces available at home must always consist, under any circumstances, of recruits. Even at the risk of being called a pessimist and a croaker, he could not help expressing a fear that we should suffer in the future, as we had suffered before, from the fatal youthfulness of our Army. He was quite aware that the right hon. Gentleman had denied the youth of the Army which was defeated last year by the Boers in South Africa; and the Secretary of State for the Home Department, at Glasgow, had attributed the defeat, not to the youth of the men, but to a mistake committed by a most gallant but unfortunate commander. Upon that point he should not like to say much, for he could not help remembering a short time ago *The Times* stated that without promotion by selection we must inevitably recur to the military imbecility of former days; but he would ask whether last year we had not in South Africa the pick of the choicest talent which the Staff College could afford? Further, he would ask whether any of the "military imbecility" displayed in former days could have been attended with more fatal results than were the battles of Laing's Nek and Majuba Hill? There was a disposition at this moment on the part of the public to believe that we had the best possible Army. God grant that the public might not be some day fatally undeceived! But, in the meantime, if our Ministers prophesied falsely, they were entitled to take refuge in the plea that the people loved to have it so.

Colonel COLTHURST said, he wished to call attention to the case of those soldiers who were entering now upon their 12th year of service, and would suffer great hardship through the operation of the Queen's Regulations of last year. From a Return which the right hon. Gentleman had furnished him with, it appeared that there were over 4,000 private soldiers who enlisted in 1870, under the Act of 1867, who were now eligible for re-engagement. The Act of 1867 gave these men the privilege of re-engaging after seven years' service. It did not give them the right of re-engagement; but they were encouraged to do so by an additional 1*d*. a-day, and, from his knowledge and experience, he could say that no man of good character had ever been refused. But the Act of 1870 took away the privilege of re-engagement after seven years, but put it at 12 years, and so it remained until the issue of the Queen's Regulations last year. By those Regulations the re-engagement was almost absolutely forbidden; it was only allowed under special circumstances, and each of such cases was to be submitted to the Adjutant General for his approval, accompanied by a statement of the grounds on which re-engagement was recommended. In 1880, 2,000 men were re-engaged; and, therefore, he assumed that of the 4,300 who were now eligible, or would have been eligible under the old system, somewhere about one-half wished to re-engage. The right hon. Gentleman had assured him that he would construe the new Regulations liberally, and he was certain the right hon. Gentleman would do so if he could. But there was the *litera scripta manet.* There were the words of the Queen's Regulations, upon which a commanding officer must act, and commanding officers might not take a liberal view of such Regulations. They considered that they were only entitled to recommend private soldiers for re-engagement when there were special grounds; when, for instance, the soldier was an artificer, or in some other way useful. The system of not retaining old soldiers was a bad one; and nearly all the commanding officers examined before Lord Airey's Committee had agreed that 25 per cent of these men should be re-engaged. After this year there would, of course, only be soldiers in the Army who enlisted under the Act of 1870, and, therefore, enlisted with their eyes open; but those men who enlisted under the Act of 1867 were entitled to some special consideration; and, however favourably the right hon. Gentleman might consider the matter, it would be of little use to them, unless he would issue an Order, or in some other way provide that these men should be treated exceptionally—that they should be re-engaged now, if they would have been re-engaged under the Regulations prior to 1881. The new Regulations ought not to be used to their detriment. He thought the right hon. Gentleman ought to make this concession, because every one of these men, if discharged against their will, would be warning beacons against recruiting in the districts to which they went. Men who went to India in 1870 had no chance of going to the Reserve, and after serving 10 years in India they were now to be sent adrift. It would be for the interest of the Service, and to the credit of the country, if the right hon. Gentleman would reconsider this matter.

Lord EUSTACE CECIL: I must preface my remarks by expressing my great regret that we were not able to bring on this discussion before 10 o'clock to-night. I do not think it is quite fair in the case of these Army Estimates, in which there is a vast sum of money at stake, and upon which a certain number of Gentlemen come down at a certain stated hour to discuss, that we should be driven to the hour of 10 o'clock before discussing them. I say this on behalf of some of my absent Friends, particularly in regard to the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), who is unable to be present to-night. He would have been glad of an opportunity of discussing several of the important matters which the right hon. Gentleman has brought forward. I must also express my regret that I do not see those Liberal Benches on the opposite side very largely filled. There are Gentlemen on that side of strong politics, and with a keen eye to reducing as far as they can, in the interests of the taxpayer, the great expenditure on the Army. I do not see in his place, for instance, the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) or the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands).

Those Gentlemen, so far as my experience extends—and on the question of the Army Estimates it extends over many years—have always been in their places; and although I do not always agree with them, still they have always upheld the interests of the public, so far as financial matters are concerned. I was much disappointed because the hon. and gallant Member for Kincardineshire (General Sir George Balfour) did not touch a little more upon the question of expenditure. I must give my right hon. Friend (Mr. Childers) a great deal of credit for the clearness and facility with which he put his proposals before the Committee; at the same time I observed that he was very apologetic. He entered into a long disquisition in order to compare the Estimates of this year with the question of population, and even with the amounts received from the Wine and Malt and Spirit Duties; and he produced figures showing, as compared with the population and Revenue, we were paying very much less for our Army than we were 25 years ago. I will not follow him in a matter of that kind; but I will go simply to the year 1880, when we left Office. In the year 1880—I take the figures he gave us—the net Expenditure was £14,980,000. What is the Expenditure this year? £15,458,000. That is to say, an increase of £500,000 upon the amount three years ago. That is a very serious addition in three years; and I think the question which the Committee and the public generally have to consider is, what additional value have we got in efficiency for this larger expenditure of money? I have made a careful computation, from which I will give a summary of the number of men in all the branches of the Service this year as compared with the number in 1880. I find that this year we have 2,671 fewer Regular soldiers, 6,036 fewer Reserve men—in the First Class Army Reserve—and 26,138 fewer trained Militiamen than we had in 1880. It is true that we have 2,000 more Volunteers and about 109 more Yeomanry. Then, if I go further and consider what the military necessities of the moment are—and I also consider the fact that something like 10,000 more men have been required for Ireland than two years ago—it makes the account on the bad side, as far as regards our efficiency, for defensive purposes very much worse. I find that we are really practically weaker in all ranks by something like 45,000 men this year than we were in 1880, and, at the same time, we are paying something like £500,000 more. If my calculations are at all correct, I must say that that is a very serious indictment. I give my right hon. Friend a great deal of credit for what he has done for the non-commissioned officers and in some other ways; but still the expenditure on the Army has gone on gradually increasing, while the number of men is diminishing. Then I come to one portion of the Expenditure which I shall have to touch upon again, and which I touched upon last year—namely, the Non-Effective Vote. Last year I never got any explanation upon this matter, although I brought it forward in order to give the right hon. Gentleman an opportunity of explaining it. I will repeat now what I read last year, but which was not explained. In 1880-1 the Non-Effective Vote amounted to £2,743,000; in 1881-2 it jumped up suddenly to £3,019,000; and this year it is £3,049,000. Therefore there is something like a £250,000 increase upon this one Vote since 1880-1 when we left Office. That would account for half the increased Expenditure, and it is this Expenditure, as I pointed out then and again point out, which we had a right to hope would diminish rather than increase; because it was certainly the expectation of Lord Cardwell, when he introduced the short service system, that if that system did nothing else, at least within a certain time—which must now have nearly elapsed—there would be a decrease in the Non-Effective Vote. But that has not taken place. On the contrary, it has gone on increasing, and has made a very sudden and extraordinary jump within the last three years. I should like to pass now to something more interesting than figures, and to touch upon the question of the age of recruits. Something has already been said upon that matter. For many years past I have wished, if possible, to get seasoned men of 20 years of age. I give the right hon. Gentleman great credit for having increased the minimum age to 19; but I must remind him of his promise last year, which he has renewed this year, that before long he would raise the minimum from 19 to 19½ years. I hope before long he may be able to raise it to 20 years. I would like to point out to the right hon. Gentleman that one recommendation of Lord Airey's Committee was that recruits should, if possible, be enlisted, for two reasons, at the age of 20—fiirst, because they would be much better seasoned; and, second, because they would cost a great deal less than younger men. The Committee reported that every efficient Infantry soldier cost the country no less than £100, and every Cavalry soldier £96—that is to say, if the men are enlisted at 19; and they pointed out, also, that if the men enlisted at 20, an Infantry soldier would cost £58, and a Cavalry soldier £57—that is, nearly 50 per cent less. If these calculations of the Committee are correct, and by enlisting soldiers at 20 years of age 50 per cent of the cost would be saved, I cannot help thinking it would be better to offer some extra inducement, whether in the shape of pay or as extra bounty, in order to get better and more seasoned soldiers at a cheaper rate. I believe the right hon. Gentleman is most anxious to arrive at such a state of things; and what I wish to do, if I may use the words without offence, is to grease his wheels—that is to say, to give him every assistance in arriving at that result, which, I am sure, will be of great benefit to the Service and to the taxpayer. Then I would like to say something about the Militia. The reason why there has been a great falling-off in the Militia is that the Irish Militia have not been called out for the last two years. The result is that whereas we had in 1880 113,500 trained Militiamen, we have now only 87,000 trained Militiamen upon whom we can depend. We are thus deprived of 26,000 trained Militiamen upon whom we have a right to depend. I have no wish to enter into the political reasons for this reduction. This is not the time to do so. I only wish to point out that, so far as the strength of the Militia is concerned, it has been reduced by the number of 26,000 in consequence of the Irish Militia not having been called out during the last two years, and that is a very serious matter. And while I am upon this subject I should like to call attention to an expression made use of by the right hon. Gentleman in his speech, upon which he appeared to lay great stress at the time. The right hon. Gentleman was talking about the Militia Artillery, and he said—"The Militia Artillery would become Royal." I did not quite understand what he meant by that—whether he meant that the Militia Artillery was to become Regular Artillery by becoming "Royal," or what, in fact, was the full force of the term "Royal." There have been reports abroad that not only the Militia, but the Volunteers are to be incorporated with the Regular Forces before long. If that is the case—and I appeal to the frankness and candour of the right hon. Gentleman to say whether it is so or not—I think we ought to have been told so earlier. We ought now to be distinctly informed whether there is an intention before long of incorporating the Militia with the Regular Forces, and that the incorporation will be extended bye-and-bye to the Volunteers. Such an expression as the official statement of the right hon. Gentleman that the Militia Artillery would become "Royal" certainly puzzled me at the time, and I shall be glad if the right hon. Gentleman will explain what the full force of the term is. I come next to a question which I do not think has been at all touched upon in the remarks which have been made by other hon. Gentlemen who have addressed the Committee. I do not think that any hon. Member has mentioned the fact that there is a proposition to reduce the number of regimental officers by something like 500. Now, the reduction of 500 regimental officers is a very serious matter. I used to hear it said, in my professional days, that we had not one officer too many. I am perfectly ready to admit that when we come to the Non-Effective Services it is quite possible to make a reduction; but, as far as the working regimental officers are concerned, I do not believe that there is one too many; and when I heard the statement that the right hon. Gentleman was going to reduce the regimental officers by 500 I did think that that was a very large number out of something like 5,000. I dare say that the right hon. Gentleman will be able to explain the matter. The right hon. Gentleman touched upon another question in regard to the regimental officers—namely, that it was his intention to abolish all extra subscriptions. I do not object to that. On the contrary, I am very glad to hear that the right hon. Gentleman proposes to make regimental life as inexpensive as possible. There could be no greater boon to the regimental officers than to abolish those extra expenses of which they complain. I hear that there is also a proposition under consideration with regard to the furniture and mess property. If that question is under consideration, I must say it seems to me that there are a great many important matters now under consideration; and although, of course, I do not wish for one moment to ask precisely what are the instructions which have been given to these Committees, or to expect them to be laid upon the Table, yet there are certain ways of finding out, besides the rumours that are abroad, that great and serious changes are contemplated. I should, therefore, be very glad to know what the right hon. Gentleman can tell us upon these matters. There are three Committees sitting at this moment. There may be more; but there are certainly three sitting now—one on the very serious question of the retention of Chelsea and Kilmainham Hospitals; another sitting, I am told, on a question of the change of dress in the Army; and there have been rumours abroad that the old traditional red coat is to be done away with. That may, or may not, be so; but if there is any intention of the kind, I think the public and the House cannot be too soon informed. There have also been reports and rumours that may not be true; but they only show how very much excited the public mind is about these matters; and there have been so many changes in the Army that it is impossible to predict what other changes may not be in store. There have been rumours abroad that the patronage of the colonels of the Guards is to be done away with, and that they are no longer to appoint to first commissions. That may be, or may not be, true. I do not for a moment say that it is so; but I wish to point out, in regard to this and other matters, that when we find two or three Committees appointed to consider what may turn out to be very serious changes in the Army, and we have hints dropped here, and hints dropped there, and remarks made that certain services are to become "Royal," and so forth, it is impossible for us to know exactly where we are; and I am bound to say that the impression is gaining ground that revolutionary changes are in contemplation, and that, notwithstanding the changes which have taken place within the last 10 years, the Army is not yet to be allowed to rest. I must protest, in the name of the Army, against the course which has been pursued with regard to it. It has been practically turned inside out. Every grade, from the general down to the drummer boy, has had its pay, its retirement, its promotion, and its prospects considered in every possible way; and the result is that many of the older officers are now trembling in their shoes, not knowing what may come next. I put a Question only to-day with regard to the promotion of general and field officers under certain circumstances. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman understood perfectly well what the purport of that Question was. It is not my intention to go into the matter now; but I wish to say most distinctly that it only shows, at the present time, how much our officers are afraid that some change in their promotion may occur which they have not calculated on, and which may tend still further to disgust many of them with a Service in which it is of the greatest possible importance that they should be retained. And now I should like, with the permission of the Committee, to say one or two words on the subject of the guns. I dare say that we shall have to say something about it on Vote 12; but as I put a Question on this subject also some time ago, and as the right hon. Gentleman informed me there was little or no truth in the matter, I think it only right to say that, from inquiries I have been able to make, I have been told that, although, of course, the newspaper paragraph from which I obtained my original information was not strictly true, still there is a certain amount of truth in the statement. This is what appeared not very long ago with regard to the subject of the breech-loaders of the Woolwich pattern. It was stated—

> "That about 27 of the guns were ordered of a particular contractor, and a similar order was given to the Royal Gun Factories. None of the latter have failed; indeed, the failure of a Government made gun has been a thing unknown for years past. Four or more of the contract guns are, however, reported to have failed at proof. Neither of them has burst, bursting being scarcely to be expected in guns of the coiled wrought iron type; but the coils have opened, which is much the same thing."

These were the observations made in regard to the contract guns, and the answer which I got from the right hon. Gentleman was that I was mistaken, and that the report which had appeared in the newspapers was not correct. Now I am informed that there has been a failure of some kind. [Mr. CHILDERS: I said something more.] I believe that the right hon. Gentleman did say something more; but I cannot give his exact words, as I have not got them with me. But I understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that I was not quite correct, or, at all events, that this paragraph was not quite correct, in what it stated. Now, this is a very serious matter. The question of the guns has been under consideration for something like three years. I recollect before the late Government left Office that the whole matter was thoroughly well considered; and it was thought that within a year, or at any rate within a limited time, we certainly should be able to obtain a gun which would not only pass every proof, but be an entirely effective gun. That limited time—whether it was a year or more—has long since passed. We still hear that the New Ordnance Committee is doing a great deal; but so it has been doing a great deal for some years, and as yet no positive conclusion has been come to, and it is becoming a serious matter for the interests of the country. I should like to know from the right hon. Gentleman if there is any chance of the Committee arriving at a conclusion within a reasonable time. We hear of foreign nations arming themselves with guns of powerful calibre; that their Navies are very much more powerful than our own; and that they are far better prepared with war material of all kinds than we are. It is, therefore, most necessary and most important that our Ordnance Committee, which I, for one, have every confidence in, should come to a speedy conclusion upon the matter. I know that this question will probably be brought on again when the Navy Estimates are before us; but it would be satisfactory if the right hon. Gentleman would inform the Committee what is now being done, and will further tell us when the Financial Report of the Ordnance Committee may be expected. I do not know that I have anything further to observe which I cannot reserve for the discussion of the other Votes; but I should be extremely glad if my right hon. Friend will add to what, if he will allow me to say so, was his very businesslike and lucid statement some information on two or three matters which were somewhat lightly passed over. I think my right hon. Friend will admit that one or two questions were very lightly passed over, and that other questions of the very highest importance have been handed over to the decision of Committees—questions which, if they are to be decided upon and carried into effect in future years without being first considered by the House and the public, will certainly occasion a good deal of alarm and disappointment. I will not trouble the Committee with any further remarks; but I hope that my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War will be able to give the Committee an explanation upon the various points to which his attention has been called.

SIR HARRY VERNEY said, that referring to the Institution which had been mentioned, Chelsea Hospital, he trusted that no efforts and no expense would be spared to add to the comfort of our soldiers. There were something like 85,000 old soldiers, almost all desiring admission there; and he should be glad to learn that they were placed in a condition of comfort and contentment. The noble Lord who had just spoken (Lord Eustace Cecil) had drawn attention to the fact that, at the present moment, there were various Committees sitting upon Army matters, one of which was engaged in an inquiry into the question of the dress of the Army. He confessed that, so far as his own opinion went, he thought a great deal might be done to improve the dress of the Army. Tight red coats were a most uncomfortable costume to march in, and an improvement in that respect was most desirable. He was also in favour of any plan by which a supply of furniture could be provided for married men which would diminish the amount of baggage which often accompanied a regiment on the march. The establishment of coffee shops in the different barracks had also been of great advantage to the soldiers, and was, he believed, very much appreciated by them. Indeed, he believed that few more valuable boons had ever been conferred upon the men; and he sincerely thanked his right hon. Friend the

Secretary of State for the steps he had taken in the matter. With regard to the condition of the Army, it was very well known that we had not got either too many men or too many officers. We had a very small Army indeed, for so important a country; and, so far as the officers were concerned, it must be borne in mind that they were becoming more and more instructed every year in the duties of their Profession, and were, consequently, rendered more valuable to the country. He was, therefore, very sorry to hear that there was any idea of reducing the number of officers. Our officers ought to be the best instructed in the world, and there was no difficulty in obtaining the best men, because there was a strong desire shown by numbers of the most intelligent classes in the country to enter the ranks of the Army. At the present moment we had not got one man too many; and he believed that it would be of great benefit to the country if the services of many officers who were now subject to retirement at an age when they were still able to do duty were retained. The last time that the House was engaged in a discussion of Army questions he had mentioned his extreme anxiety that something should be done to make better provision for the welfare of sick and wounded soldiers; and his right hon. Friend stated at the time that steps would be taken in that direction. He should be glad to learn what steps had been taken. He had himself moved for Returns with regard to the Army Hospital Corps which would show their present state of efficiency, and how far they had been doing their duty. There was one other subject which he desired to mention to his right hon. Friend, in which he had always taken a deep interest—namely, the superannuation of men at a time when they were not incapacitated from doing duty. In the present state of the Army, he felt that that was a very serious matter, and one in which the interests of the country were greatly concerned. He believed that, under the system now prevailing, the country, both in connection with the Army and Navy, had lost the services of officers who were in a perfect state of efficiency, and who ought to have been retained. As he had said already, they did not possess one man too many; and it was most desirable that so long as an officer was thoroughly efficient, and not incapacitated by old age or infirmity, he should be retained, and that when it became absolutely necessary that he should retire from the Service of the country he should receive a bonus. He believed that many perfectly efficient officers would prefer to continue in the Service rather than accept the pecuniary reward they received on leaving the Army. He was satisfied that if any means could be devised by his right hon. Friend and the Government by which they could retain for the Service of the country those officers of the Army and Navy who were thoroughly efficient and willing to remain very great advantage would be derived.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER said, that he entirely concurred in the observations which had been made a short time ago by the hon. and gallant Member for the County of Cork (Colonel Colthurst) with regard to old soldiers being allowed to re-engage after the short period of service. He thought they had been placed in a somewhat unfair position, because they enlisted in 1870 and 1871 under the supposition that they were to be allowed to re-engage. He therefore trusted that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War would take into consideration the case of those men who were under the idea, when they enlisted, that they might continue to perform the full service for which they engaged. With regard to the remarks which had been made by his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Ayrshire (Colonel Alexander) in reference to the Guards, he could substantiate all that his hon. and gallant Friend had said. Indeed, he was able to go still further, and to give even stronger reasons and figures than his hon. Friend had done in the matter. The senior subalterns in the Guards averaged now a little over 12 years' service, whereas the senior subalterns in the Line averaged only nine years' service; and he would venture to say that there was no prospect whatever of the junior subaltern officers in the Guards obtaining any kind of promotion for some time to come. The rule was that a major was to be retired at the end of seven years' service; but it must be borne in mind that there were very few officers of that rank who would retire during the next two or three years, and, further, that the Guards had a certain number of officers who would have to be absorbed before any promotion could take place. He believed he was correct in stating that in the Grenadier Guards there were five cases of senior officers who would have to be absorbed. No doubt he would be told that two of these officers had been retired within the last few weeks; but there would still remain three officers who would have to be absorbed. In the Coldstream Guards there were three officers still to be absorbed, and in the Scots Guards also three; but he admitted that one of these had only retired a very short time ago. He must also recall to the recollection of the Committee that, since the new Warrant had come out, there had hardly been one case of a senior officer having been retired from the Brigade of Guards since 1881; and he feared that the cases of retirement in future would be very rare. He did not wish for one moment to say anything against the regulations which the right hon. Gentleman had proposed and carried out for the senior officers of the Guards, because he thought that their retiring pensions and retiring allowances were very handsome indeed; but what he wished to bring before the Committee was the condition, and what would be the condition, of the subordinate and junior subalterns of the Brigade of Guards. They could not hope to obtain promotion for some time to come; and while the promotion was, as it were, in a state of abeyance, it must be borne in mind that there could be no fresh appointments for some time to come, while the matter remained in its present condition. He would now pass on to another point, because he believed that he was in Order in speaking upon the present Vote on Army matters generally. Having taken the greatest interest in all Army matters during the past year since the new Warrant came out, he thought he was justified in making a few remarks in regard to that Warrant, and the grievances which had been brought about by its promulgation. He would allude first to a grievance which he knew had already been brought under the notice of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, and which he (Sir Henry Fletcher) brought before the House some time ago—namely, the question of the retired purchase captains under the Warrants of 1877 and 1878. Last year he felt it his duty to call attention to the question of what he might term the existing purchase captains before the new Warrant of the 25th of June came into existence; and he felt bound to thank the right hon. Gentleman for having taken into consideration the matters which he had brought forward in connection with these officers. The right hon. Gentleman most kindly paid attention to all the arguments used on the occasion referred to, and most certainly the right hon. Gentleman had taken steps to promote the interests of the officers, and to benefit them to an extent which he (Sir Henry Fletcher) had hardly expected. But there was a case of another class of purchase officers which he had felt it his duty to bring before the Committee that evening—namely, the case of the purchase captains who were retired under the Warrants of 1877 and 1878. He was aware that it was a question of finance, and he must appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War to use his best endeavours with Her Majesty's Treasury, in order that he might induce them, if possible, to bestow justice upon these officers. He was perfectly aware that the matter did not rest entirely with the right hon. Gentleman as Secretary of State for War; but he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would make an appeal to the Treasury, in order that he might obtain funds to apply to the benefit of these officers. They were retired under the Warrants of 1877 and 1878, and a Memorial had recently been forwarded to the right hon. Gentleman on their behalf for his consideration. He would not trouble the Committee with reading the words of the Memorial, because, no doubt, they would be in the recollection of the right hon. Gentleman. A reply was sent to the Memorial, stating that the application of these officers could not be considered; and, when the reply was received, he (Sir Henry Fletcher) was asked to make a further statement to the right hon. Gentleman. He did so, and he held in his hand the answer he had received, and which, he hoped, the Committee would allow him to read. In was dated the 11th of February, 1882—Financial Secretary's Department, War Office—and it said—

> "Sir,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th ult., forwarding a letter and copy of Memorial from purchase captains retired on pensions prior to the

issue of the Royal Warrant of the 25th of June 1881, and to inform you, in reply, that the Secretary of State for War is unable to give retrospective effect in the cases of officers who voluntarily retired."

In connection with that reply of the Secretary of State for War, he humbly begged leave to state that the officers whose cause he was advocating did not voluntarily retire. There were, no doubt, some officers, and perhaps many officers, who did voluntarily retire under the Warrant of 1877 and 1878; but the case of the officers whose cause he was advocating was this. They were under the Warrant; but they had arrived at the age of 45, at which the Warrant stated they should retire; and it was impressed upon them that they would not receive promotion from the rank of captain to that of major on account of age; and they were told that if they remained in the Service they would be superseded by junior officers, who would be passed over their heads. What he maintained was, that when an officer was placed in such a position he had no alternative left him but to retire. It might be said that this was voluntary retirement; but he maintained that it was not voluntary retirement in the ordinary sense. When an officer was placed in that peculiar position, and told that his juniors would be passed over his head, he had, in his (Sir Henry Fletcher's) opinion, no other course open to him than to ask to be allowed to leave the Service. He would now quote the cases of some officers, each of 25 or 26 years' service, which appeared to him to be most prominent, and should be happy to furnish the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War with the list, which he held in his hand. The officers whose cases he selected did not form the whole number of those retired under the Warrant; but he thought they would be sufficient to convince the Committee that the class in question had not been quite fairly dealt with. In giving the details he should have no hesitation in mentioning the names of the officers to whom he particularly referred, inasmuch as they were public property. Lieutenant Colonel Beasly served 29 years—19 years as captain; he passed through the Staff College; served on the Staff; obtained extra first-class certificate in musketry; passed the highest examination in Hindostanee, and qualified himself in every way for command when senior captain of his regiment. A junior officer, however, was put over his head; and he felt, under the circumstances, that no other course was open to him but to retire, which he did, on a pension of £280 a-year. The next officer to whose case he would ask the attention of the Committee was Lieutenant Colonel Rawlins, of 26 years' service—19 years as captain; he was officially informed that he would be superseded if he remained in his regiment, and retired in consequence on a pension of £259 a-year. Had this officer served five months longer, he would have retired under the Warrant—of which he received no notice—on £300 a-year. The next case was that of Lieutenant Colonel Clark, of the 50th Foot, who was informed, from the Horse Guards, that he had become ineligible for regimental promotion on account of age, and was, therefore, compelled to retire on a pension of less than £300 a-year. He contended that if these three officers had been allowed to remain in the Service, they would, under this new Warrant, have obtained the maximum pension of £300, instead of the amounts he had named. Therefore, he appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to use his influence, if possible, with the Treasury, in order that a certain number of officers —not the whole, as he said before, of those who retired under the Warrant— who had retired on pensions varying from £259 to £280 per annum, might be allowed to take the benefit of the new Warrant. He thought the cases he had referred to deserved more consideration, because, although the right hon. Gentleman had said, in answer to a Question put by him upon the subject, that they could not be further considered, inasmuch as the officers in question had received a step of honorary rank, he (Sir Henry Fletcher) wished to point out that purchase captains, under the Warrant of 1881, received two steps in rank, which these officers did not. If the right hon. Gentleman would reconsider these cases, he would, undoubtedly, receive the thanks of a most deserving body of officers, who, for a considerable number of years, had served their Queen and country with credit. He would now turn to another subject that had been before the House during the present Session of Parliament and on previous occasions. The new Warrant of the Secretary of State for War was issued last June, and he had certainly been led to understand that brevet promotion was to be abolished. But since that time a *corrigenda* Warrant had been issued, under which the right hon. Gentleman had again introduced brevet promotion, and that simply for corps of Royal Artillery and Engineers. He pointed out to the Committee that by this unexpected system of brevet promotion a certain number of majors of Line regiments had been superseded and their interests materially prejudiced. The officers in question were men who had served with the rank of major for more than seven years, most or many of them having received their proper rank for services in the field. By the Return which he held in his hand it appeared that the average length of service of these 20 majors was 27 years; that three of them had been wounded severely; that the number of medals possessed by them was 34; that nine of them were promoted for distinguished service, and that eight of them were mentioned in despatches. Notwithstanding these facts, the officers in question had, by the *corrigenda* Warrant and the brevet of last October, been passed over by 75 officers of the Ordnance Corps of Royal Artillery and Engineers, and it was only natural that they should feel aggrieved in consequence. It might be said that a precedent would be created if these officers were placed in a position of seniority to the officers of the Royal Artillery and Engineers; but he could safely say that there were only seven Line majors on the Active List who could be superseded before the year 1886, and many of these would probably receive regimental rank before that time. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would endeavour to do justice to these aggrieved officers. He would now briefly allude to a subject which was touched upon by the right hon. Gentleman in the Statement made by him a few weeks ago, and which had also been referred to by an hon. Member opposite — namely, the mess and furniture of officers of the Army. This question had been specially dwelt upon by previous Secretaries of State for War, and it was one which required great consideration. In the first place, the right hon. Gentleman proposed that the officers' mess should be limited to the sum of 4*s.* per diem. Now, as an old soldier of the Line, and one who had for many years kept up his connection with his brother officers, he ventured to think that this arrangement would interfere very much with the social life of officers in Her Majesty's Service. Further, he would like very much to know from the right hon. Gentleman how it was proposed to carry out a plan by which an officer should be able to get his three meals a-day for the sum of 4*s.*? Was it intended that the Government should find sergeant caterers or mess-sergeants, or were the officers of the regiment to seek out some person who would undertake to mess them at the rate of 4*s.* a-day? He ventured to say it was impossible for any private person to provide for the officers at that rate; and if it was to be dependent on the officers to select a sergeant from their own regiment to do it, a considerable portion of their time would be spent in endeavouring to carry out the necessary arrangements. He did not for one moment wish to see extravagant messes in the Service; but he thought that this laying down of a hard-and-fast line of 4*s.* a-day, which was not to be exceeded, would greatly interfere with the social life of officers, and would have the effect of driving men away from the regimental mess to hotels and other places where they could meet with better accommodation. He remembered that 28 years ago, when he was in a Line regiment—a four-company depôt, which he was sorry at that moment was not in favour with the right hon. Gentleman—a squadron of Cavalry was stationed near them, and even their four-company mess was not considered good enough for the Cavalry officers, who would not condescend to dine there, and went to various hotels in the neighbourhood. On the whole, he felt sure that the officers of regiments would not like to have their social affairs interfered with in the manner proposed. In connection with this subject there was another matter to which he would refer. Was it the intention of the right hon. Gentleman to dispose of, or take over, the regimental plate, which was the property of the officers of various regiments? How were the knives, forks, spoons, centre pieces, and goblets, the presents from old officers who had served in the regiment, and the collection, perhaps, of 100 years—how were these to be disposed of in view of the right hon. Gentleman's arrangements for diminishing the expense of transport? If it was intended to take over all the plate from the officers at a certain price, he thought they were clearly entitled to information on this head, or sufficient notice to enable them to make their own arrangements, if an answer to this inquiry could not be given at once. There was another matter to which he would call the attention of the Committee—namely, the present position of colour sergeants transferred to the Volunteers. A Question had been asked in the House upon this subject last year; but no reply, as far as he was aware, had been given to it. Previous to last year colour sergeants of the Army were transferred to the Volunteers under certain regulations. They had to revert to the rank of sergeant in order to become sergeant instructors and to serve out their Army engagements. At the time they were transferred the rate of pension was the same for colour sergeants and sergeants; but by the new Warrant brought out by the right hon. Gentleman an additional 3*d.* per day was granted to colour sergeants. Therefore, as he understood the matter, the colour sergeants who were transferred to the Volunteers before the year 1881 would be losers of 3*d.* a-day. He maintained that this amount of 3*d.* a-day should be extended to the colour sergeants now serving as instructors with the Volunteers under their Army engagements; and he could not but think that their exclusion was due to an omission on the part of certain officials at the War Office. The matter being one of great importance to sergeants in the Army, he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would be able to say that it should be inquired into. He agreed with the hon. and gallant Member for Berkshire (Sir Robert Loyd Lindsay) that the Home battalions of the territorial regiments were mere shadows under the present system. The Home battalion now consisted of 420 men; but it was quite impossible for the commanding officer to get anything like that number on parade. After a regiment came home from foreign service it consisted simply of a number of recruits, and for years it was nothing else than a travelling depôt, the commanding officer having the greatest difficulty in getting 200 men to appear on parade by turning out servants, tailors, cooks, and others. He maintained that, under the present system, it was impossible to make the Home battalions for the first few years of Home service efficient or ready for any emergency. It might be said that they were not required to be kept ready for any emergency; but they had seen, during the last few months, that battalions which had come home from foreign service had been sent to Ireland, and that might occur for some time to come. He therefore urged upon the right hon. Gentleman that every inducement should be held out, and every method devised, in order to enable officers commanding Home battalions to get as many men together, and as much drill out of them, as possible. He was unable to see why men, when they enlisted as soldiers, should be compelled to spend so much time in attending school and gymnasium, which took them away from their military duties. As a matter of fact, recruits were overworked, and were disgusted with having to go back to school. Commanding officers were unable to get their men together, and the consequence was that they had no opportunity of instructing their young officers in drill and other matters connected with their business. He would urge that the attendance at school and at the gymnasium should be limited as much as possible, especially as the soldier was now only allowed to remain a few years in the Service. In his opinion, those few years should be devoted entirely to instructing the soldier in the duties of his Profession. Again, he desired to call attention to the practice of employing men as clerks and otherwise in general offices. When a regiment arrived where there was a general office, the commanding officer was applied to for men to fill clerkships and other subordinate offices connected with it. He considered this objectionable, because it was desirable that every available man should be at the disposal of the commanding officer for military purposes; and he thought that the staff of clerks and others should be formed and supplied by pensioners and Army Service men. Finally, he would refer to fraudulent enlistment, which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War said, on a former occasion, was a most difficult matter to counteract; but added that for this offence the House of Commons would not for one moment tolerate branding. He (Sir Henry Fletcher) submitted that the word "branding" ought never to be used in connection with this subject. There were certain ways of marking a man without branding that would enable him to be identified as having previously served in Her Majesty's Forces; and as fraudulent enlistment was one of the great evils to which the Army was at present exposed, he trusted that the authorities at the War Office would use their best endeavours to cope with a grievance that tended so much to the detriment of Her Majesty's Service.

Mr. SEELY (*Nottingham*) asked for information as to the proportion which the Artillery bore to the other branches of the Service. He understood that the usual proportion of Artillery in European Armies was three guns to 1,000 men. The 300 guns which we had were, therefore, in correct proportion to the Regular Army of the country; but it must be bore in mind that the Government were forming a Reserve of between 40,000 and 50,000 men, which would increase the number of guns that we ought to have at our disposal to 450. Again, there were the Militia and Volunteers to be taken into account, which brought up the Forces of the country to something like 450,000 or 500,000 men, the requisite number of guns for which force would be 1,200 or 1,500. But, instead of that number, it appeared that we had only 300 guns; and, therefore, he asked the right hon. Gentleman to state what he considered ought to be the proportion of Field Artillery to the other Forces of the country?

Colonel WALROND said, he understood that the territorial regiments were established for the purpose of enlisting in them men belonging to the same part of the country. But he was also informed that, supposing a Devonshire man came to the London depôt for the purpose of enlistment, although the authorities could send him to Scotland, they could not send him down to Devonshire—he would have to go there at his own expense. He believed this question was one which might be fairly considered by the right hon. Gentleman. He was glad to see that it was proposed to add £10,000 to the sum assigned for Volunteer camps, which there could be no doubt were amongst the best means for increasing the efficiency of the Volunteer Forces. Still, there were other matters in connection with this subject that he might be excused for alluding to. The right hon. Gentleman had invited 15,000 Volunteers to assemble at Aldershot, to take part in the Autumn Manœuvres, which, he believed, extended over a period of three days. It appeared that the Volunteers were to pay their expenses to Aldershot, but that they were to receive 4*s.* a-day after arrival. He therefore asked the right hon. Gentleman whether the three days over which the Manœuvres extended would be distinct from the eight days which it had been the custom to assign to the Volunteers during the month of August? He suggested that it would be far easier and cheaper in the long run if the counties of Devon, Cornwall, and Somerset had a brigade camp within easy distance of Plymouth, at which the Volunteers of those counties could assemble, under the command of officers from the garrison, the same privileges being granted to them as at Aldershot This arrangement, he believed, would be productive of the best results, and he commended it to the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman. In his own county four battalions of Volunteers went out under canvas, within a fortnight of each other; and he believed that, with a little arrangement, they might be able to get all the four regiments under canvas at the same time. If they could do this it would be an immense boon, not alone to the men, but to the officers also. The five commanding officers in Devonshire—of whom he was one—had no chance whatever of taking part in brigade drill. He had been trying hard to get up a brigade drill for Whit Monday; but he was met by the excuse from the other battalions that the expense would be too great. He was aware that the battalions situate in and near London had great advantages in this matter; and he should be glad if the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Childers) could see his way to making a grant, in order that other battalions might have opportunities of rendering themselves efficient in this drill. The efficiency of the Volunteer Force would be greatly increased thereby. He should like to say a word as to the arming of the

Volunteers. It was with great satisfaction he had learnt that an additional issue of Martini-Henry rifles was to be made to the Force. They were to have 4,500 distributed to them this year, in addition to the 3,000 they had already, for purposes of match shooting. He should be glad if the right hon. Gentleman could at once see his way to arming the whole Force with this weapon. At any rate, he believed the time was not far distant when they would have it. Perhaps, after what had taken place in regard to the Militia, they might look forward to having it served out to them next year. It would be a good opportunity then for the right hon. Gentleman to carry out the scheme he foreshadowed in his speech, of making the efficiency of the Volunteers depend more on their efficiency as marksmen than on their efficiency in drill. There might not be the same number of efficients in every regiment; but it would give an additional inducement to the officers to look after the shooting, if efficiency more largely depended on it. But it must be borne in mind that it would open a very wide field for dishonesty, especially where canvas targets were used. It was well known that even in the Standing Army, where no money was at stake, men were sometimes passed through their third class when they really had not obtained the requisite number of points. More care, particularly where sums of money depended on it, should be exercised in providing safeguards to prevent "chizzeling"—if he might be allowed to use the expression—by the markers at the butts. A great deal had been said about the shooting of the Force during the past 12 months, it having been brought prominently before the mind of the public by the disasters which had been met with in South Africa. Well, he should be glad to see more practice in field firing given to the Volunteers. So far as he and his men were concerned, they were rather fortunately situated in Devonshire, inasmuch as they were within easy reach of a range where they could practice field firing. The officer who superintended the range at Oakehampton had invited them down to shoot last year, and after the practice had expressed himself well satisfied with the result. They had been obliged to go down at their own expense, and he believed that if some pecuniary assistance were given to the men by the State a great many more would, on another occasion, be induced to take part in the work. Some hon. Members had alluded to the Army firing, and to the Committee sitting to consider the question. All he had to say about that was that he should be very glad indeed if every commanding officer had an unlimited supply of ammunition at his command, for this would tend to encourage practice in shooting. The expense would not be very great—he should think £100,000 a-year would cover it—and, of course it would increase the efficiency of the men enormously. He should like to say one word with regard to uniforms. At the present moment the Volunteers wore uniforms of three shades—namely, red, green, and grey; and, so far as he understood it, it was optional with each regiment what colour it should wear. There had been rumours that the Government intended to issue an Order requiring all Volunteer regiments to adopt one colour; and as these rumours had not been contradicted, and tended very much to prevent officers from joining the Force, he should like the right hon. Gentleman to say whether or not any Order was to be issued on the subject. At present the regiment he belonged to wore a green uniform, and the fear that an Order might come down at any moment requiring them to wear red restrained gentlemen from accepting commissions, as, if such an Order did come down, the amount they had expended on their green uniforms would have been thrown away. There was an element of uncertainty about the matter which it would be advantageous for the right hon. Gentleman to dispel, seeing that Volunteer officers were very much wanted. He had been asked to say a word respecting an Order issued not very long ago respecting adjutants of the Volunteer Force being detailed for duty in their regimental districts. He was right, he believed, in saying that an Order was issued stating that Volunteer adjutants might be detailed for garrison duty in their regimental districts. This operated very hardly sometimes where the place to which the adjutant was called was a long way from the town in which he was located. The right hon. Gentleman had allowed the officers of the Auxiliary Forces to render themselves proficient in tactics; and he was informed that his adjutant was instructing the officers in tactics, having arranged beforehand the week, day, and hour, when an Order came down from the depôt to say that he was to attend a Court of Inquiry. Of course, he had to throw over his appointment with the officers in order to attend to the Order from the depôt. If the right hon. Gentleman would take this matter into consideration he would confer a benefit on some of the adjutants. One other question he should like to draw attention to—namely, the position of the sergeant instructors. The right hon. Gentleman was, no doubt, aware that at present first-class sergeant instructors were not allowed to be employed in a civil trade. Beyond their duty with the Volunteers they were only allowed to drill schools, and for that they had to obtain the sanction of the commanding officer. Second-class sergeant instructors, however, were allowed to be employed in any trade with the sanction of the commanding officer, provided the sanction was confirmed by the General of the district. If the right hon. Gentleman could see his way to putting first-class sergeant instructors in the position of second-class sergeant instructors, it would do no harm, and would be very advantageous to the men concerned. There would always be the safeguard of the sanction of the commanding officer confirmed by the General of the district. He would not detain the Committee any longer, but would conclude by thanking the right hon. Gentleman for what he had done for the Volunteers during the two years he had been in Office. They appreciated his endeavours to improve the efficiency of the Force, but, at the same time, wished to impress upon him the desirability of keeping them as distinct as possible from the other Services of the Crown.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, that, as was usual and natural on the Army Estimates, most of those who had addressed the Committee were connected with the Army or the Auxiliary Forces. And, also, as was usual and natural, these Gentlemen had made suggestions, no doubt very useful suggestions, but suggestions which would add to the already very great expenditure on the Army. Now, the noble Lord the Member for West Essex (Lord Eustace Cecil), complained that no Radical had addressed the Committee on this subject. The reason, he took it, why the Radicals had not engaged in the discussion was that they were in despair at the great, excessive, and increasing expenditure that took place on the Army. They came down to the House to protest, but they found that their protests were not listened to; and every year, now under one pretext and now under another, the expenditure on the Army increased. He spoke as a taxpayer and as a Representative of taxpayers. At that late hour—12.45 A.M.—he was not going into all the different abuses that existed, and which might be pointed out in the Estimates which had been submitted to the Committee. He would only point out three, and respecting each he would ask for some explanation from the right hon. Gentleman. He had taken them rather as test questions, in order to show how wasteful the expenditure was on the Army. The first was with respect to the Life Guards. He wanted to know what in the name of goodness was the use of three regiments of Life Guards, two of which were in London, the other usually being quartered at Windsor? He found, on reference to the Estimates, that the pay of these men was £70,540; and, if that was a proper estimate, he took it that the total expenditure on the three regiments was £150,000. These regiments had never been out of the country since the battle of Waterloo, and he presumed they never would be sent out of the country again. It was now generally admitted that these very heavy horses and men were almost useless in time of war. There were some notable charges during the Franco-Prussian War, he believed; but now-a-days a charge of such a body as a regiment of Life Guards would lead almost to its total destruction. As he had said, although we had been several times at war during late years, the Life Guards had never been used. All they did was to provide two men for the sentry boxes at Whitehall, and to act as escorts to Her Majesty when she came down to London, or drove about Windsor. He had been told, and had seen it stated in the newspapers, that these heavy troops could not keep pace with Her Majesty's carriages, and that a regiment of Lancers had to be employed as escort when the Queen came to London. He hoped, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman would give some reason why these three regiments of Life Guards were maintained. In the late Imperial Court of France, where things were done on a grander scale, perhaps, than they were in England, all the ornamental objects of these three regiments were fulfilled by a body which was called the *sond garde;* and in England, if it were necessary rather as an ornament to the Court than anything else to have a body of Cavalry—consisting of large men and large horses—the same results could be obtained by having 100 men, and quartering them in London when Her Majesty was in London, and in Windsor when there was any occasion for their presence there. His next point was as to the Foot Guards. He did not suppose they were any better or any worse than any other regiments in the Service. What did he find in the Estimates? He found that the special pay of the Foot Guards was £18,250, whereas the special pay of all other regiments of Infantry, exclusive of the Foot Guards, was £10,500. The band allowances for the Foot Guards were £1,200, whilst for all the rest of the Infantry they were £7,300; and the mess allowances were £5,300, whilst those for all the other Infantry regiments only amounted to £23,000. Of course, these figures made the average infinitely greater for the regiments of Foot Guards than for the rest of the Infantry; and he wished to ask this question—Why was all this extra expenditure? If there was a reason for it, well and good; but he did not see any valid reason for this excessive expenditure; and if there was not, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman why, as an economist, and as a Member of a Government pledged to economy, and as a Representative of the Liberal Party, he maintained this expenditure, and did not put an end to it? There was another point to which he would draw attention, and that was with respect to the bands—and he had no doubt many hon. Members would agree with him in what he had to say. The bands were divided into two classes, the useful and the ornamental. The useful consisted of what were called "drummers;" but half of them, he believed, were buglers. There were light drummers and light buglers in each battalion, and their duty was to give the signals, and to go to the front in battle. [*A laugh.*] Hon. Members might smile, but he could assure them it was a fact that only these buglers and drummers went to the front, and remained at the front to give signals. The rest of the band kept to the rear, and were employed, or were supposed to be employed, in carrying off the field those who were wounded. They consisted of about 20 performers. Each battalion was allowed to take these 20 men from the ordinary soldiers of the line. He would take the number of battalions at 120; that would give 2,400 men in the Army who were absolutely neutralized. He did not think it was pretended they were necessary, or that they did anything that was needful beyond playing music. The music, no doubt, was very pleasant for the officers and others to hear; but the bands were not necessary from a military point of view. If they took the expenditure upon them at £40 per man they would find the cost, beyond the drummers, £96,000. In addition to this, he found that £10,000 was also put down in the Estimates as some sort of allowance to the bands, and this would make a total of £106,000. Now, it was clear that where they had a number of regiments together in a garrison town, like Portsmouth or Aldershot for instance, there was no use, for any practical purpose, of having half-a-dozen bands playing of an evening. The question of the desirability of having these bands had been discussed in the French Army; and it had been maintained by many eminent French generals that great economy might be effected by doing away with them and keeping only the drummers and buglers. But if, in England, the War Office insisted on spending this large amount of money on bands in excess of that necessary for drummers and buglers, he would suggest that when a number of regiments or battalions were quartered together the bands should be sent to the different manufacturing towns and be allowed to play for the benefit and pleasure of those who paid for them. In the town he represented—Northampton—the people were very fond of music, and they did not object to pay their fair share of this £106,000, provided they benefited by it in some way. ["Hear, hear!"] An hon. Member said "Hear, hear!" but surely it would be more reasonable that these bands, instead of being locked up at Aldershot, should be allowed to play in the evening in the market places of our manufacturing towns. He did not wish to press the matter any further. The noble Lord (Lord Eustace Cecil) had complained that no Radical had spoken on the subject in the direction of economy. He could assure the noble Lord that the Radicals would be glad to go on discussing this matter to any hour in the morning, if they thought that by doing so they could obtain any reduction in the Expenditure. They did not complain of large amounts being spent on the Army in order that the country might be efficiently defended. They wished to have an Army, not for aggressive, but for defensive purposes; but they did hope, now that they had a Liberal Ministry in power, that that Ministry would take the greatest care not only to make the Army efficient, but to make it economical and cut off all these useless excrescences.

COLONEL STANLEY: I do not wish to interpose for more than two or three moments; but I desire to put a few questions to the right hon. Gentleman which cannot be put at any future stage of the proceedings or on any other Vote. I do not rise for the purpose of answering the hon. Member who has just spoken, as I presume what has fallen from him will be dealt with by the right hon. Gentleman. I only wish to ask, with regard to certain arrangements proposed for the Cavalry, whether we are to understand distinctly from my right hon. Friend that they are suspended for the moment—that he does not intend to take any further action until the matter has again been brought under the notice of Parliament. That, I think, does not quite clearly appear from the remarks he made the other evening, which I was not fortunate enough to hear. As to the question touched on by the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the County of Cork (Colonel Colthurst), with regard to allowing a certain number of old soldiers to re-engage, as I understand the hon. and gallant Gentleman, what he asked for was not that the Warrant should be altered in any degree, but merely that the Secretary of State should intimate, in whatever manner he thought fit, to the commanding officers that his view was that they must put a favourable interpretation on the terms of the Queen's Regulations, and that they were not to be tied and bound to the special classes which, at the present time, keep them from everything but a very partial selection. The hardship is considerable where men have no opportunity to go to the Reserve; and if the right hon. Gentleman finds himself able favourably to consider the matter he will confer a great benefit on a deserving and useful class of men. As to the officers' quarters, the right hon. Gentleman said, as I understood, that he hoped very largely to reduce the expense, both to the public and the officers themselves, by furnishing quarters for them. I would venture to point out, however, that it is not, perhaps, quite as simple a matter as it looks. The question has already been fully gone into, and it must be borne in mind that not only will you have to send officers to particular places where you will have furnished quarters for them, but that you will have to send them elsewhere where they will have to supply themselves with furniture. You will experience the danger of being called upon to incur great outlay without the officers receiving a corresponding benefit. It often happens, for instance, that at the last moment the destination of a portion of a regiment is changed; and it would be very small consolation to an officer ordered to Naas to find that a comfortable room had been furnished for him in Dublin. At present, officers take their furniture with them; and they are able, at fair expense, to shift for themselves. Then there is a question which I do not intend to go into at this time of night; but which, I think, is well worthy of the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman, and that is in respect to the stoppage of promotion at the present time in the Brigade of Guards. It is well known that the organization of the Guards is somewhat peculiar—that the number of mounted officers, strictly speaking, the number of majors and lieutenant colonels in the Brigade of Guards, is not precisely similar to that of the battalions in the Line; and it is clear that, unless the systems are assimilated, promotion in the Brigade of Guards must be retarded. I need not remind the right hon. Gentleman that the whole reason of the original Promotion Warrants was to prevent officers being blocked in the lower ranks and being hopelessly dispirited by the impossibility of rising from the lower to the higher ranks. That feeling prevails in the Brigade of Guards, as well as in other regiments; and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will consider, not whether the Brigade of Guards have received advantages—which I am not here to deny—but to see whether they have received such an organization and such terms of promotion as will place them at least in as favourable a position as the Brigades of the Line. There is another question which is of some importance—one connected with the extension of the ranges rendered necessary by the increased use of the Martini-Henry rifle. That question had arisen when I left Office. The zone of danger of the Martini - Henry rifle is so very much larger than that of the rifles in use by the Auxiliary Forces, that no doubt injunctions will be obtained against the use of that weapon at some of the existing inland ranges. I hope the right hon. Gentleman has taken steps to meet the difficulty. The first thing that suggests itself to one's mind is that ranges should be obtained close to the sea; but at these ranges you are not able to obtain that valuable practice—field firing. I can only express my regret that the right hon. Gentleman is unable to lay on the Table of the House some portions, at all events, of the Report of Sir Daniel Lysons' Committee, that Committee having been assembled to deliberate upon the field-firing of the Army. I regret he has not given us something to show in which direction the ideas of the Committee tended. Whatever else I may have to say upon Army matters I will postpone until a future occasion.

Mr. CHILDERS: I think it will now be the wish of the Committee that I should reply to the various questions addressed to me from both sides of the House; and I may, in a word, say I am obliged to right hon. and hon. Gentlemen for the spirit in which those questions have been asked. The hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir Robert Loyd Lindsay) has asked me if the Pay Department is working well. The organization of the Pay Department is one of the good deeds for which we are indebted to the late Government. It is the fact that the Department is working well; and we have every reason to believe it will continue to do so. With respect to the Medical Department I may say the same thing. There is no lack of officers, a matter which, in years past, we so much deplored in both Services. We have not found it even necessary to take advantage of the permission granted in the Warrant to go to the Medical Schools for a portion of the medical officers of the Army. My hon. and gallant Friend has spoken of the First Army Corps, and has asked me if I could give the Committee some information about it? He prefaced his remarks by the suggestion—which, however, he did not say he was prepared to propose—that the number of men of the Line at home might, with advantage, be raised by 10,000. I do not deny the advantage from one point of view; and if Parliament desires greatly to pay another £750,000 towards the Army it could be well laid out in that way. I, however, on my own responsibility, am not prepared to make such a proposal to Parliament. I have obtained precise information as to the condition of the First Army Corps at the present time, not only with respect to the Infantry, which I specially alluded to in moving the Estimates, and which I showed the Committee had reached their full strength within a mere trifle, but as to the rest of the Corps. In moving the Estimates I stated that what we wanted was not merely a satisfactory Infantry Establishment; but such a condition of the whole of the First Army Corps as would enable us within a few days, on an emergency, to send an efficient Army abroad. I am now in a position to say that whereas the Peace Establishment of the First Army Corps—Cavalry, Artillery, Engineers, Infantry, Guards, and Commissariat—is 27,285 men, the actual strength at this moment is 27,838, so that we have brought, though not without considerable labour on the part of those who are responsible for this part of the War Office business, the First Army Corps to above the Peace Establishment. We shall want another 5,000 men to bring the Corps up to a war footing; but, of course, they can be easily obtained from the First Class Army Reserve. My hon. and gallant Friend thinks we are attaching too much importance to public works at Aldershot, and says we would do well to spend more upon the depôts in the territorial districts, and less upon the accommodation of troops at Aldershot, and he spoke of housing the different regiments in barracks in their own districts. I may point out, it was never intended that territorial regiments should always be quartered in their own districts. They must, in turn, move from one to another station, so that it would be impossibe to carry out our military system if battalions were always to be in their own territorial districts. I admit that, in past years, these moves have been excessive; but, out of the 16 years in which a battalion is to remain at home, there must be several necessary. What we are doing at Aldershot does not appear to have been quite understood. Many of the huts have become so dilapidated that some of them are hardly fit to put men in them; and what we are doing is, rebuilding the huts with more permanent material, without attempting to add to the accommodation. The rebuilding of the huts was not commenced by us, but by my right hon. and gallant Friend opposite (Colonel Stanley), and all we are doing is carrying on the work a little more rapidly. My hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Robert Loyd Lindsay) referred to the recruiting Report in detail, and I am glad he spoke too much in praise of the work done by the Department and General Bulwer. He said—though not quite consistently with the opinion expressed by my noble Friend (Lord Eustace Cecil) — he hoped we should not be too fast in raising the standard of age from 19 to 20. I should be glad if we could bring the minimum of age to 20; but I do not think it would be wise to run any risk in doing so prematurely. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for South Ayrshire (Colonel Alexander), and other hon. Members, have spoken to me about the reduction in the standard of height. The reduction of the standard of height does not at all mean that no men above 5 feet 4 inches enlist. As a matter of fact, the proportion who enlist at 5 feet 4 inches or 5 feet 5 inches is very small. But hon. Members are quite mistaken in thinking we have adopted a standard lower than formerly. For years past the standard of height has varied; it has been altered as recruiting has improved or fallen off. What we have thought is, that it is better to fix a certain standard and not to alter it; and we have fixed it at 5 feet 4 inches, which is above the standard of any other European Army. If it should become necessary to check recruiting, we think it would be well to do so in some other way than by changing the standard. That is the deliberate conclusion we arrived at, after consultation with our Military Advisers. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Kincardineshire (Sir George Balfour) has spoken about Cavalry organization, and recommended a reversion to the squadron formation which had been approved some years ago, but which shortly afterwards was changed back again to the troop formation. I think it too late to-night to enter into a discussion of so purely technical a question, although it is one on which there is considerable difference of opinion amongst military officers. There was weighty evidence in favour of reverting to troop formation; and I can only answer that at this moment we are not prepared to revert to the squadron formation. The hon. and gallant Gentleman also suggested that the principal officers under the Secretary of State should furnish independent Reports every year as to the work of their several Departments, and that the Secretary of State should lay those Reports with his own opinion before Parliament. I do not think that would conduce to harmonious working, but that, on the contrary, it would greatly interfere with the responsibility of the Minister and the confidential advice of his subordinates. Hon. Gentlemen have spoken of the prospects of subaltern officers in the Brigade of Guards; and I am bound to say that I am not prepared to close the door absolutely to some modification of the present system. What I will say is this—and I think those who offer their criticisms, or who know the story of the constitution of the Guards Regiment, will confirm me—that whatever disadvantages the officers of the Guards may be under at the present time is certainly not due to anything we did last year, but quite the reverse. By the Warrant of June, 1881, we improved the position of officers of the Guards more than we did that of officers of the Line. There is, I admit, a considerable disadvantage in respect to promotion in the Guards as compared with promotion with other regiments. I believe the real secret is this—that a large proportion of officers who go into the Guards do not take that step with the intention of remaining in the Service all their lives, but only with the intention of spending a short time there, and then following other careers. The hon. and gallant Colonel (Colonel Alexander) said that at Pontefract I entirely attributed the large recruiting we have witnessed to the improved position of the non-commissioned officers. I never used the word "entirely;" I never attributed the improvement in recruiting solely to any particular cause; neither does the Inspector General, in his Report, attribute it solely to the reduction in the standard of height or to localization. I have read the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting, and he expressly says the better prospects of soldiers are bringing in more men and better men. The hon. and gallant Colonel asked me a question about the invitation to the First Class Reserve to enter military service in South Africa, and he said we were recklessly dispersing what we had got together with so much success. Quite recently the charge against us was that we were not getting them together; but now we are charged with dispersing them. I think that 200 Reserve men have accepted military service in South Africa; and surely that, out of 25,000 or 27,000, is not a very great dispersion of the Army Reserve. The hon. and gallant Gentleman used language as to the steps we are taking to obtain a better class of recruits which I regret. He said that the less we say about the character of the recruits the better. I deny this emphatically. We want to get out of the public mind the idea that the men who go into the Army are men who have been in some scrape or other. We wish to get men whose character will bear investigation; and I am very happy to say that during the last year we have been getting a better class of men—men whose character will stand inquiry, and who go into the Army, not to get out of scrapes, but because they think the Army is a good Profession, and that, with reference to their permanent prospects, they might as well enter it as follow any other employment. Then the hon. and gallant Gentleman said the territorial system had failed, because so few men were recruited territorially. If the hon. and gallant Gentleman had referred to the Inspector General's Report, he would see that 51 per cent of the recruits already come from the territorial districts of their battalions; and I think that is a very satisfactory result, considering the short time the system has been in force. Then I have been asked again whether I am prepared to allow privates, who have not become non-commissioned officers in their first term of service, to re-engage? To this I must again reply in the negative. If a man has not become a non-commissioned officer it is 10 to 1 that he is not worth re-engaging; and it must be remembered that the additional cost to the State of re-engaging a man who, at the end of his second term, will have a pension, is equivalent to a present payment of between £200 to £300. But, carrying out what I said in reply to the hon. and gallant Member the other day, if there is any misunderstanding in the minds of commanding officers as to the circumstances under which they may recommend men for re-engagement it shall be set right. I said, some days ago, that I thought already some 200 men had been re-engaged, and that if a special cause was assigned, and it was shown that a man was worth retaining, he would be re-engaged. I am told that there have been not more than one or two cases in which men have been refused. The noble Lord opposite (Lord Eustace Cecil) went into a question which it would be impossible at this time of night to answer; he repeated a comparison he made in 1881, not between the Estimates for this year and for former years, but between the Estimates of previous years and the Estimates of last year. Last year I went over each figure that the noble Lord has given to-night, and explained them, as I thought, to his satisfaction. Now, he has given some figures in the nature of a comparison between this year and two years ago, and says we have this year 2,671 men less than in 1880-1, and spent £500,000 more. I have looked over the Estimates, and I cannot find that diminution; on the contrary, we have 1,000 more men. The noble Lord must remember that two years ago the Estimates showed a reduction of 3,000; and, therefore, as between three years ago and the present time, there is, no doubt, a reduction——

Lord EUSTACE CECIL: I took into account the whole force.

Mr. CHILDERS: The noble Lord, speaking of the comparative expenditure, said we had 2,671 fewer men, but greater expenditure. Our expenditure depends not on the number of men in a year——

Lord EUSTACE CECIL: What I wished to show was that the number of Regular Forces in this country and in India was, in point of fact, greater in 1880 than it now is.

Mr. CHILDERS: I have nothing to say for the Force in India. We do not pay for it, and to refer to it in comparing what we do pay in different years is utterly beside the question. But the simple fact is that between 1880-1 and 1882-3 there is an increase of £400,000, with an increase in men of above 1,000. Of this £400,000, £300,000 is due to Naval Ordnance, £30,000 to the Autumn Manœuvres, and the rest to the Volunteers and automatic increase in Non-Effective Charges. As to this last, the noble Lord is quite wrong. He said that in 1880-1 the charge was £2,743,000; while last year it was £3,019,000, or a difference of £276,000. I explained last year that that apparent increase was caused by the transfer of items from one Vote to another—for instance, retired officers who were colonels of regiments used to be charged to the Effective Votes, and are now charged to Non-Effective. Of course there is, and must for some years be, an increase in these Votes, until the effects of short service on the Pension List are felt. The noble Lord also asked, what does "Royal" mean in connection with the Artillery Militia? Just what it means when a Militia regiment becomes a battalion of a Royal Line regiment. The noble Lord and one or two other hon. Members asked, with alarm, what were the contemplated reductions in regimental officers? I contemplate no further reductions. Last year, in doubling the number of field officers, we reduced the aggregate regimental officers by 400 or 500. My noble Friend also spoke about the abolition of regimental subscriptions. I have explained that we are endeavouring to keep down mess expenditure; but I did not say we proposed to abolish all regimental subscriptions. The noble Lord also spoke about the Committee on the change of uniform. I have had to meet Motions brought forward by hon. and gallant Members on the other side of the House —to resist which I had no assistance from the noble Lord—on the subject of soldiers' uniform, particularly in the case of men on active service. I said we had appointed a Committee to inquire whether any changes were required in the colour or character of uniforms on active service; and I was careful to explain that, whatever advantage one colour might have over another in point of visibility, that was not the only question. My noble Friend asked whether it was true that we were going to take away the patronage of the present colonels of the Guards? I have no such intention; but in process of time there will be no longer paid colonels of the Guards. As vacancies occur in these colonelcies, their successors will be honorary only; and other arrangements will be necessary as to the patronage they now have in first appointments. The noble Lord asked when the Ordnance Committee, which has been sitting for three years, would present their Report? The Committee has only been sitting one year, and it has done a great deal of work, and presented a number of most useful Reports, the result of a great variety of experiments; and I think it has done its work remarkably well, and rapidly. The hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir Henry Fletcher) raised two questions of grievance—one as to retired purchase captains, the other as to the supersession of certain Line officers. As to the first question, I am not prepared to increase the pay of officers who had finally retired under former Warrants. I could not venture to disturb the well-known arrangement in all Departments that, when an officer has retired under the Regulations then in force, his retired pay cannot be increased to the scale of subsequent Retirement Regulations. Any departure from this rule would raise thousands of claims, from not only Military, but Naval and Civil officers. Personally, I sympathize with some of these officers; but I cannot take any action in this direction. As to the question of supersession, the case is this. In the Line, promotion is regimental. It is extremely rapid in some regiments, but slow in others. That is one of the disadvantages of the regimental system; and in dealing with other corps, where promotion is by seniority, all we can possibly do is to see that, on the average, their promotion is equitable. By the great improvement made last year in the promotion of the

Line—when we doubled their field officers—we greatly disturbed the relative position of other corps, especially the Artillery and Engineers; and this inequality we have partially redressed. We effected this by, among other changes, allowing majors of Artillery and Engineers promoted before 1877 the Army rank of colonel after seven years, a privilege enjoyed by the Line. This put a few of these officers over some 25 of the Line officers whose promotion was slowest, and in their interest the hon. and gallant Baronet has spoken. But it is impossible to do anything for them; and, in fact, 19 out of the 25 have had slow promotion by their own voluntary action, such as exchanges to other regiments. The hon. Member for Nottingham (Mr. C. Seely) spoke of the insufficient proportion of Artillery to the rest of the Army. I have done nothing to disturb that proportion. The hon. and gallant Member for East Devon (Colonel Walrond) made some suggestions about the Volunteers which appear to me worth consideration. As I have said, we hope to be able to issue Martini-Henry rifles to Volunteers after the issue to the Militia is completed; and I have already expressed my hope that before long efficiency will be tested by some other rule than merely the expenditure of so many rounds. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (Colonel Stanley) asked one or two questions, which I will answer. We have entirely suspended any decision as to changes in Cavalry organization, and no new plan will be adopted until Parliament has been informed. As to ranges, we are quite alive to the importance of their extension, and we are asking further provision for this purpose. Then the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) has made some suggestions, and I shall be happy to have his assistance in effecting economies. I shall always give a willing ear to the suggestions of any hon. Member who can suggest any direction in which I can effect economy. My hon. Friend proposes that we should abolish the Life Guards, and complains of the expense of the Foot Guards in London, and the military bands. As to the latter point, whatever some French unnamed Generals may have said, regimental bands are not abolished in Germany, France, Italy, or Austria, and I should hesitate very much to abolish them here. I do not think it would be wise to abolish the Household Cavalry, who form part of the small garrison of London, and who are probably the steadiest body of men in the Army. The expense of the Foot Guards is not so much in excess of the expense of Line regiments as my hon. Friend thinks. He has referred to the special pay and mess allowances to the Foot Guards; but the Foot Guards have not barracks as the Line officers have, and these extra allowances are intended to represent the difference, everything being considered, between the expenses of officers with quarters and others without quarters, but obliged to live in London.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would consider the case of the colour sergeants?

Mr. CHILDERS: Yes; I took down the suggestions of the hon. and gallant Member on that subject, and I think there is some force in them.

General BURNABY wished, in regard to the last explanation of the right hon. Gentleman, that the House should know the officers of the Foot Guards did not draw any lodging allowance. There was another subject, but which had not been touched upon in the course of the evening. In 1877 the right hon. Gentleman was Chairman of a Select Committee which inquired into the best means of providing civil employment for soldiers, sailors, and marines. He (General Burnaby) had always been an advocate for the employment of a certain proportion of soldiers, sailors, and marines in the Public Offices; and he hoped to hear from the right hon. Gentleman that some satisfactory steps in that direction had been taken. He had no desire to take the bread out of the mouths of any persons at present employed in the Public Offices; but he was satisfied that it would be greatly to the advantage of the soldiers if a certain proportion of them were able to find public employment in the manner distinctly recommended by the Committee presided over by the right hon. Gentleman. In the concluding paragraph of their Report, which had now been presented for some years, the Committee said—

> "Your Committee desire to express an earnest hope that the recommendations we have made, and the evidence on which they have been made, may be taken into consideration by the

Department concerned with as little delay as possible."

That Report was dated 1877, five years ago; and he (General Burnaby) really thought the time had now arrived when something should be done to give effect to the recommendations of the Committee. There was one short passage in the Report of the Committee which he thought was a very telling one, and which was likely to have considerable effect upon the men who were induced to offer their services to the Army. The passage he referred to was this—that if there were to be any inducements in regard to a future provision for the men entering the Military and Naval Service of the country, they should be made known at the time the men entered the Service, so that they might be made fully aware of all the inducements that were offered to them and the prospects they had to look forward to. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) proposed to reduce the expenditure upon the bands. The bands were an important element in the Army, and did much to stimulate the energies and revive the spirits of the men. The House should know that bandsmen were trained soldiers and regularly practised riflemen, and that the officers contributed large sums of money towards the support of the bands, and made no complaint. He would certainly protest against any proposition that was calculated to impair the existence or efficiency of the bands. The officers themselves had no wish to reduce the expenditure on the bands, and he did not think, in the absence of any representations from the officers, that any enforced reduction should be made; but, at the same time, he had no doubt it would be hailed as a boon if the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War would, by making a grant from the State, do away with some of the contributions which the officers now found themselves compelled to make. He believed that such a relief would be highly acceptable to the officers. He did not presume the State would do this, and until it did the officers were perfectly willing to continue their subscriptions from their pay in order to provide that which they knew from experience to be so greatly appreciated by the men under their command. What, after a long and tedious march, when the men assembled round the camp fires, weary, wet, and footsore, was a greater enjoyment than to listen to the cheerful strains of the band? Therefore, he appealed to the right hon. Gentleman not on any account to take any step that might impair the efficiency of the bands, and do away with one of the institutions of the Service which was fully appreciated by the men and regarded by everyone with the highest satisfaction. There were one or two other points upon which he should like to say a few words. In the first place, in regard to the First Class Army Reserve, he was informed there were reports abroad that some men who were recently drafted into the First Class Army Reserve took ship and went to America; but he believed that it was confined to a few men of the Rifle Brigade now at Cork. Nevertheless, it was certainly whispered currently that many of the men who ought to be in the Reserve had left the country. Naturally the names of all the men who had evaded service in the Reserve would in due course be struck off the pay lists. Some remarks had been made in the course of the discussion in reference to the uniform of the regimental officers. Of course, the uniform was an expensive article; but he was not aware that the officers had made any complaint in any way, and, therefore, the matter should be allowed to rest until they did. The same might be said of the mess expenses. He believed that the right hon. Gentleman proposed that the mess allowances should not be in any way reduced or increased from the sum at which they were at present fixed; but it was suggested that an officer's messing should be limited to 4*s*. per day. He believed that that proposal was creating a feeling of discontent in some of the regiments. The officers naturally said—"If a friend asks me to dinner, he does not tell me what that dinner costs, nor do I ask him." The officers in this case certainly did not like the interference to which they were subjected; and the proposition to which he referred was undoubtedly creating an unpleasant feeling among them, and, if enforced, would drive officers out of the mess to get their meals, to restaurants and clubs at greater cost, and the loss of what had been a great bond of union in the English Army. Now, he happened to know what the largest maximum amount expended in mess expenses per month in connection with some regiments was. Take the case of the Rifle Brigade. He had been informed by one of the officers of that brigade, who happened to occupy the position of mess president of a Rifle Brigade battalion, that, after an experience of 17 years, it had been ascertained that the maximum cost was £13 a-month. The officer in question did not consider that that was an excessive sum, nor, he (General Burnaby) confessed, did he. Of course, the officers liked to be not only civil, but to be enabled to return hospitality towards those with whom they were brought into contact, and they invariably did all in their power to render the Army as popular as possible. The extraordinary expenditure of an officer serving in Ireland was put down at £50 a-year. [An hon. Member: No!] He knew, as a positive fact, by experience, that the sum he mentioned was right. With regard to the Reserves, he should like to add to what he had said, that there was, at the present moment, much anxiety to know whether the 26,000 men now composing the Force would be called out for some period of service. When the men were called out under the old system two or three years ago, it was found that some of the men—and he was alluding to facts which came immediately under his own notice — were receiving pay, not only in one, but in two, and even three different districts. The very same man was drawing pay from various distinct localities. A great deal of good would be gained by calling out the Reserves, if it were only in enabling the War Office to ascertain whether the same practice were resorted to now. There would be a further advantage in showing the men that their services were really required. He did not think they ought to lull the men into a feeling that their services were useless, and that they were to rest and grow rusty, in the belief that they would never be called out at all. No doubt, many of the men who belonged to the Reserves had found employment in connection with the railways and in other directions. So far as the Railway Companies were concerned, he had taken some pains to ascertain how many men belonging to the Reserves were employed, believing that it might be desirable to class them separately, in regard to the time of the year when they were called out. There were times during the year when the Railway Companies could better spare them than at others. The largest number of these Reserve men were employed by the Midland Railway Company; but the Great Northern Company, although it possessed a *personnel* of about 17,500 *employés*, had probably the least—namely, 74. The feeling in the Army was that the experiment, so far as numbers were concerned, had failed. The original anticipation in regard to the Reserve Force was that by this time it would have amounted to some 50,000 men; whereas, according to the Army Estimates of the present year, it only amounted to 26,000. He had listened very carefully to the remarks which had been made in the course of the evening, not only in reference to a First Army Corps, but also to a Second Class Army Corps, and he had endeavoured to realize what the existence of this Force of 26,000 Reserve men meant. He was amazed how it was possible that the House could blind its eyes to the fact that at this moment the Continent was bristling with men under arms. Let it also think of the hammers at work in every dockyard and arsenal of Europe. He believed that altogether there were not less than 10,000,000 of armed men in Europe capable of being brought under arms at a very short notice; and without having more regard to Prince Bismarck's or Prince Gortschakoff's men, or those of any other Continental State, as compared to the intrinsic value of the men who composed our little Army, he asked the House to think of the ambitions, the plottings, the plannings in the minds of those who had those forces under control, and to say if it was not absurd to suppose that nothing was likely to happen in the turn of intrigues and the clash of those mighty hosts to involve English interests. Such a position, for a country like this, and such interests at stake, was, in his opinion, a very serious thing to contemplate; and he had been seriously thinking, while the Committee had been engaged in discussing all this *minutiæ* in regard to uniforms, rank, and the expenses of the mess and the bands, whether it would not have been much more advantageous to consider the propriety of practising the massing together a larger body of men, whose services might happen to be required at a moment's warning, and seeing that they were properly equipped?

Mr. DILLWYN said, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War had intimated that he would be thankful for any suggestion that might improve the condition of the Army. His hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had certainly made one which would be beneficial to the Army — namely, that something should be done to reduce the excessive expenditure which was incurred in connection with the Life Guards and the Horse Guards. The right hon. Gentleman said he did not agree with the view expressed by the hon. Member for Northampton; but he (Mr. Dillwyn) thought that his hon. Friend had made out a good case. The Royal Horse Guards were not soldiers for military purposes, but were used only for State purposes; and he certainly thought that, for State purposes, one regiment would be sufficient instead of two. He also thought that his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War should have gone into more detailed explanation in reference to the reason why so large a force was really required. It was very well known that these regiments were of no use, but that they were really employed for purposes of show; and he very much regretted that his right hon. Friend had not gone into more explanation than he had done.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Secretary Childers,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

House *resumed.*

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

ELECTRIC LIGHTING BILL.—[Bill 122.]

(*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Ashley.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I beg to move the second reading of this Bill. I do not propose, at this late hour of the night, to offer any explanation of its provisions, although I shall be prepared, if hon. Members see fit to put any questions to me, to deal with any points that may be raised. If the measure is read a second time I propose to refer it to a Hybrid Committee of 15 Members, nine to be appointed by the House and six by the Committee of Selection. To the same Committee we propose that all Private Bills dealing with the same subject shall be referred.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Chamberlain,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.

And, on April 19, *Ordered,* That the Select Committee on the Electric Lighting Bill do consist of Fifteen Members, Nine to be nominated by the House and Six by the Committee of Selection:—Committee *nominated* of Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Whitley, Mr. Slagg, Mr. Boord, Mr. Henderson, Mr. Henry Northcote, Mr. William Fowler, Mr. Molloy, and Mr. Brooks:—With power to send for persons, papers, and records; Five to be the quorum.

House adjourned at a quarter after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 18*th April,* 1882.

MINUTES.]—New Member Sworn—Edward Sheil, esquire, *for* Meath County.

Private Bills (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Aberdeen Lighting*; Dublin Electric Light and Power Company*; Edison's Electric Lighting*; Westgate and South Eastern Junction Railway*.

Public Bills — *Ordered* — Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 1)*; Local Government (Highways) Provisional Order (No. 1)*; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1)*.

QUESTIONS.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—CAPTAIN T. BOLTON JONES.

Mr. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If the Mr. T. Bolton Jones, who was elected clerk of the Petty Sessions of Drumod and Drumsna, county Leitrim, on the 20th March, is the same person who was known in the Leitrim Militia as Captain T. Bolton

Jones; and, whether there was any charge against the latter as to the misappropriation of mess-money, in consequence of which he had to sever his connection with the regiment?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Mr. Jones, formerly a captain in the Leitrim Militia, has been elected clerk of the Petty Sessions district of Drumod and Drumsna, in county Leitrim. I am not aware that any such charge as the Question suggests was ever made against him; but his appointment has not yet been ratified by His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, and before it is ratified the Registrar of Petty Sessions Clerks must be in a position to satisfy His Excellency both as to Mr. Jones's efficiency and integrity.

MR. HEALY: Was there no charge against him of misappropriating mess-money?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): That question would necessarily be inquired into.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—THE LAND COURT, NEW ROSS.

MR. REDMOND asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether he is aware that the jurisdiction of the Land Court sitting at Waterford on the 17th April, includes "that part of the union of New Ross, in the counties of Wexford and Kilkenny," and if he can state why the sixty or seventy cases arising in the union of New Ross cannot be heard in that town, where there is a commodious court house and good hotel accommodation, and why the suitors should be put to the inconvenience of having their cases heard at Waterford, which is over twenty miles distant from the homes of a great number of them; whether he is aware that the authorities in Merrion Street have refused all information to the tenants as to the hearing of their cases until a fortnight before the sitting begins; whether up to the 1st instant no list of cases has been published; whether, considering that valuators and surveyors have to be employed, and solicitors instructed in the several cases, a fortnight is sufficient to enable tenants to bring their cases properly into court; and, whether he will communicate with the Land Commission, with a view to having the professional gentlemen engaged in the several cases consulted in the making of future arrangements as to fixtures, and also in order that the cases arising in the union of New Ross may be heard in that town, it being the most convenient place for all the parties concerned?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): The Land Court, which sat at Waterford yesterday, is empowered by the Land Commission to hear cases in which applications may be made in towns in the unions other than the town appointed as the centre of the district. The cases referred to may, therefore, be heard at New Ross if application is made for that purpose to the Sub-Commission, and that Court grant the application. In reply to the second and third Questions, I am informed by the Secretary to the Land Commission that the authorities in Merrion Street have never refused information to parties applying for it, where it was possible to give it. In this instance the list of cases was published on the 4th of April. As to the fourth Question, there is no reason to think that a fortnight's notice of trial is not sufficient. It is a longer time than required for notice of trial in an action in the Supreme Court of Judicature; and professional gentlemen are usually employed, and proofs ready, even before notice of trial is served. As to the last Question, it would not be possible to meet the individual wishes of the several professional gentlemen engaged in these cases in the various counties in Ireland.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — ELECTION OF POOR LAW GUARDIANS—MR. O'HALLORAN, A SUSPECT.

MR. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether it is the fact that a voting paper for the election of guardians for the Kiltullagh Division, duly filled up by Mr. Martin O'Halloran, suspect in Kilmainham Gaol, was not forwarded in time for collection, although he had explained the necessity for its despatch, and obtained a promise that it would be attended to?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): The voting paper in question was posted immediately on its receipt from Mr. O'Halloran. There was no default on the part of the prison authorities.

PRISONS (IRELAND) — ENNISKILLEN GAOL—REGULATION AS TO VISITORS TO PRISONERS ON ST. PATRICK'S DAY.

Mr. REDMOND asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to a Letter from Mr. J. Moyle Mahony, a suspect in Enniskillen Gaol, published in the "Freeman's Journal" of 3rd instant; whether it is true that, on St. Patrick's Day, prisoners in the various gaols were deprived of their ordinary privileges of seeing visitors, as provided by the prison rules; whether, on Mr. Mahony making complaint on this matter to the Prisons Board, he received through the Governor a reply, to the effect that they approved of this departure from the prison rules, and that if he attempted to make the matter known to the Press, that he "would never again be permitted to visit anyone;" and, whether he will have this matter at once inquired into?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): The persons detained under the Protection Act in the various gaols in Ireland were not, on St. Patrick's Day, deprived of their ordinary privilege of seeing visitors as provided by the Prison Rules. In Clonmel Gaol alone (owing to the Governor's misapprehension of the Rules) were they deprived of that privilege; and, of course, this miscarriage will not occur again. It is the fact that no visitor was admitted to Mr. Mahony in Enniskillen Gaol on St. Patrick's Day; but this was simply because no visitor called to see him. He was, I believe, informed, in effect, that if he sent out letters contrary to the Rules his visits would be stopped for a time. There is nothing, so far as I can see, which calls for inquiry.

Mr. REDMOND asked whether steps would be taken to make the Governors of the different prisons understand and act according to the Rules?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): In every case, with this one exception, the Rules have been acted upon and understood by the different Governors.

STATE OF IRELAND—ALLEGED OUTRAGE IN WEXFORD COUNTY.

Mr. BARRY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether any report has reached the Government of an outrage committed by the wife of the sub-inspector of police at Taghmon, county Wexford, who, it is alleged, on the 8th instant, fired a revolver at her servant man, whose face was scorched by the discharge, the bullet passing through a window and lodged in the woodwork of a house on the opposite side of the street; and, if the Government will cause inquiry to be made into this case?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): A civil action has been brought by the servant in this case, and, it being still pending, it is not my place to say anything on the subject.

Mr. HEALY inquired whether it was not the duty of the right hon. and learned Gentleman to conduct criminal proceedings, instead of allowing the matter to be settled by a civil action?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): It is not my duty to do so.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARRESTS IN THE COUNTY OF WEXFORD.

Mr. REDMOND asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, on the 22nd December last, five men were arrested at Clonrocht, county Wexford, on the same charge; whether three of them have been released; whether the district is in a peaceful condition; and, whether, under these circumstances, he will order the release of the two men still detained from the same district and on the same charge?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): All these men have been released except one, named O'Neill, and he will be released to-morrow.

Mr. REDMOND: There is another man named Doran still detained.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): I think not; but I will inquire.

CRIMINAL LAW—THE CONDEMNED PRISONER LAMSON.

Mr. LEWIS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has received any representations showing that the further evidence stated to be on the way from America with reference to the propriety of interfering with the due course of Law in the case of the convict Lamson for the crime of murder, are of any different character from those already submitted to him, which he describes as affording no justification for advising any interference with the sentence of the Law; and, if not, whether he will state on what grounds he has inflicted on the criminal the additional punishment of ten days' further suspense and doubt?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: It is quite impossible for me to form an opinion on the nature and character of evidence which I have not yet seen. It is quite impossible, therefore, for me to express any opinion upon it.

Mr. LEWIS: The right hon. and learned Gentleman has not answered my Question. I did not ask him to form an opinion; but whether he had received a representation showing that the evidence on its way from America was of a different character to that already submitted to him?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have received no representations that will enable me to form an opinion as to the character of the evidence.

POST OFFICE—THE AUSTRALIAN MAILS.

Mr. STEWART MACLIVER asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is true that, whenever the Mails from Australia and Queensland, brought respectively by the Orient and British India line of steamers, arrive at Plymouth in the day time, they are forwarded to London unsorted; that, whenever these Mails arrive during the night, they are detained at Plymouth until the 8·35 train in the morning, thus causing very considerable delay in their delivery in Ireland and the West and North of England; and, whether he will place these important Mails on a like footing to the other Colonial and Foreign Mails arriving at the same port, by despatching them in special trains when they arrive at night, and sorting them between Plymouth and Bristol?

Mr. FAWCETT: Letters which arrive at Plymouth by the lines referred to in the Question of my hon. Friend are, if time permits, sorted at Plymouth, and, if not, sent to London unsorted by the ordinary trains. If a special train with sorting carriages were employed, as suggested, considerable expense would be incurred; and I do not think this would be justified in view of the fact that letters which are sent from Australia can, if the writers wish, be despatched when they reach Suez by quick route, *viâ* Brindisi, and arrive in England at least a week sooner than if they are sent by the long sea route by way of Gibraltar and Plymouth.

NAVY—INDIAN TROOPSHIPS—CHATHAM.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If there is any truth in the statement that has appeared in some of the newspapers to the effect that arrangements are in progress for making Chatham, instead of Portsmouth, the future port of arrival and departure of the Indian troopships; and, if so, whether he can explain the reasons of the change?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The *Jumna* has been sent to Chatham for repairs in order to reduce the pressure on Portsmouth; and it may in future years be found necessary to follow a similar course; but no arrangements are in progress for making Chatham the future port of arrival and departure of Indian troopships.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—AMERICAN CITIZENS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If it is intended to lay upon the Table the Correspondence with the United States Government respecting the detention of suspects in Ireland claiming American nationality; and, if so, when?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The Correspondence on the subject of the detention in Ireland of "suspects" of American nationality is being printed, and will be laid on the Table of the House; but I cannot yet say when.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked if the Government would produce at the same time the representations made last year?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he thought Notice had better be given on the subject.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true, as reported in the public press, that certain persons imprisoned under the Irish Coercion Act, and claiming citizenship of the United States, have been offered their release on condition of leaving the United Kingdom, and have refused to accept release on this condition; and, whether, in view of this offer and refusal, the United States Ambassador in this Country has been instructed by his Government to demand that the men in question be either released or put on trial; and, if so, what the Government propose to do in the matter?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I think that the Question contained in the first paragraph should be addressed to the Irish Office. With regard to the second paragraph, it is the case that representations have been made by the United States Minister as to the "suspects" of American nationality, the nature of which representations will be seen when the Correspondence on the subject comes to be laid before the House.

Mr. SEXTON asked whether the American Government had been asked to undertake that the American "suspects," if released, would remain out of Ireland?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: It would be very inconvenient for me to make a statement on this matter that would necessarily be imperfect when the whole subject is not before the House.

Mr. SEXTON said, he would ask a further Question on the subject on Thursday next.

POST OFFICE—THE PARCELS POST—OBLIGATIONS OF BRITISH SHIPOWNERS.

Mr. DILLWYN asked the Postmaster General, Whether, under the Act 1 Vic. c. 36, and 3 and 4 Vic. c. 96, secs. 36, 37, and 61, owners of British ships, not being under actual contract, can be compelled to carry parcels forwarded (under existing rules) through the Post Office to India, China, Australia, Cape of Good Hope, America, and other Countries, on the terms of a gratuity of not exceeding one penny for each parcel, irrespective of weight, payable to the master of the ship at the option of the Postmaster General; or, if not on these, on what other terms; if so, will these powers of compulsion be applicable to parcels forwarded under the proposed new Parcels Post; and, if this will not apply, do the Government intend to bring in a Bill to enable the Post Office to compel shipowners, so described, to convey to such Countries such parcels, in addition to all other Postal matter which may be tendered on board their ships?

Mr. FAWCETT: I am advised that the power can be legally exercised to which reference is made in the Question of my hon. Friend; but I am sure that, when an International Parcels Post is established, there will be no desire on the part of the Government to deal otherwise than fairly with shipowners.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—CORRUPT PRACTICES (DISFRANCHISEMENT) BILL.

Mr. LEWIS asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether the Government is prepared to fix a day for the Second Reading of the Corrupt Practices (Disfranchisement) Bill?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James), in reply, said, there was no prospect at present; he wished there was.

ARMY ESTIMATES—VOTE 23—PENSIONS.

Colonel BARNE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will inform the House what portion of the £1,760,500, asked for in Vote 23, Sub-Head 2, of Army Estimates, is required to pension men enlisted under the long service system, and what portion for men enlisted under the short service system?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to the hon. and gallant Gentleman, I have to say that without analyzing at Chelsea the whole pension list of about 85,000 men, it would be impossible to give an exact answer to his Question. But, practically, almost the whole of the £1,760,000 goes to long service men. There are a few cases of wounded short service men who are entitled to permanent pensions, and of invalided short service men receiving temporary pensions; but the amount going to them is inconsiderable.

BOARD OF MANUFACTURES AND FISHERIES (SCOTLAND).

Sir ALEXANDER GORDON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a Copy of the Treasury Minute, of 1841, requiring the Board of Manufactures and the Board of Fishery in Scotland to appoint a joint secretary to carry on the duties of the two Boards?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH, in reply, said, that the Treasury Warrant appointing a joint establishment for the Boards of Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland was a purely formal document, and did not appear to him to be of sufficient interest to be laid on the Table; but if his hon. and gallant Friend would like to see it, he should be very happy to show it him.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. PARNELL.

Mr. LEWIS asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether Mr. C. S. Parnell, M.P., having been arrested on the 13th October last under the provisions of the Act 44 Vic. c. 4 s. 1, and having been released from custody on the 11th instant, can now be lawfully re-arrested or detained in custody under the original warrant; and, whether, if a new warrant be necessary for his re-arrest or further detention in custody, it can be issued in respect of the same offence?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Mr. Parnell, on surrendering himself at Kilmainham, may lawfully be detained in custody under the original warrants.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARMS LICENCES.

Mr. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether it is the fact that Mr. G. J. Stephens, of Leskinfin, Gorey, when recently applying for an arms licence, was first asked if he belonged to the Land League, and, having replied that he did when it was legal, the magistrate then inquired if he had subscribed to the fund for the suspects; and, upon stating that he did, was told that it was illegal, and, in consequence, was refused a licence; and, whether the Government approve of refusals to grant licences on such grounds?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): The local magistrates refused a certificate to Mr. Stephens; and the resident magistrate, who was the licensing officer, refused him an arms licence. These magistrates, in doing this, exercised the discretion with which the law has invested them; and even if I had the power, which I have not, I should not think of interfering with them, or reviewing their action in the matter.

Mr. HEALY: That is no answer to my Question. Attention had been called to the circumstance that people had not arms with which to defend themselves against "Moonlighters," and yet licences were denied them when they wanted arms.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) thought it quite sufficient to say that the magistrates had exercised their discretion. It was not in his power to review what they had done, nor to ascertain their reasons if they gave any further decisions; but, so far as he could give an opinion, he thought that if there were fewer arms in Ireland, and the facilities for obtaining them much less, it would be much to the advantage of the country.

STATE OF IRELAND—POLICE VISITS.

Mr. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether it is the fact that Mr. Martin O'Sullivan, of Lacka Ballyduff, county Kerry, having been bound to be of good behaviour on a charge of "Boycotting," has his house constantly visited during the night by the police, to the great alarm of his family; and, whether this is necessary; and, if not, whether a stop can be put to the practice?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): An occasional visit to this man's house is considered necessary; but no inconvenience or alarm has been caused to his family.

Mr. HEALY asked what was the usual hour of their visits?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) could not say; but he apprehended that they were made at the hour at which unlawful practices were most likely to be detected.

Mr. LEAMY asked if they were to understand that the right hon. and learned Gentleman considered his police were at liberty to make domiciliary visits at any hour they thought fit?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) replied that these were police visits, and not domiciliary visits; and the police would be guilty of a dereliction of duty if they failed to make them.

Mr. HEALY said, he hoped the next time the police came there they would get a warm reception. ["Order!"]

STATE OF IRELAND—HOUSE SEARCHES BY THE CONSTABULARY.

Mr. REDMOND asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether it is a fact that on Sunday the 26th March, Constable Hayden and a body of police attempted to search the house of Mr. John Egan, of Ballinasloe, without warrant or authority; that on the following day they again visited his house, and in spite of his opposition proceeded to search the building, refusing to show any warrant to authorise them; whether the police were justified in taking this action; and, whether Mr. Egan would not have been acting legally had he ejected them by force from his house?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): This search was made by the Constabulary, under the orders of their officer, for dynamite, with which an abominable attempt was feloniously made to blow up a gentleman's house in the neighbourhood.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — MR. JOHN O'CONNOR.

Mr. REDMOND asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Upon what grounds Mr. John O'Connor, of Cork, who has been imprisoned for nine months under the Coercion Act, was recently removed from Kilmainham to Clonmel Gaol; whether Mr. O'Connor had been previously transferred from Naas to Kilmainham, at the instance of his business employers, so that he might be able more conveniently to pursue his usual occupation; whether he was placed in a large cell by the Governor of Kilmainham, to afford him space and light to keep the books and ledgers appertaining to his business; whether the cell Mr. O'Connor now occupies in Clonmel is only five feet wide, and so dark that he is obliged to light a candle at noon to enable him to write; whether, in consequence, he has been obliged to give up his business correspondence; whether Mr. P. J. Murphy, T.C. of Cork, who was arrested shortly after Mr. O'Connor, and on a similar charge, has been released for some months; and, whether, under these circumstances, he will order the release of Mr. O'Connor, or his transfer to Kilmainham, to enable him to carry on his business?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Mr. O'Connor was transferred to Clonmel Prison because it was considered necessary and expedient. The hon. Member will excuse me from giving any further reason. Mr. O'Connor had formerly been transferred from Naas to Kilmainham at the instance of his employers; and while in Kilmainham he was placed in the most convenient cell which could be appropriated to his use. I am informed that his cell in Clonmel is 13 feet by 5 feet 1 inch, and that there is sufficient light in it to read by; therefore, I should infer that there is sufficient light also to write by. Mr. Murphy, who was arrested two days before Mr. O'Connor, has been released, I understand, on his parole; and I am informed that Mr. O'Connor's case will be shortly reconsidered.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — BALLYCARY DISPENSARY DISTRICT AND LARNE WORKHOUSE.

Mr. BIGGAR asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, What is the largest number of paupers who have been inmates of Larne Workhouse from the Ballcary Dispensary district during the past year; and, how many persons have received outdoor relief from same district during that time?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): The number of paupers from the Ballcary Dispensary district relieved in the Larne poor-house for the year ending March 31 last was 19, the largest number at one time being 11. The number relieved out of the poor-house during the same period was 15.

SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM—MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY.

Mr. BIRKBECK asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether, in view of the opening of the International Fisheries Exhibition, on the 1st of May

1883, measures are being taken to complete, at an early date, the building proposed to be erected in connection with the new Natural History Museum in Cromwell Road, and intended to receive the Fish Collection, and other specimens preserved in spirit, now at the British Museum?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said, the building would be finished in November next.

STATE OF IRELAND—THE RECENT MURDERS.

Sir EARDLEY WILMOT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, with reference to the late atrocious assassination of Mrs. Smythe, near Collinstown, and other similar outrages, Her Majesty's Government have had under consideration, during the Recess, any measures for vindicating the power and authority of the Law in Ireland; and, if so, if he will kindly state what measures the Government propose to adopt? At the same time, perhaps, he might ask the right hon. Gentleman if his attention had been drawn to another atrocious outrage which had since occurred in Limerick on Sunday last, when a lady, accompanied by another lady, was fired at, while returning from church, by three men with blackened faces who were concealed behind a hedge?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The hon. Member seems disposed to think that all outrages are, in the first instance, reported to me when they take place in Ireland. That is not so. They are first reported to the Irish Government, and reports are only mentioned to me in certain cases. I have no detailed information of the outrage to which the hon. Member has last referred; but I understand it is not the case that the ladies were fired at. Her Majesty's Government had under consideration, and have constantly under consideration, all measures that they can take, and they have taken the best measures within their power, within the limits of the existing law. I include, of course, the extraordinary powers entrusted to them by Parliament. With regard to other measures, it is obviously quite impossible that I should state, in answer to a Question, what will be the policy of the Government with respect to that country. And I am bound to say this—that I think we should make a very great mistake if we entered upon a discussion of the subject till we have a plan to propose, and till we see our way to ask the House of Commons to give it effectual and continuous attention.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE—THE CHANNEL TUNNEL SCHEME.

Mr. E. W. HARCOURT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, By whom are the expenses of guarding the tunnel between Dover and Calais to be borne, by the Nation or by the Railway Company?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The question of the expense of guarding the Tunnel between Dover and Calais forms a part of the general question; and what, I presume, the hon. Gentleman desires is an assurance from Her Majesty's Government that they will do nothing that has any tendency to commit, directly or indirectly, by word or act, the taxpayers or ratepayers of this country to any expense, actual or contingent, in connection with the Tunnel, unless under the authority and with the full sanction of Parliament, and that assurance I can give him.

Sir HARRY VERNEY asked if the right hon. Gentleman would give the House an opportunity of discussing the question?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I believe my hon. Friend has a more sure reliance in this matter than upon any statement I can make, for nothing, I apprehend, can possibly be done except with the authority of this House; and whether I wish it or not, it is quite certain there will be ample opportunity for discussing the subject.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—SECTION 8.

Mr. LEAMY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If he will request the Land Commissioners, in those cases in which they are called on under the eighth section of the Land Act to place a value on the interest of a tenant, to ascertain if the tenant has purchased his interest from his predecessor, and in every case in which the tenant has so purchased, to state, in the Returns hereafter to be presented to the House, the amount of the purchase money paid by the tenant, as well as the value placed on the tenancy by the Court?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): My right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary has ascertained that, while in these cases the purchase-money alleged to have been paid by the tenant would most probably form part of the evidence, yet it cannot always be ascertained with certainty by the Court, and the Commissioners, therefore, cannot undertake to state it in their Returns.

Mr. HEALY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Cullen, tenant, Bunbury, landlord, reported in the "Freeman's Journal" of the 24th instant, in which Judge O'Hagan commented on the "extreme difficulty of the task imposed on the Land Commission" by section eight, sub-section five of the Land Act, which requires the Court, on application, to fix a specified value of a tenancy with a view to a subsequent sale, and expressed a wish that he could, if possible, evade the difficult task thus imposed on the Court; whether he is aware that the same difficulty has arisen before the Sub-Commissions all over Ireland, and resulted in extreme divergence of practice and procedure among those bodies; whether it is the case that one Sub-Commission has decided that its duty, under the circumstances referred to, is to fix the highest market value of the tenancy as the specified value, while Mr. Justice O'Hagan has expressed an opinion that the specified value should not be the highest market value; that another Sub-Commission was in the habit of fixing, as the specified value, the maximum amount of compensation for disturbance which the tenant would be entitled to if arbitrarily evicted, and without any reference to the tenant's improvements, but was subsequently compelled to change this practice; that one of the Sub-Commissions has refused to fix a specified value at all, unless specific evidence on the point is offered, while all the other Sub-Commissions fix the value without any evidence on the point having been offered, and discourage the practice of offering such evidence; whether it is the case that the Lord Chancellor and the Master of the Rolls, in their respective judgments in the case of Adams v. Dunseath, expressed contrary opinions as to the meaning of the phrase "true value" of a tenancy; whether it is a fact that the power of fixing a specified value does not apply at all when a holding is subject to the Ulster Custom; and, whether, having regard to the difficulties and contradictions which section eight, sub-section five of the Land Act has given rise to, the Government will take steps to have it repealed?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am afraid I could not give a satisfactory and full answer to the hon. Member's Question within the proper limits of an answer to a Question; but I shall do the best in my power. It is quite true that Judge O'Hagan has commented on the difficulty of the task referred to—namely, the task imposed on the Commissioners by Section 8, sub-section 5, of the Land Act, which contemplates the fixing of the value of a tenancy during a statutable term. I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman intended to ascribe the use of the word "evade" to Judge O'Hagan — probably he did not—but Judge O'Hagan does not admit that he applied any such word in reference to any provision of the Act of Parliament. Moreover, he did state that as between the Commissioners and the Sub-Commissioners there is no complete understanding yet established as to the rule of procedure in dealing with that particular sub-section; and I may remind the hon. Member that, although he himself took a very active—and I must say a most highly-informed part—in the discussion of this Bill, yet there was no discussion in the House on this sub-section, so that the Sub-Commissioners have not the advantage of such guidance as possibly in some cases they may be able to draw from the lengthened debates in Parliament. Of course, there must be further official information before it can be stated whether there has been that "extreme divergence of practice" which the hon. Gentleman refers to; but the matter will be borne in mind with a view to a full and satisfactory reply. With regard to the statement that Mr. Justice O'Hagan had expressed an opinion that the specified value should not be the highest value, Justice O'Hagan's expression was that the specified value was to be held to be the true value, and I do not know that I could add anything to that statement of fact. I am not here to justify or explain any expression the Judge might use; nor would the Judge be a party to my undertaking one course or the other. With regard to the fifth point, we believe that it is not the case; but we have heard that one Sub-Commissioner has taken "specified value" as meaning the maximum compensation for disturbance, plus the compensation for improvements. With regard to the sixth point contained in the close of the third paragraph, the answer is in the affirmative, and appeals on the subject are now pending. With regard to the seventh point, the Lord Chancellor took the "true value" to mean what the holding would *bonâ fide* bring in the open market if sold to an unobjectionable person; and the Master of the Rolls stated the "true value" could not be the market value, but what, having regard to the interests of landlord and tenant respectively under this code, would be the true value as between them. With respect to the eighth point contained in the last paragraph but one, the answer is simply, "Yes, it is a fact;" and with respect to the ninth point, I must say that is a matter which I think could not be entered upon in answer to a Question; but there will be an early opportunity of again referring to it and of discussing it in the House.

In reply to Mr. Biggar,

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, he was not aware that Mr. Bomford was still a Sub-Commissioner acting in the county Cavan. He was under the impression Mr. Bomford was not.

Mr. HEALY: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman state whether the Members of this House will get any official information as to the names of the Sub-Commissioners and their districts?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): The new ones is it?

Mr. HEALY: All of them.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): They have all been published from time to time. [*Cries of* "Where, where?" *and* "Order!"] I shall ascertain and inform the hon. Member.

STATE OF IRELAND—LAND LEAGUE HUTS—MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD.

Mr. SEXTON: I wish to address a Question to the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland on an urgent matter which has just been communicated to me by telegraph. My Question is, Whether he is aware that at Tulla, in the county Clare, where a number of families have been evicted and huts were being erected to shelter them, Mr. Clifford Lloyd interfered to-day, stating that the building of the huts was illegal, and ordered the builder to leave the place this evening, and informed him that unless he left he would be arrested? I also ask whether Mr. Clifford Lloyd acted within his legal rights; and, if so, under what statute he could arrest the builder in case he refused to leave?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): The first part of the Question deals with a matter of fact, and, as I have not had the advantage of seeing the telegram which the hon. Member quotes, I cannot answer it. Assuming that the facts are, as stated by the hon. Member, correct, if Mr. Clifford Lloyd found that those tenants, or others on their behalf, were building huts in which the evicted persons might carefully watch the farms from which they had been evicted for the purpose of doing mischief to any persons who might take them, or with the object of preventing persons taking those farms, then, in my opinion, Mr. Clifford Lloyd has acted rightly.

Mr. SEXTON: Under what Act of Parliament?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Under the Common Law, Sir. His duty is to protect life and property.

COAL MINES—THE WEARDALE COLLIERY EXPLOSION.

Mr. BROADHURST asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can give the House any further information with regard to the colliery explosion in Durham than that which appears in the evening papers?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I have received a telegram from Mr. Bell, the Government Inspector of Mines, and he says—

> "I regret to inform you of an explosion of a colliery belonging to the Weardale Coal and Coke Company, which occurred at 1.30 this morning. Only the night shift, consisting of 40 men, was in the pit at the time. Twenty have been rescued alive. Six bodies have been recovered; hope to reach the remainder during the evening. The work of exploration is going on satisfactorily, there being plenty of engineer-

ing assistance at hand, and willing workmen. My colleague, Mr. Thomas, is with me. If necessary I will report further."

MOTIONS.

PAPAL SEE (DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS).—RESOLUTION.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF, in rising to call the attention of the House to the irregular and clandestine communications now passing between Her Majesty's Government and the Vatican; and to move—

> "That, while recognizing the value of a good understanding between this Country and the Papal See, this House is of opinion that all communications between any of Her Majesty's Ministers and the authorities of the Vatican should be placed on official record in accordance with the constitutional practice in diplomatic affairs, and should be conducted with the cognizance of Parliament,"

said, he wished to explain, in the first instance, that he did not bring forward his Motion in any spirit of hostility to the Roman Catholic Church; he only desired that any communications which passed between this country and the Papal See should be carried on in a regular manner, and in accordance with what took place between the Representatives of other countries. But before entering upon that question, he desired to refer to what had fallen from the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. That hon. Gentleman had expressed himself aggrieved at his having charged the Government with defraying Mr. Errington's expenses out of the Secret Service Fund; but he had had that information on authority that left no doubt on his mind on the subject. The expenditure of the Secret Service money was perfectly Constitutional; but it ought not to be employed in the payment of a salary to a Diplomatic Agent. In "another place" Lord Granville had denied that Mr. Errington's expenses had been paid at all; but the denial was made in such a manner that it amounted to no denial at all. He said that Mr. Errington had not received any money. That might be perfectly true, for nobody supposed that when a gentleman was engaged on business of that kind he received the money for every pound of butter, and every cab he hired; at the conclusion of his mission he sent in his account, and the account was settled. But he would not lay stress upon that point; his contention was that they had no right to send a mission to any Foreign Potentate or Sovereign without the facts and circumstances being recorded in the archives of the Foreign Office. It was idle and immaterial to say that Mr. Errington was not paid; there were embassies upon which plenty of gentlemen would be perfectly ready to serve for the honour of the mission. Nor was the comparison made between the mission of Mr. Errington and the messages intrusted to Lord O'Hagan a fair one; it was quite erroneous. It was true that a gentleman like Lord O'Hagan might very well receive a message to deliver in case he met the person for whom it was intended; but it was quite different when a gentleman went to reside in Rome with a letter expressing the confidence of the Government in him as a medium of authentic communication. He would read a short extract in support of his view from a work which formed a proper complement to the work which they owed to Sir Erskine May. It was a book written by Mr. Alpheus Todd on the Constitutional history of this country. It was there pointed out that all the communications passing between the Foreign Secretary and the Representatives of the Crown abroad upon matters of public importance should be committed to writing, in order that a record might be preserved in the Foreign Office, and in due course submitted to Parliament. Now, he had never asked that any documents connected with Mr. Errington's mission should be submitted if it were inconvenient to do so. He had only contended that the Correspondence should be placed on record, so that when Her Majesty's Government came to leave Office they should leave in the archives of the Foreign Office some traces of the negotiations with the Vatican. There was another remarkable statement in another of Mr. Todd's works which had reference to the question of private letters. He said that communications frequently passed between the Foreign Secretary and diplomatic servants abroad. These letters were strictly secret; but, as Mr. Todd pointed out, they had been severely animadverted upon in Parliament. However, it was the opinion of Lord Wodehouse, Lord Clarendon, and others that these private letters were indispensable. He maintained that Lord Granville, in his recent dealings with the Vatican and the Court of Rome, had established a system of secret diplomacy. I was a system which he conceived to be dangerous to this country, not because Lord Granville obtained information that was not given to Parliament or to his Successors, but hereafter, when the Government was changed, sooner or later it might be found that certain assurances had been given to Rome or received by England which were not on record. Thus, the continuity of their diplomatic correspondence would be severed, and in a manner full of peril to the country. His first knowledge of this matter, after some private letters which he received, was derived from the Roman Catholic Bishop of Salford, who made a most eloquent speech on diplomatic relations between this country and the Vatican, making special allusion to Mr. Errington's mission. The Bishop said that Mr. Errington was in Rome, but had no strict mission from the Government. He held a letter of confidence, so that he might be a medium of direct communications between the Government and the Holy See, without any salary or regular appointment. Now, in the time of the late Pope it was a recognized thing that a Representative of Her Majesty's Government should be stationed at Rome; but all the despatches written to him or from him were laid on the Table of the House. He (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) stated on good authority the other day that Cardinal Jacobini had informed Mr. Errington that he would be received as the "recommended agent of the British Government." A great many people who had been to Rome stated that Mr. Errington was received in that capacity by the Vatican; and he should like to know whether Lord Granville ever saw the letter which verified these statements? Cardinal Jacobini received Mr. Errington in that capacity. Lord Granville, as everyone knew, wrote a letter with regard to Mr. Errington's mission. The Bishop of Salford said this letter had been written and submitted to Cardinal Jacobini. He (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) did not object to communications with the See of Rome. He believed it was absolutely necessary that there should be an understanding with the powers of the Vatican. He felt it the more because he knew that Mr. Errington had been sent to Rome with the view of arranging matters with regard to Ireland. Well, he was afraid Mr. Errington had not succeeded. At all events, he had tried to succeed. That he had been engaged in important negotiations no one could doubt, for had they not seen Mr. Errington, an Irish Member, coming to England in hot haste to vote for the *clôture*, and then hurrying back to Rome, after only a couple of days' stay in this country? Would this have happened had not Mr. Errington some very important business on hand? But, while he saw reasons for the appointment of Mr. Errington, he could not reconcile the statements made at different times by the Prime Minister with the statements made by the Bishop of Salford. The Bishop of Salford eloquently described the enormous power which the Pope exercised over the Christian community throughout the world. The Pope was spoken of by the Bishop as the Supreme Director of Men's Souls, and he added—"If there be a moral power on the earth, it resides in the Pope." And then the Bishop proceeded to say that it was an undisputed fact that the Pope exercised great moral power and authority through the territories of the British Empire. He could scarcely reconcile the reasons which the Bishop of Salford gave for the sending of Mr. Errington to Rome with the powerful protests against the influence of the Vatican made by the present Prime Minister when the late Government were in power. He had read a book on the Vatican decrees in their bearing on civil allegiance. It was there claimed that the loyalty of the subject and his civil duty were placed at the mercy of a Foreign Potentate; and in a subsequent work the right hon. Gentleman asserted with regard to the Vatican decrees that, in the strictest sense, they claimed for the Pope a supreme power over loyalty and civil duty of the subject. And these works were published as protests against that pretension. It was to the Pope that the right hon. Gentleman now appealed; and he must say that he did not wonder that the Government wished to conceal the Correspondence. There could be no doubt that the difficulty at Gibraltar helped to lead up to Mr. Errington's mission; and the Bishop of Salford made some significant allusions to that subject. It was in consequence of that understanding with the Pope that a most monstrous oppression, as he could prove from Blue Books laid before the House, had been committed by the Colonial Office against the Roman Catholic inhabitants of Gibraltar; and that had been done against the wishes and the advice of the Governor of Gibraltar himself. He would ask the House to allow him for one moment to enter into this Correspondence about the Gibraltar business, because he maintained that a great wrong had been done by Her Majesty's Government towards the Roman Catholic inhabitants of Gibraltar. For some time there had been a feeling of great bitterness between the laity and the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church in Gibraltar with regard to the administration of temporalities of their Church. The laity complained, on many occasions, that the clergy endeavoured to have the administration of property which did not belong to them. In September, 1869, Lord Granville, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in his enthusiasm for disestablishment, wanted to disestablish the Church at Gibraltar, and gave instructions that the churches and chapels there should be handed over to the different communions. On the death of the late Vicar Apostolic a new one was named, who, for different reasons, was unpalatable to the managing junta of elders. Until Mr. Errington went to Rome Her Majesty's Government had taken the part of the congregation, and made representations to the Holy See against the appointment of Dr. Canilla as the new Vicar Apostolic. In October, 1881, however, the Vatican having declined to accede to a Memorial that the appointment should be withdrawn, Lord Kimberley, in a despatch to Lord Napier of Magdala, as Governor, took a different view from that which the Ministry had previously held. It appeared that Mr. Weld was sent to Gibraltar to settle the dispute as to the appointment of Dr. Canilla. Lord Napier of Magdala, writing on the subject of Mr. Weld's mission, said it was not clear what his object or intentions were; but it seemed to be highly necessary that this Church scandal should come to an end; and it appeared that nobody would accept the appointment of Dr. Canilla as his pastor, and the dispute would probably lead to violence. The mission of Mr. Weld, so far from settling the question, very much aggravated the feeling against the appointment of Dr. Canilla. Mr. Weld said he would not leave Gibraltar until he had fulfilled his mission. He declined to produce any credentials from the Pope. That appeared from the Report of the Attorney General; and this also—that in consequence of the irritated feeling of the majority of the Roman Catholics, it would be necessary that the police and military should always be present at the ministrations of Dr. Canilla. It was shown that the Roman Catholics had, from time immemorial, had a right to the management of the temporalities of the Church, and that a feeling of great dissatisfaction prevailed as to the way in which those temporalities had been disposed of. It was for the Secretary of State to determine whether it was necessary or expedient for the Government to interfere with regard to the appointment, and it was shown that such a course as that threatened could only have the effect of bringing the local authorities in conflict with the inhabitants, and that the gravest consequences might ensue. What was the answer of Lord Kimberley? The noble Lord seemed to have acted in a manner which was quite inexplicable in the case of one of his enlightened judgment. He gave orders that measures should at once be taken to enforce obedience to the law and to enable the Vicar Apostolic, or other ecclesiastical authorities, legally constituted, to have access to the Church buildings from which one clergyman, who had gone over to take possession, had been expelled. But who had said that this Vicar Apostolic was legally constituted? The people said "No;" and yet Lord Kimberley, without giving any reasons for so doing, ordered the Governor of Gibraltar, in the most discourteous manner, to make use of force in order that this Vicar Apostolic might be installed. There was no despatch after that of Sir Augustus Paget; but it seemed as if there must have been some sort of secret communication with the Pope, whereby it was ascertained that he considered the new Vicar Apostolic properly constituted. Lord Kimberley, therefore, ordered the troops which on the last occasion had been employed ineffectually against the Boers to be more effectually employed against the inhabitants of Gibraltar. Lord Napier, who seemed to foresee the difficulties of the situation, then wrote that he regretted that the situation remained unchanged, and that there was no indication of conciliation. The course the local Government had taken from the commencement was with the object of not identifying the Government with a question of Church discipline, and of the appointment of a dignitary whose installation was strenuously opposed by the population. In reply to that letter, Lord Kimberley renewed his orders, and ignored the tone of remonstrance in which Lord Napier wrote. He said he had carefully considered the despatch of Lord Napier, and, while approving the general policy therein referred to, he must impress the paramount obligation of preventing disorder. He went on to say that his instructions contained in his last letter must be observed in their integrity, and maintained as long as required. In that despatch Lord Kimberley, who in 1869 had sought to disestablish the Church at Gibraltar for some secret reason, gave the most peremptory orders without, apparently, inquiring into the merits of the case, and against the opinion of Lord Napier, instructing him to take steps to force the congregation out of the church, and impose on them a Vicar Apostolic who was distasteful to them. The result was that the congregation were ejected, the troops violently invaded the Church, the doors were broken in, and many people arrested. And all that seemed to be done for no earthly reason except that which was stated by the Bishop of Salford—namely, that Mr. Errington might obtain a good understanding with the Church of Rome. He (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) made this Motion in no spirit of hostility towards the Church of Rome itself. On the contrary, he was of opinion that there should be a free and full understanding between the Government and the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church, and that we should try to conciliate the members of that communion in Ireland and in other parts; but he maintained that it was an unconstitutional and unfair act on the part of the Government to keep Papers concealed in such a manner that they would not be handed down to the successor of the present Minister at the Foreign Office. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice,

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, while recognising the value of a good understanding between this Country and the Papal See, this House is of opinion that all communications between any of Her Majesty's Ministers and the authorities of the Vatican should be placed on official record in accordance with the constitutional practice in diplomatic affairs, and should be conducted with the cognizance of Parliament."—(*Sir Henry Wolff.*)

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, it was the intention of my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Charles W. Dilke) to have followed the hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), because on various points he is more conversant with the particulars of this question than I am; but, at the same time, as regards the main points of the hon. Gentleman's speech, and the very decided objections that the Government entertain to his Motion, I think I may, without any fear, undertake to state them. Now, Sir, when I listened to the hon. Gentleman throughout his interesting statement, what I was struck with most was the power of imagination by which, having got hold of a very few fragmentary circumstances, being driven on by an intense suspicion of those with whom he is dealing, and being abundantly gifted with creative imagination, he has constructed a scheme and a system out of the very slenderest materials, which, when you come to notice and point out the defects of the evidence, entirely crumbles to the ground and vanishes. That I believe to be the state of the case with the hon. Gentleman; and he will be able to judge himself, in some degree, whether I am at all warranted in making a statement of that kind. The last moiety of the speech of the hon. Gentleman was taken up with, as it appears to me, an unwarrantable attack upon my noble Friend Lord Kimberley, with reference to a series of transactions in Gibraltar, which, no doubt, are of considerable interest. The hon. Gentleman founds his allusions to these transactions on a statement in the speech of a Roman Catholic Bishop in this country in reference to them; and this Roman Catholic Bishop gives his own opinion, or hypothesis, that something that has been done in Gibraltar has probably arisen from what the hon. Gentleman persists in calling the "mission" of Mr. Errington. Well, Sir, it is a fair enough point that is raised by the hon. Gentleman—a very fair and a very fit subject for discussion; but, at the same time, I cannot admit the correctness of his remarks upon it. His statement is that Lord Kimberley has insisted that the Governor of Gibraltar and the Roman Catholic community should accept Dr. Canilla as Vicar Apostolic. Now, Sir, that is a very serious affair, on which I must say it appeared to me that the extracts read by the hon. Gentleman did not, in the faintest degree, bear out his statement. No extract which the hon. Gentleman read contained any such instruction to the Governor of Gibraltar. Again, the hon. Gentleman says that Mr. Errington was at work as a secret agent in this matter. That is, doubtless, a very fair subject for discussion upon the Papers before us; but I would point out that in those Papers Mr. Errington does not at all appear, and that there is no evidence of any necessity for the Government to work through a secret agent, for there is a public agent, Sir Augustus Paget, who appears as the agent and the organ of the British Government. The hon. Gentleman has also referred to certain conduct of Lord Kimberley, founded on the proceedings of Sir Augustus Paget, and has stated that Mr. Errington was employed, with the sanction of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in some communication which, it appears, he has been able to hold with the Vatican. I was not aware that he would have been able to hold such communication. There it is, and I see no reason to be ashamed of it. I see no reason to disapprove of it. There is a certain despatch of Lord Kimberley's, founded, apparently, upon Sir Augustus Paget's proceedings. I need not say that I do not admit the charges against Lord Kimberley which the hon. Gentleman has made; but I am not prepared to defend Lord Kimberley, simply because I know nothing about it. What I am in a position to say is, that I believe that a matter more purely imaginative than to say, as the hon. Gentleman has done, that Mr. Errington has been at work as the agent of the British Government in regard to this affair at Gibraltar never was concocted by an ingenious mind. I have the strongest conviction that Lord Kimberley never would, either by himself or in conjunction with Lord Granville, empower Mr. Errington to act in that capacity without making the circumstance known to me; and I can only say that, except by the hon. Gentleman, I have never in my life heard the name of Mr. Errington mentioned in connection with these proceedings at Gibraltar; and I beg, therefore, entirely to withhold my belief from that which the hon. Gentleman has, in perfect good faith, imagined, and my assent to his Motion in so far as that very important, if not main, prop of his Motion, which is founded upon this supposition—namely, that there has been a course of action by Mr. Errington in this matter on the part of the Government—is concerned. Well, then, the hon. Gentleman founds himself upon two suppositions. One of them is that Lord Granville had organized, through Mr. Errington, a system of secret diplomacy, and the other is that it is perfectly clear that Mr. Errington is now occupied at Rome in some important and secret business with the Vatican. Sir, with regard to Mr. Errington's return to Rome, I can only say that, so far as I am acquainted with the facts—and I apprehend if Lord Granville had organized this system of secret diplomacy he would have made me conversant with what he was about—Mr. Errington has returned to Rome upon purely private considerations. Moreover, I have heard—I rather think I have known—that Mr. Errington did acquaint Lord Granville, that there was a private consideration which made him anxious to return to Rome. He takes a very great interest, I believe, founded upon personal acquaintance—but I am not able to say whether that acquaintance is intimate or not—he takes a great interest in the promotion of Dr. M'Cabe, Archbishop of Dublin, to the Cardinalate, and as the ceremonial connected with Dr. M'Cabe's advancement was to take place after Easter, I believe Mr. Errington returned to Rome on that account. I am giving you this information merely as that which I have had no recent opportunity of verifying, so as to be precisely accurate. I merely give it as what I think to be the case; but what I will state positively to be the case, so far as I know—so far as my knowledge goes—is that Mr. Errington has no mission of any kind at this moment, and no purpose in view with regard to an agency of any kind in connection with Her Majesty's Government. I hope the hon. Gentleman will clearly and distinctly understand me in that sense; but, whether he does or does not so understand me, I trust the House will. The hon. Gentleman has done me the great honour to refer to certain publications of mine, and I am always very glad when I find that any individual, and especially if he happens to be an opponent, has conferred upon me the very great compliment of reading anything that I have written. But I am afraid the hon. Member, although he has quoted me, has not read the book. [Sir H. Drummond Wolff: Yes; I have.] Then, Sir, I am extremely sorry to say, if he has read the book, he has not profited by it. He has not remembered the book, for I am quite sure if he had remembered it he would not have made the citation that he has made. He would have made his citation such as to convey a true account of what was stated by me upon that occasion. He has quoted from me the statement that, under the decrees of the Vatican Council, the Pope had made claims upon the civil allegiance of English and Irish and Scotch Roman Catholics, which placed their civil allegiance at his mercy. Having made that half quotation, he says that I, who made that allegation when I was out of Office, now that I am in Office have committed myself upon those claims of the Pope of Rome, and have made a request to him to act upon those powers to which I have so greatly objected formerly; "and no wonder, therefore," says the hon. Gentleman, "the Prime Minister is very anxious, under these circumstances, to conceal the correspondence on this subject." Now, I am going to destroy the entire fabric of the hon. Gentleman's imagination. It is quite true that I stated in that publication that the claims made on behalf of His Holiness did amount to a claim of command over civil allegiance; but if the hon. Gentleman will kindly refer—though he has an advantage over me, for I am stating now from recollection of writings to which I have not recently referred—to those publications, and make himself thoroughly acquainted with them, he will find I stated that those claims of mastery over civil allegiance were not recognized by the Roman Catholic subjects of the Queen, and that their loyalty and civil allegiance were perfectly undisputed. Therefore, how could I appeal to those claims of the Pope over the Roman Catholic subjects of the Queen, when I myself had declared in print that the Roman Catholic subjects of the Queen, so far as I was able to judge, did not allow those claims? I hope, therefore, the hon. Gentleman will see that I have no great motive for concealing any correspondence, if there had been any—which there is not—between Mr. Errington and myself. The hon. Gentleman says there is no analogy between the case of Lord O'Hagan and Mr. Errington. There is a very great analogy between them. Essentially, they are precisely the same. Mr. Errington is not what the hon. Gentleman supposed. He says to-day he sees no importance in the question whether Mr. Errington is paid or not. He sees no importance in it now; but, unless I am mistaken, he did so a short time ago, when he came forward with a positive statement that the hon. Gentleman was paid for his services.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I said that his expenses were paid, and I believe they were.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Very well; the hon. Member says that his expenses were paid. The hon. Gentleman saw great importance in the point before; but my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, stretching a good deal—out of deference to the hon. Gentleman—the wise and salutary rule of public action, has stated that he was entirely mistaken with regard to it. To-day the hon. Member says that he dismisses that subject from his mind; but if he continues to believe that those expenses are paid, he ought to have some evidence to give in support of that belief. Really he is not entitled—it is not fair, it is not just—in the face of a distinct and official contradiction from my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whom he has drawn into the field, to state as that which he believes that which my hon. Friend near me has taken upon himself to deny. I will say, then, for myself, that Mr. Errington is not a paid agent of Her Majesty's Government. I say that the hon. Gentleman is really quite mistaken in supposing that Lord Granville has organized a system of secret diplomacy, and for this plain reason, that he has organized no system whatever. Mr. Errington, as has been stated again and again in this House, went to Rome on his own account; and, as he went to Rome on his own account, Lord Granville availed himself of the opportunity offered by the journey to Rome of a Gentleman, a Member of Parliament, an Irishman, a man of high intelligence, and entirely to be trusted and relied on as deeply attached to his country, to carry certain communications with respect to the state of Ireland to the Vatican, and then to assist the Pope in completing his knowledge on the subject. Those communications were transmitted to the Vatican through Mr. Errington, without any reference to the claims of the Pope in 1870. The British Government has known for a very long time that the Pope was a great social power in every country, and perhaps in Ireland more than any other country, where there are a very large mass of Roman Catholic believers. He is a great social power, and in a time of great social disturbance, Lord Granville was desirous that the Pope should be well informed on the subject. He found more than one Gentleman going to Rome whom he could trust to carry this information, and he made use of both of the two channels referred to, the difference between Lord O'Hagan and Mr. Errington being that Mr. Errington went first, and that he stayed longer. But to convey information was not the purpose of Mr. Errington's visit, as far as the Government are acquainted with it, because we have no control over the private and personal action of Mr. Errington in Rome. To convey information was a purpose which he undertook to fulfil on the part of the Government; and I believe I am strictly correct in saying that, while conveying that information, we submitted no request whatever to the Pope at Rome. The hon. Gentleman's statement that secret communications were going on is wholly destitute of foundation. Mr. Errington has been in England, but I have not seen him. My belief is, that his return to Rome was a return for personal purposes, and, if I am rightly informed, he had a natural reason for going back to Rome. It is not for me to say—I have no reason to know—whether he intends to prolong his stay there or not; but it is quite plain that the hon. Gentleman is interested in the installation of a Cardinal there, and it has nothing to do with any secret system of diplomacy. The hon. Gentleman refers to an expression, which he seems to place great stress upon, that Mr. Errington was described, with the knowledge of Lord Granville, as an *agente racommendato*, or "recommended agent," of the British Government. I cannot from recollection say whether that was so or not; but I believe it is perfectly possible that it was the fact. If the hon. Member will only limit the interpretation to be placed upon that phrase, it may be quite correct that the expression was used even with the knowledge of Lord Granville. That Mr. Errington was "recommended" is perfectly true; but then he was not a well-known public character, not a man like Lord O'Hagan, who had for many years played an important part in the Roman Catholic community of Ireland, and borne the Office, which he has only just surrendered, of Lord Chancellor of Ireland. Mr. Errington was recommended not, I believe, by any letter from Lord Granville with authority, but by a letter from Lord Granville to Mr. Errington himself, in which Lord Granville put Mr. Errington in a condition to show, if he found it necessary, that he was a man on whose honour and intelligence the most entire reliance could be placed by any Government. We may take it, then, that he was recommended. Was he an agent? Well, any Member can carry a message, and any man who carries a message for you is an agent. I was myself in 1845 an agent of Lord Aberdeen, and, as the agent of Lord Aberdeen, I undertook a commission which I think had reference to the question of International Copyright. That commission I was asked to fulfil, and I did fulfil, in Paris, by a communication with M. Guizot. I was a recommended agent at that moment. I stayed in Paris for 24 or 48 hours, and then, on leaving my agency and my commission alike, I fell to the ground. In this limited sense, therefore, I am prepared to admit that Mr. Errington is an *agente racommendato*. He is a person recommended, because we have the attestation of Lord Granville as to his ability; but I am not aware that at this moment he has any agency whatever in his hands. Now, Sir, I hope I have in some degree fulfilled the promise I made to dissipate the vague shadows which have been cast over this subject on the conduct of Her

Majesty's Government through the active and powerful imagination of the hon. Gentleman. With regard to the Motion of the hon. Gentleman, I cannot agree to it for reasons which I will state in a very few words. First of all there is a Preamble to the Motion, in which the hon. Gentleman speaks of the "irregular and clandestine communications now passing between Her Majesty's Government and the Vatican." That Preamble is intended to give point to the Motion, and therefore I comment upon it to this extent, to say that I am not aware of any communications of any sort now going on upon these matters. There were communications connected with conveying any certain information which we thought it most desirable that the Vatican should be possessed of; but those communications are not, so far as I know, communications now going on. Then, Sir, comes the Motion of the hon. Gentleman, and he asks the House to commit itself to a declaration—

> "That, while recognizing the value of a good understanding between this Country and the Papal See, this House is of opinion that all communications between any of Her Majesty's Ministers and the authorities of the Vatican should be placed on official record in accordance with the Constitutional practice in diplomatic affairs, and should be conducted with the cognizance of Parliament."

Now, Sir, I do not understand the meaning of those words. Does he mean that there ought to be distinct diplomatic relations with the Papal See? I have heard the hon. Gentleman declare himself to that effect. Well, Sir, that is an opinion which it is perfectly competent for him or for any Member of this House to hold; but it is one upon which possibly there may be great diversity of opinion amongst us. But this I will say—that it is a subject upon which, in my opinion, it would be most undesirable for the House to make any declaration in the shape of a formal vote, unless it perfectly knows what it means by that declaration, and unless, if there is a substantive meaning in the words, there be a disposition to give effect to the substantive meaning. Now, Sir, for my own part, I am not prepared to commit the Government to any opinion on the point without having taken the advice of my Colleagues in reference to it. I rather have an opinion about it myself, and my opinion would lead me to think twice or thrice before I concurred in the words of the hon. Gentleman. But that is not my point. My point is that no declaration could be wisely or prudently made. The hon. Member has, of course, a perfect right to his opinions; but the making of any such declaration, especially if in vague and ambiguous terms, would tend, I think, to create a good deal of misapprehension, and, perhaps, not a little suspicion out-of-doors, and would do a very great deal towards preventing a good understanding—if a good understanding means that we are always to deal with charity with all mankind, and to give everyone credit for doing that which he thinks to be right according to his character and constitution. That may be all very true; but I do not think that sort of good understanding would be at all promoted by passing this Motion. Then the hon. Member says, in his Motion, that he objects to certain communications between the Vatican and Her Majesty's Government—I believe there are none—because, he says, they ought all to be placed on official record. Well, the hon. Gentleman himself has let fall words in the course of his speech, and has even quoted authorities, showing that all communications are not placed upon official record. Surely he is perfectly well aware that very important private correspondence is carried on between a Minister of State and all the great Embassies and Missions of this country; but these private communications are never placed upon official record; and it would be perfectly untrue—I can hardly think the hon. Gentleman can suppose that everything is so recorded, although, as I have said, I did hear him let fall some expressions of the kind in one of his many speeches on this subject—but it is perfectly untrue to state that these communications are placed upon official record, either at the time that they are written, or at any subsequent period. These communications contain, undoubtedly, very important portions of the integral communications between the Foreign Minister and the agent abroad, but they are never placed upon record. The House of Commons ought not to commit itself to a proposition so precipitate and so much at variance with the perfectly well-understood practice of all Governments in all times, as the proposition that all communication between any of Her Majesty's Ministers and the authorities of the Vatican should be placed on special record. I will, however, go so far to meet the hon. Gentleman as this—that if Her Majesty's Government should see fit to organize what he calls a system of diplomacy, or anything that any right-minded man could call a system of communication between this country and the See of Rome, I then agree to join hands with the hon. Gentleman, and I will agree that these means ought to be taken. I do not say for giving in that case, more than in any other case, absolute publicity of everything that is said; but to place communications of that kind on the same official footing as communications with other Embassies and Missions, I cannot agree. But my point is, that nothing of the kind exists; that a special and temporary function was undertaken by Mr. Errington upon the happy and convenient occasion of his going to Rome, as it was on a similar occasion by Lord O'Hagan, and as it might be by any other Gentleman; and unless I am entirely ignorant of the proceedings of my Colleagues—and I think I am not so—no such communications now exist. The subject-matter upon which the hon. Gentleman has fastened his suspicion is no longer in a condition to be made the subject of comment, because the purpose of Mr. Errington's proceedings has been served in conveying the information that was to be conveyed, and that information neither involved any proposal on our part, or any request on our part, or any necessity for the conveyance of those proceedings. I hope, therefore, that the hon. Gentleman will not press his Motion further upon the House.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, he concurred with the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister in the recommendation that his hon. Friend (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) should not press his Motion, for the proposal it contained was inconsistent with the Common Law, which established Her Majesty's supremacy, and with the Diplomatic Relations Act, which was passed in 1848 to establish commercial relations and other relations between this country and the then Sovereign of the Pontifical States. That Statute carefully declared the supremacy of Her Majesty. When that measure was before the House of Lords, a most important debate took place, in consequence of which that most loyal of Her Majesty's subjects whom he (Mr. Newdegate) ever knew, the late Duke of Wellington, deemed it necessary to insert the 3rd clause, guarding Her Majesty's supremacy in all parts of her Dominions, unless modified by Treaty. He (Mr. Newdegate) found that Gibraltar was ceded to the English Crown in full Sovereignty by the Treaty of 1814. He was not surprised, therefore, that Lord Napier, as Governor, was surprised, and found himself in a very awkward position, when he had to deal with a person who claimed to have been appointed Vicar Apostolic, and who would not produce his credentials, but presumed to take upon himself the regulation of the Roman Catholic ecclesiastical property in Gibraltar. But there was another matter. He (Mr. Newdegate) could quite understand the suspicion which was very generally felt with regard to the position of Mr. Errington, because the public were perfectly aware of the state of the Common Law in this country, which retained to Her Majesty and to Parliament full Sovereignty in matters ecclesiastical as well as civil; and that was most carefully guarded by the Act of 1848. The Pope was no longer Sovereign of the Pontifical States; therefore, the Common Law excluding his ecclesiastical and spiritual authority was in full vigour to prevent any diplomatic relations with the Holy See. He could not vote for the Resolution of his hon. Friend, whose ability he so much respected, because he should be voting against the Diplomatic Relations Act of 1848; at the same time, he thought his hon. Friend had done eminently useful service in bringing the subject under the notice of the House. But his hon. Friend proposed that this country should enter into communications with the Pope with reference to the property and the rights of Her Majesty's subjects at Gibraltar, and he (Mr. Newdegate) could not vote for that, for it was contrary to the Common Law. His hon. Friend was, no doubt, right in calling the attention of Parliament to the fact that there was strong reason for believing that the Common Law had been evaded in this instance. That, however, was a totally different matter from the substance of his Motion; and he thought that the speech of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Salford, which his hon. Friend had quoted, was very cleverly devised to pave the way for breaking up the protection given by the Common Law. The Common Law protected all Roman Catholic property, excepting monastic property, most carefully; but it retained to itself the right of judging whether that property was duly, legally, and loyally appropriated; and he had no doubt the Roman Catholic Bishop of Salford would like to see that jurisdiction transferred to the Vatican. He (Mr. Newdegate) was quite sure that the House was not prepared for that transfer; and that his hon. Friend did not wish, under the cover of diplomatic relations, to sanction uncontrolled interference on the part of the Vatican in Gibraltar, the entire Sovereignty of which belonged to Her Majesty under the Treaty of 1814. Though he thanked his hon. Friend, then, most sincerely for having stated the grounds for the very strong suspicion that certain communications had been made to the Pope, which were inconsistent with the Common Law, and inconsistent, therefore, with Her Majesty's supremacy, he regretted that the Resolution was drawn up in terms which rendered it impossible for him (Mr. Newdegate) to support it.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he must confess that it was with considerable relief he heard the Prime Minister's statement disclaiming all knowledge as to the proceedings that had taken place in Gibraltar. A Motion was on the Paper in his (Sir George Campbell's) name which had fallen to the ground; but he was glad to know that whatever had been done had not been done by the authority of the Prime Minister or of the Government, but as a purely Departmental affair, and might be criticized as such. He was also very glad indeed to hear the ground on which the Prime Minister opposed the Motion of the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), for he (Sir George Campbell) himself was strongly opposed to the Motion on the grounds stated by the Prime Minister. Neither the House nor the country were prepared to resuscitate the long suppressed diplomatic relations between Her Majesty's Government and the See of Rome. On several occasions, when questions of that kind had been brought forward in the House, he expressed his opinion to that effect; and, while disclaiming acting on what was called Scotch prejudice in this matter, had done so on political grounds, and so adhered to the old principles of the country. He had served a good deal over the world, and had seen a good many religions, and it was on political grounds he adhered to the old principle that it was better this country should not interfere diplomatically with the Vatican, but keep civil matters entirely apart from ecclesiastical matters and power. In this country, as regarded Ireland, at least, we had adopted the principle of levelling down in matters of religion; and it would be an unwise departure from that principle to enter into special relations with any foreign ecclesiastical authority. The connection between Church and State had been injurious throughout the world; and he hoped that we should take that lesson to heart, and that there would be no disposition towards a renewal of the diplomatic communications between the Government of this country and Rome. There was great temptation in the circumstances of Ireland to use the social influence of the Pope, in the way which the Prime Minister had explained, for the purpose of quieting and conciliating Ireland; but, in that respect, he thought he might quote the old adage, that "bad cases make bad law," and so a temporary advantage might end in the adoption of a bad line of policy. He hoped and believed Her Majesty's Government would have no difficulty in avoiding entering into communication with Rome of such a nature in any degree as to cause the Pope to expect any return from them. With regard to the Gibraltar matter, they had been told it was not the action of the Government, but simply of a Department; and it seemed to him that they ought to be on their guard against supporting or countenancing, in such cases, the influence of a centralized ecclesiastical authority. There was a great temptation on the part of the Government to support authority; but the great objection to the centralized power of the Pope was that it had too great influence and authority in the affairs of this and other countries. It seemed to him that they ought to encourage the aspirations of those Roman Catholics who were not inclined to submit to the great centralization of the See of Rome and to the too infallible power of the Pope, but who were, on the contrary, rather inclined to assert the rights of the laity; they should respect the rights of a National Catholic Church as they would any other Church. There were several instances in which it had been made plain that the Roman Catholic laity were not inclined to submit to this foreign domination. An analogous case arose in Bombay, and he was glad that the India Office had taken a different view in the matter from that of the Government of Bombay, and refused to interfere. But in this case the Colonial Office had taken the part of the Pope's nominee, and put him in possession. He trusted this debate would lead the Prime Minister to consider the subject. They knew that, if he had not absolute authority over the different Departments, he had a moral authority; and he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would look into the matter, and see whether the India Office was right, or the Colonial Office was right. He hoped the matter would be settled, and that there would be no clashing between the Departments of the Government, and that a uniform policy would be followed. That policy, he hoped, would be in favour of a free Church, and non-interference with a Church not established by law and having no connection with the Government. That would be the only safe policy to pursue.

Mr. COURTNEY said, the Motion of the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) condemned certain irregular communications which were supposed to have passed between the Vatican and Her Majesty's Government; but the discussion had drifted into the question of the appropriate action of the Colonial Government in a matter arising at Gibraltar. He should almost have thought the discussion was not pertinent to that subject. The full extent of the connection of the Vatican with what happened at Gibraltar appeared in the Blue Book, and entirely disproved the assertion that the two questions had any relation, and showed that the visit of Mr. Errington to the Vatican was not in any way connected with Gibraltar. The question was a totally distinct one. As to the policy of the action taken in Gibraltar, he (Mr. Courtney) would confess that he thought, when the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) went into the matter more closely, and read the pages again, he would find that the conduct of Her Majesty's Government in the affair at Gibraltar entirely corresponded with the principles which he had laid down. In Gibraltar they had treated the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church in the same way as they would have done the trustees of a Particular Baptist Chapel. They had simply given notice that the peace should be preserved, and that Dr. Canilla should be freed from molestation on his way to and from the Cathedral. The Government looked upon the Roman Catholic Church as a free Church in a free State. The hon. Member for Portsmouth had said that the Government was prejudging the rights of the laity in the matter; but it was not a fact that the Government was prejudging those rights at all. The rights of the laity, as they had been established in Gibraltar, were far above the action of the Government.

Mr. WARTON: I rise to Order; the hon. Gentleman is not addressing the House, but the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy.

Mr. COURTNEY, in continuation, said, the Government did not, in the slightest degree, attempt to prejudge or interfere with the rights of the laity, who could appeal, first, to the Court at Gibraltar, and then to the Privy Council. The action of the Colonial Office had been simply confined to the preservation of peace and order at Gibraltar, and the rights of the laity to the Church or the temporalities of the Church remained precisely where they were. They could submit their claims, if they chose, to a legal tribunal.

Mr. BELLINGHAM said, that he should like to know if there was any prospect of opening communications with the Vatican; for, at the present moment, there seemed great misconception on the point? The Act passed in 1848 contained a cause providing that no ecclesiastic of the Roman Catholic Church should be received in this country as Representative of the Vatican; but if that provision were repealed, there would be nothing to prevent diplomatic relations being established between this country and the Vatican. It was immaterial to Catholics whether a Liberal or a Conservative Administration brought such a change about, for it was the wish of the Holy See; and, considering the fact that Prince Bismarck, who had been one of the upholders of ultra-Protestant-ism in Germany, had been obliged lately to open communications with the Vatican, he did not see why communications should not be opened by this country with the Papal See.

MR. WARTON said, he was sorry that the discussion on the Resolution of his hon. Friend (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) had involved matters which seemed to him extraneous to the important question that the House had to consider. He did not care to inquire whether they ought to have diplomatic relations with the Vatican, or even to have a good understanding with it. The real object of the discussion was to ascertain what the Government had been doing in that matter; and he should have preferred a more simple Resolution than that of his hon. Friend, one declaring that the House regretted the recent correspondence with the See of Rome through Mr. Errington, or words to that effect. His hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth had alleged a number of facts to show that diplomatic proceedings had taken place. The Prime Minister met those allegations—first, by treating them as if they rested entirely upon pure imagination, characterizing them as the baseless fabric of a vision; and then he went on, step by step, to admit everything that had been charged. Mr. Errington, he allowed, was an agent; he had a letter of recommendation from Lord Granville, and, therefore, he was a recommended agent. Next, it was admitted that Mr. Errington was the special agent of the Government for some purpose. For what purpose? To inform His Holiness the Pope of something? Was it from pure benevolence to the Pope that they wished to tell him something which he did not know? It was to be presumed that, there being so many of the Clergy of his communion in Ireland, the Pope was well informed of what went on in that country. The extraordinary thing was that when they made their communication to the Pope they did not want an answer. It was said there was no answer, and they were, at the same time, told that at this moment no correspondence was going on. That meant, he (Mr. Warton) supposed, that the answer had not yet come; and then the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) got up and expressed his great delight that the Prime Minister, by his lucid statement, had dissipated every apprehension or objection on that subject. The hon. Member had not the wit to see that the Prime Minister had admitted everything. He (Mr. Warton) wanted to know whether the Prime Minister would lay upon the Table of the House the orders to Mr. Errington; next, the information which he gave to the Pope; and also state—as they were told there was nothing now going on—whether it was intended that nothing should go on?

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF, in reply, said, he must adhere to his previous assertions, notwithstanding the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. He (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) maintained that Lord Kimberley had ordered the Governor of Gibraltar to send troops to instal the Vicar Apostolic, and to enable him to have full and free access, without molestation of any kind, to the Cathedral and Presbytery. The right hon. Gentleman had now acknowledged that Mr. Errington was an *agente racommendato;* and what he (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) maintained was, that if Mr. Errington was a recommended agent, there should have been some record placed in the Foreign Office to show in what capacity he had been recommended. The right hon. Gentlemen had gone on to say that private letters were constantly addressed to our recommended agents or other diplomatists abroad; but he (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) would contend that private letters ought only to be supplementary to a public despatch. He contended that the letter in question positively accredited Mr. Errington to Rome, and established him there as an agent. [MR. GLADSTONE: No.] It was no use discussing words in that way, and he would contend that the letter established Mr. Errington as an agent; that he was recommended by Her Majesty's Government; that that was a secret system of diplomacy; and that the Government were ashamed even to put on record in the Foreign Office what they had done. He had to complain that Lord Granville, speaking in "another place," had misquoted what he (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) had said in reference to Mr. Errington's expenses, and had given only a limited denial to it. He had never said that Mr. Errington's expenses had been paid out of the Secret Service Fund; but the right hon. Gentleman would not deny that they would be paid. Unless it was declared that Mr. Errington was never at any time to receive money from the Secret Service Fund for expenses, he would adhere to the statement that his expenses were a charge on that Fund. It was no use, he would admit, going on with the argument, as he was perfectly satisfied with the result of the debate. The right hon. Gentleman had endeavoured to involve the subject in mystery, but he had not succeeded. He had really admitted every statement he (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) had made, and was ashamed to put any of the communications which had passed on the Table. He begged to withdraw the Motion.

MR. GLADSTONE: No, no.

Question put, and *negatived.*

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (POOR LAW) (NO. 1) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HIBBERT, Bill to confirm certain Orders of the Local Government Board under the provisions of "The Divided Parishes and Poor Law Amendment Act, 1876," as amended and extended by "The Poor Law Act, 1879," relating to the parishes of Barmbrough, Burghwallis, Coleshill, Conisbrough, Forrest Hill, Hickleton, Inglesham, Kirk Bramwith, Kirk Sandall and Trumfleet, Shotover, and Shotover Hill Place, and to the townships of Adwick-le-Street, Askern, Barnby-upon-Don or Barnby Dunn, Campsall, Dalton, Ecclesfield, Helmington Row, Langthwaite-with-Tilts, Mexbrough, Moss, Owston, Thorpe-in-Balne, and Willington, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HIBBERT and Mr. DODSON.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (HIGHWAYS) PROVISIONAL ORDER (NO. 1) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HIBBERT, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board under "The Highways and Locomotives (Amendment) Act, 1878," relating to the county of Kent, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HIBBERT and Mr. DODSON.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 1) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HIBBERT, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the City and County of Bristol, the Local Government District of Bromley, the Port of Cardiff, the Rural Sanitary District of the Glendale Union, the Borough of Hastings, the Local Government District of Merthyr Tydfil, the Boroughs of Newport (Monmouthshire) and Portsmouth, the Local Government District of Sandal Magna, and the Rural Sanitary District of the Ware Union, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HIBBERT and Mr. DODSON.

IMPERIAL TAXATION.

OBSERVATIONS.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA, in rising to call the attention of the House to the unequal Incidence of Imperial Taxation in Ireland; and to move for the appointment of a Select Committee—

> "To inquire and report whether, since the year 1851, the new and additional Duties which have been levied off Ireland have not increased the pressure of Imperial Taxation on the population of that portion of the United Kingdom to such an extent, that, having regard to the total property and income of the inhabitants of each Island respectively, the Imperial Taxation of Ireland is now doubly heavier than that of Great Britain; whether the entire Imperial Taxation of Great Britain does not barely exceed the produce of an Income Tax of 2*s.* 6*d.* in the pound; and, whether that of Ireland does not exceed what would be produced by an Income Tax of 5*s.*,"

said, the case to which he asked their attention was quite distinct from that upon which a Committee of the House sat and reported in 1865. There was not any finding of that Committee which anticipated, answered, or decided in any way upon the issue raised by his present Motion, which was one for the appointment of a Committee to inquire into a state of facts without parallel in modern history, into a course of legislation for the last 29 years which had led to results without precedent in this or any other country in the world. Calling things by hard and bad names was not his habit, for that was neither proof nor argument; but it was almost impossible to find words in which to describe the financial policy pursued towards Ireland since 1853, unless one had recourse to very strong terms. His chief difficulty, however, was not to be moderate in referring to the injustice which had been done, but in finding words to describe the ignorance of hon. Members in former Parliaments and in this on the subject. Even this lack of information was scarcely so remarkable as the self-complacency with which those hon. Members seemed to contemplate the conduct of Great Britain and this Parliament towards Ireland in modern times, for it was not infrequent to hear the fiscal legislation for the United Kingdom referred to as if Ireland were in that respect a favoured and cherished sister. There never was a greater delusion. He (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) ought to know whether that was the true relation in which Ireland was dealt with or the true state of the case. He had no interest in misrepresenting England or Englishmen, and he said deliberately that he knew of no country in Europe, and that there was none except Ireland, in which so large a proportion of the total income of its people was levied by the State tax-man. He did not ascribe the evils of which he complained to intentional injustice. He could not believe that the injustice was designed, no matter how it had come about. He believed the right hon. Gentleman now at the head of Her Majesty's Government, when he instituted and led the way in 1853 to the system of taxation which had impoverished Ireland, deceived himself by assuming that identity of imposts was equivalent to, and almost synonomous with, equality of taxation. But this assumption was in the case of Great Britain and Ireland, and would probably be in the case of any two countries so linked together, a monstrous delusion. If there were but one tax on the inhabitants of both countries, and if that tax were an Income Tax, then he admitted that identity of impost would imply equitable distribution of burden. But when, as in the United Kingdom, a comparatively small portion of the Revenue was raised by an Income Tax, and the great bulk raised by sumptuary taxation levied on selected articles, equality could be ascertained only when they had analyzed and affirmed the fairness of the selection. And what was the test of the fairness of selection? It would be found when they had answered the following question:—Were the articles selected for taxation such as, under ordinary circumstances, were equally in demand, equally used, equally consumed in both countries? If they were not equally in demand and equally used in both countries, then identity of imposts might mean the very opposite to equality of taxation; and in the case of England and Ireland the selection made was the very reverse of equality. It was simply legalized injustice. But England and the English Minister had the selection, and they knew what had come of it. It would have been quite easy to have selected articles for taxation on an equally identical plan for the whole United Kingdom, which would have spared Ireland and worked unfairly against England. A moderate tax on cheese would fall heavily on the bulk of the English people, and scarcely affect the Irish in the least; a high scale of taxation on the alcohol of beer, and a lower one on the alcohol in distilled spirits, would be unfair towards the English people, and might be oppressively so. He mentioned these things to illustrate and explode the fallacy of assuming, as it was the habit to assume, that, as all the taxes affecting the Irish people also affected the English, there must be equality of taxation. He would show that these taxes were unequal and unfair in their incidence, that they favoured the richer country, and fell with extraordinary severity on the poorer and more temperate nation. He must now advert shortly to the relative taxation of Great Britain and Ireland anterior to the epoch of 1853. Could any hon. Member, who, from personal memory—as in his own case—or from authentic history, knew what was the condition of Ireland in 1841, or what it was in 1851, testify that Ireland was better able to pay the taxes then imposed upon her than Great Britain was to bear those which fell on herself? He did not apprehend that anyone would maintain seriously that Ireland was not in 1841, before the Famine, and in 1851, after the Famine, taxed as nearly to the full level of her ability to pay taxes as was Great Britain at either of those dates. But, lest there might be anyone ready to assert that Ireland was at either of those dates more lightly taxed relatively to her means than Great Britain, he would now inquire what was the total Revenue raised by the Imperial taxation of Ireland in 1841 and 1851? He referred to the Parliamentary Returns in his hands. In 1841 the Imperial Revenue raised by taxation in Ireland was slightly under £4,000,000. In 1851 it was slightly over £4,000,000. The Revenue raised by taxation of Great Britain in 1841 was over £46,000,000, and in 1851 it was over £49,000,000. At those dates, then, the Imperial taxation of Ireland amounted to a sum equal in round figures to one-twelfth of the sum raised in Great Britain. He would prove to any Committee of the House in more detail than was possible in his present statement that, relatively to the entire wealth of both Islands respectively, the contributions of Ireland to Imperial Revenue in 1841 and 1851 not only equalled but exceeded her equitable quota. Of that excess, however, he did not complain; it was not a proper subject for clamour or popular agitation, even if people understood it, which they did not. He merely referred now to the fact that even then the Irish quota was somewhat excessive in order to emphasize the statement and the fact that, nevertheless, in 1853 a new system was commenced for reducing the quota of taxation borne by England, and for securing the maximum contribution out of Ireland in relief of several Excise and Customs Duties of the United Kingdom, of which latter Ireland's share was scarcely equal to 5 per cent of the new burdens laid upon her. The financial result of the policy of 1853, which he would describe and explain before he sat down, was not long obscure nor long delayed. They would find by the Return in his hand that the Revenue raised by taxation in Ireland in 1861 was £6,420,378, as compared to £4,006,711 in 1851, forcing up on seven years' operation of the new policy the quota of the taxation of Ireland from a twelfth to a ninth, as compared to Great Britain. By the end of the next decennial period the taxation of Ireland was forced up to £7,086,593, or to within a fraction of one-eighth of the sum raised by taxation of Great Britain. This was the modern way of sowing dragon's teeth, with somewhat a parallel result to that of the ancient precedent. All this time illusory statements were being made under the auspices of Dublin Castle, not with the intention to deceive, but none the less deceptive on that account, and Ireland was represented as making great strides in material prosperity because her Revenue, or rather her tribute to the Imperial Revenue, was swollen by new taxes, and under favour of occasional good harvests, she struggled, and, as it turned out, struggled in vain, to make headway against the wasting process and the new impediments to her progress. There was, however, great joy in Downing Street as each fresh additional million was dredged out of Ireland, and poured into the abyss of the British Exchequer, in place of being allowed to remain with the people to reward Irish industry, and to help to fortify and provide the people against the lean years, bad harvests, and hard times which had since come with a vengeance. The vengeance, however, was not wholly for Ireland, for the problem of her pacification remained to be solved, and it would be well if all these millions rendered back could suffice for the solution in peace. He would now explain precisely how the new taxes came to be cast on Ireland in 1853, and how radically unjust they were. The explanation of what was done in that Session of Parliament practically explained the whole, for the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer then announced that he was going in for a system of identity of imposts, and it never appeared to dawn on his ingenuous mind that identity of imposts did not mean actual and equitable equality of taxation; and although other Chancellors of the Exchequer, other Governments, and other Parliaments had since then, from time to time, increased the Spirit Duties and varied the Income Tax, they merely proceeded in grooves defined and deeply cut for them by the legislation of 1853, which laid down the lines of a financial system which, save that it succeeded in extracting a greater Revenue from Ireland than ought ever to have been exacted, was at once unscientific, unjust, and unfortunate. He would next refer to the best records obtainable in an exact and statistical form of the total incomes of the inhabitants of the two Islands respectively, to the extent which the Income Tax Returns reached. He would not commence with the earliest years of the working of the Income Tax in Ireland, for all the sources of income were not at first made out; but he took the Returns for 1861, when the Income Tax had been seven years working. In that year the yield from Income Tax in Ireland was £715,269. In the same year the Income Tax for Great Britain was £9,755,938, which showed approximately taxable incomes 13 times greater in Great Britain than in Ireland. It should be borne in mind that these were the proportions they would find without descending to compare the earnings and incomes of the wage-earning classes in both Islands, in which he could show, were it necessary, that a still greater disparity existed; but he was not driven to force the figures by substituting estimates and hypothesis for statistics. On the contrary, he would make allowance for the fact that the rating of houses and lands in Ireland was made under the Poor Law, or Griffith's valuation, and, the rating in England was presumed to be taken at a fuller value, and, making other trivial allowances, he would adopt the conclusion that the rateable incomes of Great Britain under all the Schedules would indicate the relative ability of one Island to the other at that time as about 1 to 12. There was no rational theory to sustain an assumption that Ireland relatively to Great Britain was better able to bear taxes in 1853 than what the Returns of 1861 would denote; but, if such was the fact, so much the worse for those who argued in favour of the taxation scheme of 1853. It sufficed for him (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) to show that the taxation of Ireland in 1841 and 1851, being already as 1 to 12 of Great Britain, no fresh taxation should have been laid in 1853 on the poorer country, and he had explained that if Parliament were to have measured the taxation to be levied in Ireland by the Schedules prepared for the purposes of the Income Tax, the total contribution of Ireland to Revenue would have been laid down at a thirteenth of that of Great Britain. What excuse, therefore—what plausible pretext—what cogent reason was there for imposing upon unfortunate Ireland in the year 1853 a fresh burden destined to grow weightier and weightier year by year? He might answer that in truth there was, to his thinking, neither cogent reason, rational excuse, nor plausible pretext for doing what was then done; but that which stood in place of reason, excuse, and pretext was this sophism that indentity of imposts was equivalent to equality of taxation, and this corollary that indentity of imposts was to be established as speedily as possible. He gave the right hon. Gentleman now at the head of Her Majesty's Government credit for believing he was doing no injustice; but he was at best legislating in the dark, for there was then no Income Tax Schedule for Ireland to demonstrate the injustice of the scheme. What that scheme was, and how it was followed up, it was his (Sir Joseph M'Kenna's) duty to review by the clear and unsparing light of events. When the present Premier, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the 18th April, 1853—that day 29 years—introduced his Budget to Parliament, he had, from several points of view, a gratifying statement to make; but the case had, nevertheless, a shady side, and there was a spectre which it was his business to lay or banish somehow from the feast he was about to spread before an admiring Parliament and an appreciative British public. The spectre, which would have scared anyone else, rose before him in this way. There had been a grim Famine in Ireland in 1846-7. It was no portion of his (Sir Joseph M'Kenna's) present duty to review that terrible chapter of Irish history, some of the details of which would never vanish from his memory. But, as one of the results of that Famine, there were certain debts due by the famine-stricken districts to the Treasury, the greater portion of which a Committee of the House of Lords had already recommended to be treated on distinctly equitable grounds as Imperial Expenditure, and discharged from being a debt of the districts. They were called, in official language, "Consolidated Annuities," and the charge to extinguish them amounted to £260,000 a-year. As was natural under these circumstances, those who were made liable to repay were very fretful, and appealed to the good feeling and justice of Parliament to have them treated in accordance with the recommendation of the Lords' Committee. How this appeal was responded to hon. Members should hear, and how the Chancellor of the Exchequer improved the occasion by an apparent remission of the Famine Debt, whilst he added burdens to Ireland of fresh taxation to an immensely greater extent, laying the foundation or opening up the way for still further levies in the future, until it had come to pass that the drain from Ireland, poverty-stricken as she was, was ratably more than double the amount drawn from the more prosperous inhabitants of Great Britain. What he (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) described was carried out in this way. The Chancellor of the Exchequer made his statement with that matchless power of exposition which not only persuaded the majority of his audience that whatever he said was right, but actually appeared to have the same effect on his own mind. The Income of the year just closed was £53,000,000, the Expenditure something over £50,000,000, the Surplus £2,460,000. What would he do with it? Well, that was a simple question, and the right hon. Gentleman preferred to deal with complex problems; so he set his audience to think upon this one. He proposed to lower his nets again into the waters and make a fresh haul, then to compute what that would amount to before he unfolded what distribution he would make of the loaves and fishes he had already available, and of the further draughts he expected to bring to land. He then made his computations, which had been since all realized, as well as some things consequential which did not appear to have occurred to the mind of the right hon. Gentleman at the time. Well, this was what he said he would do, and did—abolish the Duty on Soap, reduce the Duty on Tea, the Stamp Duty, the Advertisement Duty, and the Duties on about 130 articles in the Customs Tariff. The Consolidated Annuities he would remit *in toto.*

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Sir JOSEPH M'KENNA, resuming, said, all these, except the last-mentioned, were *bonâ fide* remissions and reductions; but the remission of the Consolidated Annuities was quite of another character. This was the policy towards Ireland which the Government pursued. It was a portion of the Budget Scheme to continue the Income Tax for Great Britain. They now determined to extend it for the first time to Ireland; as also to increase the Irish Spirit Duties 8*d.* a-gallon. The amount of these increases far exceeded—even at that time nearly trebled—the amount of the remission, although that was not quite apparent at the time. At this point, he (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) would shortly observe that he had no objection to an Income Tax for Ireland, nor to a high Spirit Duty. As taxes had to be raised, there were no fairer subjects for impost than income and alcohol; but he maintained that it was monstrously unjust to spare or only lightly tax alcohol in the form which suited English habits, taste, diet, and climate, and to tax more than five-fold alcohol in the form which suited Irish people. But that was what had been done; and he (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) prayed attention to these facts. Before 1853 the tax on the alcoholic equivalent of a gallon of proof spirits, in the form of beer or other brewers' drinks, levied in the Malt Duty and in the Hop Duty, considerably exceeded the Duty on Irish Spirits. The Malt Duty was at the time 2*s.* 8½*d.* a-bushel—it was now 6*d.*—and the Duty on Irish Spirits payable in Ireland was 2*s.* 8*d.* in respect to every proof gallon. Beer was then, as it was now, the popular beverage of England; whilst whiskey, diluted in water hot or cold, was the popular one of Ireland. There was not then and there was not now any valid reason why alcohol should be more taxed in one vehicle than in the other; but no serious injustice then arose from the disparity, because, as he (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) had shown, the incidence of the taxation as a total was in the result fairly distributed between the two Islands previous to 1853. But the Budget of 1853 inaugurated a new departure, since which the constant effort of successive Chancellors of the Exchequer appeared to have been to raise the Duty on Spirits in Ireland and to reduce the Duty on Malt, until the fiscal policy toward Ireland had culminated in this incredible injustice—that the tax on alcohol in the popular English beverage was less than one-fifth of the tax on an equal volume of alcohol in the Irish. It must not be lost sight of that this disparity was an innovation—that it dated no further back than 1853, so far as the disparity was complained of, although there were slight variations in the Duty before that date; and, above all things, the innovation had nothing to do with the discouragement of intemperance. When official excuses were made in this House for the inequality of taxation, and the disproportionate sum latterly levied off Ireland, the line of reply generally adopted was of this sort. It was admitted that some inequality did exist, but that such complaints were not confined to Ireland—that the incidence of taxation probably varied as considerably in some parts of England as compared to others as it did between Ireland as a whole and Great Britain as a whole. And the Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1875 proceeded somewhat in that strain. Of course he should say something, and his line was the nearest resemblance to a defence which he could think of. But, with all respect to him, it was no defence whatever—it was the merest evasion. What was complained of was not any defect incidental to all schemes of taxation, except to Income Tax *per se;* what was complained of was the monstrous inequality brought about in their own time by an innovation made in 1853, which, under the pretence of making some sort of concession by forgiving a comparatively small debt, cast new burdens on the Irish people, already taxed to the full level of Great Britain. This question of the disparity of the incidence of Imperial taxation on Ireland was last brought under the notice of this House by the hon. Member for County Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry) in the last Parliament. On that occasion the House heard a characteristic critique from a right hon. Member once himself Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Lowe), and now a noble Lord. His line of argument was peculiar and characteristic; he regarded Ireland and Great Britain as geographical expressions merely, and they were not taxed at all; and then he went on to say it was true that individuals happening to reside in these countries were taxed, but they were taxed quite equally, and on the same identical tariff, and there was an end of it—that settled it—argument was exhausted—all was fair. Such absurdities as were here involved scarcely deserved notice, save to exemplify the shifts to which people were driven who had to struggle to defend the innovation of 1853. According to that argument France and Tunis were merely geographical expressions; and if Tunis were incorporated with France, and if there was a heavy tax laid on the date crop and a light one on grapes, it would be quite fair as between the French and the Tunisians, provided the heavy tax on dates applied to dates grown by Frenchmen in Tunis or in France, and the light tax on grapes applied to grapes grown by Tunisians in either country. He (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) had really thought that Æsop's fable of the Fox and the Stork had long since put boyhood as well as manhood on its guard against such shallow sophistry. The legislation of 1853 on this subject did not take place without some earnest protest from an Irish Member. Mr. John Francis Maguire, then Member for Dungarvan, and afterwards Member for Cork City, was reported to have said—

> "The right hon. Gentleman in the course of his speech—which for a Chancellor of the Exchequer to make was, he thought, one of the jauntiest he had ever heard—said that the justice of the tax was generally felt and acknowledged in Ireland. Now, if that were the case, such a feeling ought to have manifested itself where the Consolidated Annuities were particularly oppressive, and where the Income Tax would be scarcely felt; but what was the fact? Why, it was from those portions of Ireland in particular where the Consolidated Annuities pressed heaviest, and the Income Tax would be felt the lightest, that petitions and remonstrances against the proposal were poured into that House. All the counties in the South and West of Ireland had pronounced against the impost. The attempt to gull the people of Ireland into an approval of the tax by saying that the present proposition was a good bargain, because they would have to pay £460,000 instead of £260,000, to which they were at present liable, was worse than a financial juggle—it was, if he might say so in Parliamentary language, an Exchequer swindle. The trick was so stale, the juggle so plain, and the real object so unconcealed, he could only express his wonder at any man representing an Irish constituency being gulled by it." — [3 *Hansard,* cxxvii. 530-1.]

So spoke John Francis Maguire in that House one day in May, 1853. He thought he had mastered the subject and understood the scope and nature of the transaction, but he had not penetrated far into the future; for, in place of this being the laying on of an impost of £460,000 a-year in lieu of £260,000 remitted, the transaction was *ab initio* an immensely worse one for Ireland than Mr. Maguire believed it to be when he denounced it—for its author then announced a principle which had been unsparingly applied ever since, under which there had been raised by taxation of Ireland for the last 20 years—not to go farther back—about £3,000,000 a-year more than her previous normal contribution, being at least £3,000,000 a-year more than her quota, if the entire Revenue of the United Kingdom were raised by an identical Income Tax for England, Ireland, and Scotland. There was no test nor analysis of the wealth of Great Britain and Ireland that would not disclose the extraordinarily unfair disparity which existed between the taxation of the people of the two Islands. The latest Return of the comparative population and taxation of Great Britain and Ireland at the decennial epochs was that issued in August, 1874, which dealt with the financial years 1841, 1851, 1861-2, and 1871-2. It was too soon to expect the Return for 1881-2; but there had been no change to affect the case based on the four completed decennial Returns. The respective totals of the incomes of £100 and upwards for Great Britain and Ireland were, in the year 1871-2—for Great Britain, £455,750,000; for Ireland, £26,500,000. The total Revenue raised by taxation was, from Great Britain, £57,534,683, which was the merest fraction in excess of 2*s.* 6*d.* in the pound on the total incomes; and the Revenue raised from Ireland in the same year was £7,086,593, which equalled 5*s.* 3*d.* in the pound, on the total of Irish incomes under all Schedules. What wonder was it that, under these circumstances, an agricultural people would be unable to pay fair rents, not to speak of rack rents? One independent English Member at least expressed in April, 1853, his objection to heaping new taxes on Ireland before she had recovered from the effects of a desolating Famine which had reduced her population from 8,000,000 to 5,500,000 between 1841 and 1851. Sir Francis Baring, on 28th April, 1853, showed that—

> "The relief given to Great Britain by the immediate operation of the Budget of that year would be £1,443,000, and the taxes imposed—new and peculiar to Great Britain—£403,000, making the amount less to be paid by England £1,040,000. He submitted for the fair consideration of his fellow-countrymen, whether it was quite fair, when they would be immediately receiving a relief of £1,040,000, to place a new Income Tax on Ireland, and a whole amount of additional taxation of £413,000."—[3 *Hansard*, cxxvi. 732.]

He had said that the increase of the Duty on Irish Spirits had no connection with a temperance policy, for it singled out the soberest population to mulct them most heavily. The Irish people were in 1853, and were now, the most moderate of the three nations in their consumption of alcohol. The alcohol consumed in beer, spirits, and wine for each unit of the population of England for the year ended 31st of March, 1877, was slightly in excess of four gallons and three quarts.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at a quarter after Eight o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 19th April, 1882.

MINUTES.]—New Writ Issued—*For* Somerset County (Western Division), *v.* Vaughan Hanning Vaughan Lee, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds.

Supply — *considered in Committee* — *Resolution* [April 17] *reported.*

Public Bills—*Ordered—First Reading*—Inclosure (Cefn Drawen) Provisional Order* [126]; Inclosure Bettws Disserth) Provisional Order* [127]; Inclosure (Ashleside) Provisional Order* [128]; Irish Reproductive Loan Fund Act (1874) Amendment* [133]; Parish Registers* [132]; Military Manœuvres* [134].

First Reading—Local Government Provisional Order (Highways)* [129]; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law)* [130]; Local Government Provisional Orders* [131].

Second Reading—Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) [7]; Parliamentary Elections Expenses [34].

Select Committee — Electric Lighting* [122], *nominated.*

Considered as amended—Army (Annual)* [105]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

POOR LAW GUARDIANS (IRELAND) BILL.—[Bill 7.]

(*Mr. Leahy, Mr. Gray, Mr. O'Sullivan.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. LEAHY, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, the Bill would introduce two useful changes in the system of electing Poor Law Guardians in Ireland. In the first place, it proposed that the elections of Poor Law Guardians should be every three years, instead of annually, as at present. This was most desirable, as it was very inconvenient to have an annual election, from the excitement that took place. Besides, the expense of electing these officers would be greatly diminished by allowing them to hold office for three years. In the second place, the Bill proposed to substitute the ballot for the existing method of election by voting papers. He contended that it was, on all hands, acknowledged that the ballot was the better way of taking the sense of the electors, and he could not see why the system should not be applied to elections of Guardians as it was in every Parliamentary and Municipal contest. There were very many serious evils connected with the present system of sending out voting papers to be delivered and collected by the police at the houses of the electors. Without making any insinuations against the police, it was undoubted that in many cases these voting papers were tampered with. If the ballot system was adopted, it would do away with all this irregularity. He did not see that there was anything proposed by this Bill to which anybody could make any serious objection; and he was therefore at a loss to know what the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis), who had put down a Notice in opposition to it, could advance to justify the action he had taken. It was not necessary to make any lengthened observations in support of so simple a measure, and he would therefore merely move its second reading.

Mr. GRAY, in seconding the Motion for the second reading, said, that four years ago he had the honour of introducing this Bill. On that occasion, in 1878, there was a tolerably exhaustive discussion on the subject. The Bill was not then read a second time; but it was not met by a direct negative, as was now proposed. By a Motion tantamount to the Previous Question, the House decided that as a Select Committee had been appointed on the Motion of the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Hibbert), now Secretary to the English Local Government Board, it would be undesirable to read the Bill a second time. The subject was fully investigated by that Committee, and he had had the honour of being one of its Members. It might be urged that the Committee reported against the introduction of the system of voting by ballot for Poor Law Guardians generally; but any Member who took the trouble to read the entire of the Report, and to examine the evidence given before the Committee, must see that the conclusion arrived at was somewhat inconsequential. The objections to the present system were set forth in full detail in that Report; yet, after stating the various irregularities, the intimidations, the tamperings with voting papers, the delays and confusions which frequently arise under the present system, it said—"We therefore recommend that the system of voting by ballot should not be adopted." The hon. Member for Oldham, who was Chairman of that Committee, would not, he thought, feel any objection to his saying that the Report in its present condition was a somewhat limp document. It acknowledged the weakness of the present system, it rejected the proposition to adopt voting by ballot, but suggested nothing instead. The fact was, the Report, which at first read admirably, was so cut up before adoption that its conclusions were an absurdity. In 1878 he showed, in instancing various abuses, that tenants, especially in the rural districts, were subjected to the grossest intimidation by bailiffs and agents, compelling them to vote for the landlord's candidates. It might be alleged now that things had greatly changed since then, and that the same amount of intimidation was not likely to be practised in future. It might even be shown that intimidation was not confined to the landlords, that it was practised by representatives of popular interests, and by clergymen of various denominations. But he was equally opposed to all intimidation, desiring that every man should be able to vote according to his conscience. It was also shown to the Committee that those who desired to tamper with voting papers followed the policeman from house to house, asking the voters—many of whom were ignorant persons—to allow them to fill up the voting papers, and invalidating them very often by either filling them wrongly or deliberately making some slight error. The manner in which ballot papers were marked was now widely known in Ireland, and many people had an idea that these voting papers should be marked in the same way. He knew a Queen's Counsel in Dublin, who assumed that he ought to mark the voting paper he received for the election of Poor Law Guardians in a manner similar to the way he marked the ballot paper for a Member of Parliament. But this was sufficient to invalidate a voting paper; and anyone who desired to invalidate it, had only to suggest to the elector that he should put a cross opposite to the name of the person he desired to see elected. So rigid were the rules, that if a voter, instead of waiting for the policeman to call, brought the voting-paper to the Returning Officer, the vote was invalidated. If he put it into the post it was invalidated. A most mischievous arrangement under the present system was that the ratebook, as it stood, was taken as the register of the votes in an electoral division. The consequence was that great uncertainty was introduced into the elections, and it was only after the worry and expense of a contest that a candidate could obtain a scrutiny, which generally lasted for days, and might have the effect of reversing the result of the election. He had never heard a suggestion even in favour of retaining this system. He knew some difference of opinion existed with regard to the first proposition in this Bill—namely, triennial elections. He himself supported it, because the only apparently good objection he had ever heard against the substitution of balloting for the present system being that it would involve a large amount of additional expense, extending the period of election from one to three years, would counteract any additional expense that might arise. A proper registry would tend, in his opinion, to reduce expense, because candidates would be able to calculate their chances, and contests would be fewer in number. The second proposition was substantially that the system of voting should be assimilated to that adopted in Municipal and Parliamentary elections. The *onus probandi* of showing that the ballot would not be applicable to Boards of Guardians lay upon the opponents of the Bill. To accomplish proper secrecy in voting, he proposed that property holders having multiple votes should receive a separate voting paper for each vote; thus a man having six votes would receive six papers. He left the framing of rules for carrying out this system to the Local Government Board. An important aim of the Bill was to secure that every man who wanted to vote should record his vote in person. The present system of proxy voting was an outrageous abuse. A property holder having 18 votes, against the poor man's one, could hand 12 of them over to a nominee, who, as wire-puller in the district, could use them for purely party purposes. A property voter should exercise his own discretion as to the candidate for whom his votes should be recorded. He had heard that a well-known electioneerer in Dublin held nearly 1,000 proxy votes, and that one agent thereby returned most of the Conservative Guardians to the South Dublin Board. The Secretary of the Local Government Board, Mr. Banks, showed the Committee that an enormous number of complaints reached his Board each year of intimidation and undue influence; but, notwithstanding that, the Board did not make any inquiry as to how those votes were obtained. Passing by altogether the allegations of corruption, or intimidation, or other forms of undue influence which, if proved before an Election Petition Judge, would result in the disfranchisement of the constituency, and taking cognizance merely of the inquiry whether the candidate declared elected had received a majority of valid votes, this entire Board was occupied in this investigation six weeks each year. This statement alone was sufficient to prove the desirability of introducing vote by ballot. But that prolonged investigation did not represent all the complaints, because it was only after a local scrutiny had proved unsatisfactory that the matter went before the Local Government Board. In Dublin, for instance, where the Returning Officers were lawyers of experience, that scrutiny occupied a fortnight. Mr. Banks also deposed to the widespread tampering with votes, and to undue influence upon voters, being careful to point out that this was not restricted to Roman Catholic clergymen, but extended to Protestant and Presbyterian, in fact, to clergymen of all denominations throughout Ireland, as well as to bailiffs, rent warners, agents, mobs—he himself (Mr. Gray) had heard of a mob following a policeman from house to house insisting upon the voting papers being delivered up to them to be filled as they wished or to be destroyed. These complaints, Mr. Banks said, were of everyday occurrence. He urged some objections against the substitution of the ballot system; but they were very slight, and, subject to their removal, he favoured the proposed change. One was the expense, which he estimated would be double; but this was met by the triennial election. Mr. Banks further said that it would be a great hardship upon a poor man to have to walk to the polling booth. It would be a greater hardship upon him to be unable to exercise the franchise at the election of a Guardian. The greatest distance which would have to be walked would be three miles and a-half, and no person who knew Ireland would say that that was a very formidable difficulty. Mr. Banks further said that females who would be entitled to vote would be afraid to come to the polling stations. But everyone knew that the system of election by ballot in Ireland was monotonous in the extreme, and that the most timid female need have no apprehension of walking into the polling booth and recording her vote. He further said that it would be hard upon a working man to be taken from his labour to exercise the franchise. No doubt it would; but inasmuch as an extension of the hours of polling was introduced in England to provide against that difficulty, he saw no reason why a similar plan should not be applied to Ireland. He had very warm hopes that the Bill would receive the support of the Government, and be read a second time at an early hour to-day. He had in contemplation at one time the introduction into the Ballot Act Continuance Bill of a clause extending this principle to the election of Guardians; and if the Bill should, unfortunately, be rejected today he should make an endeavour in that direction. The system which the Bill proposed to introduce had worked so well in connection with the election of Members of Parliament and of Municipalities in Ireland, and the abuses of the existing system were so patent and undisputed, that he hoped they would not be forced to wait much longer for this much-needed reform in Ireland. This question had been so long before the House—for four years it had been brought forward by himself, and previously by the late Sir Colman O'Loghlen—that he really thought it was time to settle it on the basis of the Bill which he now supported. The introduction of the system could do no mischief, while it would do away with a great deal of inconvenience and a great deal of feeling of injustice which existed in connection with the election of Poor Law Guardians. There might have been some kind of reason for the proxy vote, and for the present system of election when it was first introduced. The functions of Boards of Guardians were then solely confined to the administration of the rates for the relief of the poor, and it might have been felt necessary to give the property class a preponderating power by the *ex-officio* representation, as well as by the enormous power of the proxy system. But since that time the functions of Boards of Guardians in Ireland had been greatly enlarged, and it was scarcely going to far to say that at present the relief of the poor was not the most important duty they had to exercise. The entire powers of the Public Health Act of 1878, which were of very great importance, were now vested in the Guardians of the rural districts as the rural sanitary authority. They had the power, for instance, of entering any man's dwelling, of shutting it up if they thought it necessary, or ordering improvements at the expense of individuals; they had the power of burning clothes, of compelling persons to leave their homes and go to hospital; in fact, they had the most despotic powers, not merely over the purses, but over the persons of those within their jurisdiction. It was of the utmost importance that these powers should be fenced round with safeguards, which would inspire a feeling of confidence in the constituencies. The tendency of the time was to increase the powers of Poor Law Guardians, and therefore the necessity became greater for so managing their election as to enable them to command the confidence of their constituents. He asserted, without fear of contradiction, that under the existing system they did not command the confidence of their constituents, and that it was impossible they could do so so long as the present causes of complaint existed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Leahy.*)

Mr. TOTTENHAM, in moving, as an Amendment, that the Bill be read a second time on that day six months, said, as he understood the measure, its object was to insure the holding of office by the representatives of the Land League for the period of three years instead of one, and, in districts where that wicked and inhuman organization had no power, to throw the nomination of the Poor Law Guardians into the hands of the Roman Catholic Clergy. The hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray) said he considered voting by the cumulative vote an abuse.

Mr. GRAY said, he referred to the proxy vote. The Bill did not deal with the property vote.

Mr. TOTTENHAM said, that being so, he had nothing further to say upon the point. The hon. Member for Carlow also stated that intimidation had been constantly used by bailiffs and agents of landlords, and in some cases by the Roman Catholic Clergy. He said that intimidation on the part of the representatives of the landlords was not likely to be repeated; but he did not say that it was not likely to be repeated on the part of the other intimidators, the Roman Catholic Clergy, whose influence had been used in the most illegitimate manner at Parliamentary and Municipal elections. Looking to the part taken by those gentlemen in the support and in active advocacy of the principles of the Land League, he trusted that the House would hesitate before placing this new weapon in their hands. He moved that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months"—(*Mr. Tottenham.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, that he rose thus early in the debate for the purpose of stating that it was his intention to support the second reading of this Bill. As he understood the Bill, it was a measure intended to correct abuses, and to require all whom the law invested with the right of voting for the Board of Guardians to exercise their right on their individual responsibity. In his opinion, the less the people were led in such matters the better it would be for the general community, and the more they were called upon to act for themselves the better security we should have for good order. It would be better that the voter should walk to the polling booth and record his vote, under any conditions of secrecy that might be imposed, rather than that voting papers should be left by a policeman one day and called for the next. What they had to determine, in the first place, was whether this Bill was necessary, and that depended on whether any abuses existed under the present system which required to be remedied. In reference to this point, he might observe that the Committee which was appointed in 1878 to inquire into the subject, and which was of a cosmopolitan character, comprising hon. Members from both sides of the House who were practically acquainted with the municipal affairs of Ireland, and who were men of great knowledge and of business habits, had reported—

> "That the abuse and inconvenience of the voting paper system as at present carried out were very great; that intimidation, tampering, and forgery of papers were practised, and frequently voters did not receive their papers at all, and in other cases they were invalidated from 'trifling technical errors.'"

He asked the House whether a system which admitted of these irregularities deserved to be supported? He would not occupy the time of the House by referring, as the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray) had so moderately and clearly done, to the evidence given by that distinguished official, Mr. Banks, who probably knew more about the working of the Poor Law system than any man in Ireland. One of the principal objections taken by Mr. Banks to the introduction of the ballot was that secrecy could hardly be secured to illiterate persons; but it appeared that Mr. Banks had then altogether overlooked the provisions of the Ballot Act for securing secrecy. When the Committee to which he referred held its sittings the Ballot Act was on its trial, and the system was hardly understood in the different aspects in which it was intended to be applied in the country. But they had now had a long experience of the Ballot Act, and he asked was there any Member of the House prepared to go back to the system of open voting in existence before? ["No, no!"] Then, why should not the system be extended to all cases in which they wished to secure the independence of the voter? He cared not by whom intimidation was practised; it ought to be put a stop to. If it were desirable that the independence of the voter should be secured in the case of a Parliamentary election, it was still more desirable that that independence should be maintained in the case of an election of the Board of Guardians, whose power was exercised at the doors of the voters, who had the control of their roads, and of almost all public matters in their immediate neighbourhood. It was most important, therefore, that the voters should exercise their right of voting free from intimidation and from undue influence, and with a due sense of their responsibility. The hon. Member for Leitrim (Mr. Tottenham) objected to the triennial period, and was afraid Guardians would be elected by the influence of the Land League; but he (the Attorney General for Ireland) wanted to prevent that influence, and therefore he supported the Bill. The object of the Bill was to prevent the election of Guardians by any such influence, and the first step towards that was to make the voters independent. He believed, in addition to the almost unanimous opinion of the Committee of 1878 in favour of triennial election, that it was the general feeling in England that Guardians should hold office for three years; but it was further urged that in all of the public bodies there was a system of election by rotation, so as to prevent all the old members from going out together, and a fresh set coming in who would possess no acquaintance with their duties, and that if this triennial system were adopted with reference to Poor Law elections a new Board, unacquainted with the business it would have to perform, might be elected every third year. That objection was purely theoretical. He did not suppose it ever happened in Ireland that an entire Board of Guardians went out at any election. On the contrary, from their position and influence in the district, most of the Guardians were sure to be re-elected. Assuming that the three years' tenure of office tended to make Guardians independent, he was in favour of that tenure. It would probably be also less expensive than the present system of annual elections. The Bill was framed with extreme moderation, and with great consideration for existing arrangements. As he understood it, it did not propose to interfere with any existing votes, and that all it did was to require the personal exercise of the vote. The franchise was not altered, the votes of property and of occupiers remained the same, while the personal exercise of the vote would be much less embarrassing when it was only to be exercised triennially. It did not lay down hard-and-fast lines, but gave the Local Government Board power to make the election rules. The Local Government Board had come in for some hard knocks in the House; but he must confess he still had confidence in it. He thought there were a few alterations on points of detail which he should be disposed to make in the measure in Committee, and this he reserved the right to himself to do. Believing the Bill did not interfere with any right of property, that it would assist in establishing individual responsibility among the people of Ireland in the exercise of the franchise, and would at the same time secure independence, he should give it his cordial support.

Mr. PLUNKET said, he could not take the same view of this proposal as that taken by his right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General for Ireland, and he should feel it his duty, if they went to a division, to support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Leitrim. He would not follow the abstract arguments of the right hon. and learned Gentleman in regard to the question of the ballot. The principle of the Bill under discussion had been rejected by the able Committee which sat to consider the question in 1878. That Committee had been described as a cosmopolitan one. Whatever that term might mean, the Committee was certainly a good one. It thoroughly thrashed out the subject, and very frankly stated in its Report the arguments in favour of the Bill which it had seen fit to reject. The question was considered with reference to England and Scotland, as well as Ireland; but for neither of those countries had any Bill similar to that now under their discussion been brought forward. He should like to know how the owners of property were to have their proper weight in Poor Law elections if this system was carried out? It was quite true that on the last occasion when this subject was brought up he moved the Previous Question, and he did so because a Committee was then sitting, charged with the business of investigating this very matter. The Committee of 1878 was not so much in favour of altering the present system as had been represented. Several witnesses condemned the present system, but others had proved that the system was convenient as affording the greatest facilities for every class. Mr. Banks stated that, in his opinion, the present system of election was the simplest, the most efficacious, and cheapest. The question of election by ballot came prominently before the Committee, and the system was objected to by some witnesses on account of the increased inconvenience it would entail as compared with the present system, by reason of imposing on the voter the necessity of attending to record his vote, and of its unsuitableness to plurality of voting. It was for these reasons, amongst others, that he was opposed to the Bill. The Committee, by a majority, found that it was not desirable to apply the ballot to the election of Poor Law Guardians. The hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray) was in a terrible state of mind about voting by proxy, and before the Committee he formulated a paragraph which he proposed should be introduced into the Report, and which summed up in the most forcible manner what he conceived to be the abuses of the system. The Committee admitted that there were some abuses in connection with it; but they added that in certain cases it was a most valuable mode of recording one's vote, and on a division the hon. Member stood alone—in a minority of 1—in support of his paragraph. The hon. Gentleman who sat behind him (Mr. Tottenham) had raised the point as to what sort of Guardians were likely to be elected if the proposal was agreed to? He did not want to enter into that large question. He very much agreed in what the hon. Gentleman said as to Guardians being elected for three years; but they must not look at the matter as merely for the present, but must look forward a little. As long as there was life there was hope, and he did not yet despair that some time or other, almost hopeless as the case might seem, a better state of things might arise in Ireland. But it was a mere mockery to say that the laws enacted in Parliament had at present any force in Ireland. The objections he had raised were not of a polemical or Party nature at all; they were difficulties which beset the progress of such a proposal as this with regard to England and Scotland. His right hon. and learned Friend opposite entirely supported the Bill. The measure was one of extreme importance, and in his opinion it was one that, if introduced at all, ought to be made a Government measure. Although his right hon. and learned Friend, with a light heart, gave his assent to this proposal with regard to Ireland, he would like to know what Her Majesty's Government, who were always for assimilating the laws of these countries, intended to do with respect to England and Scotland? If his hon. Friend who had moved the Amendment went to a division, he would certainly support him.

Mr. T. A. DICKSON said, he was glad that the Government showed no hesitation in supporting the second reading of this Bill. He did not think it possible to adduce a stronger argument for the passing of this measure than the Report of the Select Committee of 1878. They reported, emphatically and distinctly, that all the Irish witnesses examined were in favour of the alteration of the system of voting by ballot. The Irish witnesses who were in favour of the present system were officials; while the non-official wtnesses condemned it. He had sat for 12 or 14 years, both as an elected and an *ex-officio* Guardian, and he had no hesitation in saying that nothing could be more mischievous than the present system of election. A crowd followed the policeman leaving the papers at the houses of the electors, and the unfortunate voter was surrounded by the friends of both candidates; and the fact was that at present, in connection with the election of Poor Law Guardians, there was no such thing as freedem of election. Notwithstanding the evidence of Mr. Banks, it was not possible for a solid or substantial argument to be used against the passing of this Bill; and when Municipal Corporations and Members of Parliament were elected by ballot, what reason could be adduced why Poor Law Guardians should not be elected by the same system? He could quite understand how the hon. Member for Leitrim's political vision was distorted, and why he saw in every Irish measure a Land League scheme. But, speaking as an Ulster Member — and in Ulster they knew nothing of the intimidation of the Land League — he could say that no difference of opinion existed among the Ulster Members as to the desirability of having Poor Law Guardians elected by ballot. If the hon. Member for Leitrim wanted to get rid of the intimidation of the Land League, the bailiff, or anyone else, he could not do better than give the voter the protection of the ballot. He was glad the Government intended to support the second reading, and after that stage he hoped they would give some facilities for passing the Bill into law.

Mr. SEXTON said, that, after the excellent and very reasonable speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland, he thought it unnecessary to prolong the conversation to any extent. It seemed that it was only on Wednesday that he and his Friends could enjoy the luxury of agreement with Her Majesty's Government, and of seeing their arguments not only adopted by the Government, but so well supplemented as they had been to-day. The right hon. and learned Gentleman comprised the object of the Bill in a single sentence, when he said that the object of the Bill was to recognize and protect the freedom and conscience of the individual voters. Moreover, his right hon. and learned Friend embedded in his speech one or two remarks which he would like to see illuminated as political maxims, and hung up in whatever room the Cabinet met to discuss the affairs of Ireland. He had not much fault to find with the observations of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket); but he might say it was a black-letter speech, or a technical plea. The right hon. and learned Gentleman was one of those exceedingly artful speakers who employed the perfection of their artfulness in order to conceal their art. He dealt what was as nearly as his courtly nature would allow a rebuke to the hon. Member for Leitrim for dragging the large question of the Land League into the scope of the second reading of this modest Bill, and then he proceeded to say the laws passed in that House had at present no force in Ireland. It was very singular that that remark was never made by the right hon. and learned Gentleman when the proposal was to pass a restrictive measure for Ireland. They should not forget the fact that 500 or 600 of their countrymen were now in gaol in Ireland, although the right hon. and learned Gentleman said that at present the law had no force in Ireland. The hon. Member for Leitrim (Mr. Tottenham), like the character in Dickens's novel who was always bringing into his conversation the subject of King Charles's head, had dragged the Land League into that discussion. In fact, the hon. Gentleman could not deliver his sentiments for a moment on any imaginable topic without referring to that "inhuman and wicked association." The reason of this was not far to seek. The Land League had extended its protection to the tenants whom the hon. Gentleman had evicted and cast out upon the highway, and therefore it was perfectly natural that he should attack the Land League in return whenever he had the opportunity. There was no orator in the House of Commons who made such liberal draughts on the adjectives as that hon. Gentleman; but he might remind him that the adjective taken alone did not make any solid form of argument. It was a curious fact that the only opposition offered to that small and inadequate Bill for the good of Ireland came from the immediate Representatives of the landlord class in that country. It was notorious that the country had been administered solely hitherto in the interest of the landlord class; and when it was said that, according to the objects of the Bill, the representatives of the Land League should be put into the various offices, the meaning was that men who were in sympathy with the electors should hold those offices instead of those mean creatures, the followers of the landlords in Ireland. It was wonderful that any man of the experience and sagacity of the hon. Gentleman should think that, when the citadel of the landlord class in Ireland had been battered down, he could any longer defend the outworks of their stronghold.

Mr. O'SHEA said, he had received many communications on that subject from persons on both sides of politics, some of whom thought it would be very advantageous, from a Conservative point of view, if the ballot were adopted at the election of Guardians. Among those communications was the following, which, with the permission of the House, he would read:—

> "Honoured Sir,—There was a deal more rows about the election of Guardians than the election for the county. I was bothered entirely between them, and the ballot would be a grand thing, for a man could say and do what he liked. Mr. —— was pressing me one way, and I was not wanting to offend him, and how did I know but what the reduction would be depending upon it. Three shillings in the pound we are expecting, and the boys on the other side going for ruin like mad, and am bound to get a taste of the stick. I gave them the slip to go to the funeral of my cousin and forgot to fill it in the paper at all; but I am very sorry

ever since, because if I had voted I would have only had one party against me, and now I have got the two, and them calling me a snake. So I hope your honour will get me the ballot against next year."

He would add nothing, but simply support the Bill.

Mr. WARTON said, he thought that the Attorney General for Ireland had departed on that occasion from the usual prudence of his Profession by going beyond his brief. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had said that no man objected to vote by ballot at Parliamentary elections, or would wish to return to the former mode of voting. Now, he protested against the doctrine that the ballot in itself was a good thing, and that there was not a man in the House who objected to it. Every honest Member of the Tory Party must admit that a most disgraceful system of voting by ballot now existed. The ballot had been brought in by the Liberal Party professedly to put down corruption; but it had increased corruption, because it had enabled men to take bribes from both sides, and to tell falsehoods. Again, he maintained that the time was inopportune for bringing in a Bill of that kind. It reminded him of the saying about Nero fiddling while Rome was burning. Murder now stalked through Ireland, and the Government looked coldly on, the Prime Minister intimating that he did not know whether he would bring forward any measures to restore peace and the authority of the law, because he did not know whether he could get the *clôture* passed by the House. He (Mr. Warton) wished to have no more Irish legislation until Ireland was at peace, and the supremacy and authority of the law were asserted. All these questions were comparatively trumpery so long as the Queen's supremacy was not enforced. It was idle for the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) to attempt to ridicule the frequent references made to the Land League in their discussions. The fact was that the Land League was everywhere, and the Government knew it, but did not suppress it as they ought to and could have done if they had used more vigorous measures. The clause which required that everyone should attend in person to vote was a disfranchising clause, because at present votes could be given without personal attendance. He was in favour of taking the votes at Parliamentary elections by means of voting papers.

Colonel NOLAN rose to Order. He wished to know whether it was regular to discuss the clauses of a Bill on a Motion for the Second Reading?

Mr. SPEAKER ruled that such a course was irregular, unless the clause so discussed raised some principle of the Bill.

Mr. WARTON said, he would bow to the ruling of the Chair, and conclude by expressing his determination to oppose the further progress of this measure by every means in his power.

Colonel NOLAN said that, as Chairman of a very large Union in Ireland, he wished to give his support to this Bill; and he hoped that the hon. and learned Member who had just spoken would not persevere in his intention to block the Bill, as the Government had adopted its principle. The hon. Member for Leitrim (Mr. Tottenham) had represented his hon. Friend the Member for the County Carlow (Mr. Gray) as having said that the Roman Catholic Clergy interfered much in these elections. Now, what he understood his hon. Friend to say was that the elections were interfered with equally by clergymen of all denominations. In his part of the country the Clergy interfered very little in Poor Law elections. In future he believed that these elections would turn less upon Land League or Catholic questions than upon questions of expenditure, and the ballot would promote the return of Guardians pledged to economy. The objections raised by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket) were exactly the same as those which the Tory Party used at the introduction of the Ballot Bill for Parliamentary elections. At that time the Conservatives, seeing that it was impossible to stand against the feeling in the country and in Parliament in favour of that measure, took the course of raising a number of technical objections. The right hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to think that plural voting could not be worked under this Bill; but it was hard to understand what difficulty could arise in a voter having to fill up a dozen papers instead of one. As to the illiterate voter, he must be got rid of—he must be handed a paper like anyone else, and if he filled it up wrongly he must suffer the loss of his vote; but there would not be one in a hundred who would be so stupid. The ballot for Poor Law elections must be adopted first in either England or Ireland; and it was of ten times more consequence to Ireland, where many Boards of Guardians were like County Municipalities, and the constituencies were mostly small farmers, who felt the want of the ballot. It was natural that the demand should come first from Ireland; and if the Bill were blocked by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton)—who, however, might relent in this case when he saw what was the wish of the Irish Members—he trusted that the Government would defeat his obstruction by giving facilities for the progress of the Bill.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said, he was glad that the Government had at last opened their eyes to the expediency of permitting this very much needed Bill to pass through the House. It was a very small Bill, but one very much required in many parts of Ireland, and would simply have the effect of giving freedom of judgment to the men entitled to vote. The existing system was the cause of very great abuses, and he had known voters over and over again to destroy their papers by voting for both candidates when only entitled to vote for one, acting under representations from the agents. He had often heard men say they would be very glad to be rid of the vote altogether in consequence of the intimidation to which it had laid them open. This measure would give freedom of action to the small holders throughout the country, and they were the men who most required it. It did not at all affect property votes, but merely did away with deputies and asked men to vote for themselves. He hoped, therefore, that if any obstruction were offered the Government would give facilities for the passage of the Bill, and bring it to a successful issue this Session.

Mr. FINDLATER could not allow the remarks of the hon. Member for Bridport to pass without expressing his opinion that the best mode of making Her Majesty's Government respected in Ireland was by passing good and just laws. He intended to support this Bill in its integrity. When he first read the Bill he did not approve of the sections which required the personal attendance of voters; but, having heard the able arguments in favour of it put forward by the hon. Member for Carlow, he felt that his first impression was erroneous. The arguments from the Conservative Leaders against the Bill did not possess the slightest weight. The Attorney General for Ireland appeared to have examined the Bill with minuteness and care, and his approval of it did not deserve the description "perfunctory," applied to it by the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin. He could not agree with Members who considered the effect of this Bill would be to enable Roman Catholic clergymen to exercise undue influence. It effect must be quite the contrary. At the last election for the county which he represented, he found a landlord's agent presiding in one of the polling booths, speaking to different voters in the most familiar manner, with the object, no doubt, of influencing their votes. A great many Roman Catholic clergymen were also present; but he did not observe any attempt on their part to interfere with the election. It was a very valuable measure, and would prove most beneficial to Ireland; and he trusted that the dreadful system of blocking would not be employed to defeat it.

Mr. W. J. CORBET said, he thought very much credit was due to the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray) for the manner in which he had presented this Bill. In support of the case made out by the hon. Member, he would mention an instance of proxy voting which occurred a few days ago at the election of Guardians for Rathdrum. A large sheaf of voting papers having been handed in on behalf of Earl Fitzwilliam, a gentleman who attended on the part of the tenant farmers insisted upon seeing them, and found that they did not bear Earl Fitzwilliam's signature, but that they had been signed by some bailiff or under-agent.

Mr. CALLAN said, he objected to the 4th clause, which insisted upon the personal attendance of voters. This absolutely took away all right of voting by proxy, which had existed in Ireland since the institution of the Poor Law system, and still existed in England. To take from the beneficial owners of property all right of voting by proxy would result in the election of a worse class of

Guardians. He had seen amongst the lowest class of ratepayers' Guardians as great a tendency to "job" as amongst grand jurors. Practically, if this clause passed a person who did not reside in Ireland would not have a vote, although the principle of the Poor Law was not representation of persons, but representation of property. With this reservation he supported the Bill, and hoped the hon. and learned Member for Bridport would not block it on going into Committee.

Mr. HIBBERT begged to assure his right hon. and learned Friend opposite (Mr. Plunket), who had made some reference to his absence from the discussion, that he entirely sympathized with the objects of the Bill. When he moved for the appointment of a Committee on this subject in 1878, he included Ireland and Scotland in his Motion, because he thought if it was desirable to consider the law with regard to England, it was equally desirable to consider it as regarded Ireland and Scotland. He had a very strong opinion that when they were considering any question of administration it was desirable to consider it as regarded the Three Countries, and not as it affected one country separately. On that Committee they had the presence of several hon. Members for Ireland, and many witnesses from Ireland were examined, and the evidence of the majority was decidedly in favour of an alteration of the present system. He could not, of course, speak of the necessity of an alteration in Ireland so strongly as he could with regard to the necessity of it in England. He believed that in the large towns of England a strong feeling existed as to the importance of altering the present system of electing Guardians. In Lancashire great excitement very often arose in connection with those elections, because they were made political elections like most other elections in that county; and the abuses were so great and so objectionable, that he had been pressed over and over again by gentlemen representing both sides of politics to push forward as far as possible this question. He did not think that in Lancashire there was any subject upon which a stronger and more unanimous opinion prevailed than the subject of altering the present system of electing Guardians and substituting the ballot for the voting papers now used. He would go further, and say that all elections should be by ballot where it was possible or desirable to have it. He would not confine the ballot mainly to Poor Law Guardians, but would extend it to Local Board and other elections. Therefore, speaking for himself personally and not as a Member of the Government, he entirely sympathized with the Bill, and hoped it would soon become law. With respect to the 4th clause, which necessitated the attendance of the voter at the polling booth, of course there was much to be said on both sides; but that was a matter for discussion in Committee. The great objection to the present proposal when it was brought before the Committee was that of expense; but he thought that had been met by the proposal to make the tenure of office three years instead of one.

Question put.

The House *divided* :—Ayes 95 ; Noes 31 : Majority 64.—(Div. List, No. 64.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS EXPENSES BILL.—[Bill 34.]

(*Mr. Ashton Dilke, Mr. Barran, Mr. Burt.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. ASHTON DILKE, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said: Sir, the measure, as I introduce it to the House, may be divided into two parts, the latter of which, I think, may be taken almost as a necessary corollary of the first. The first portion of the Bill provides for the payment of the absolutely necessary expenses — the expenses of Returning Officers—of a Parliamentary election out of the local rates; but the second part of the Bill is new, although its provisions are adopted in almost every foreign country. A measure with a similar intention to that contained in the proposals of the first part has frequently been proposed to this House; but the principle of the second portion of the Bill has been passed over altogether. The measure is one which has been very closely identified with the name of my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General (Mr. Fawcett) when he was an independent Member. It was brought in as an Amendment to a Corrupt Practices Bill, introduced by a Conservative Government, and it was carried by a small majority; but not meeting with the approval of the Government, they succeeded in procuring a majority against the proposal on Report, and on the third reading of the Bill it was cut out of it by a still larger majority. The proposal was again introduced in 1872 by the right hon. Gentleman when the Ballot Bill was before the House. It received the approval of the Liberal Government of the day; but it was not carried, and has not since been renewed. Therefore, the Bill I have now to introduce to this House has, on a previous occasion, been carried in the teeth of a Conservative Government, and rejected in spite of the approval of the Liberal Government. I hope that it will be more fortunate on the present occasion, and that it will receive the support of a majority of the new House of Commons. The chief, and, in fact, the only grave objection raised against the Bill, on the Conservative side, is simply the question of cost. In connection with that point, I have been engaged during the past Recess in speaking to a good many meetings in various parts of the country on the subject of Parliamentary Reform, and included in that was this question of payment of election expenses out of the rates. I have brought it forward in order to ascertain the feeling of the working classes on the subject; and I venture to say, though it is a proposal to put on the shoulders of the ratepayers certain expenses, yet of all the propositions I have submitted to the various meetings I have not found one which is more thoroughly popular, or where the working classes of the Kingdom more thoroughly see the advantage they will gain by the carrying out of the proposal, which is not to be weighed in the same balance with the very trifling expenditure it will involve. When the proposal was first brought forward there were no Members of this House who could fairly lay claim to the title of being direct Representatives of the working classes; but in the present Parliament we have at last secured the presence of several hon. Gentlemen who come directly under that description, and who are intimately connected with the working class interest, and so far the object of the Bill may be said to have been attained; for although my right hon. Friend, in introducing it, deprecated its being a measure exclusively for the benefit of working men, or calculated to secure the return of working men, there can be no doubt that it was generally so accepted by the House, and that that was the general impression conveyed to the country. But even if it were not desirable to increase the representation of that class, there is another class to whom the franchise may, before many years, be given, to which this Bill will apply with greater force than the working classes. I refer to the agricultural labourer. With regard to that class, a Conservative Statesman has lately said that he would be glad to see them represented; and if that feeling had been shared by his Party, it ought not to have been difficult for that Party to let the labourers have one of the county seats which were at the command of the Party; but the remark referred to is, perhaps, to be regarded rather as a Platonic expression. I think, however, it will be admitted that a candidate of the agricultural labourers would find considerable difficulty in raising even the comparatively small sum necessary for the payment of the Returning Officer's expenses, if there should not be an extension of the law in the direction which I propose. I believe that even those expenses will be considerably diminished if this Bill is passed. The expenses to the community at large, I believe, will be considerably reduced. I found my argument on the facts as to the expenditure at the last General Election in 1880. The Return, which gives the expenses of the Returning Officers, and, at the same time, the general expenses of the Election, is an instructive one, because it shows that the Returning Officers' expenses vary enormously in different constituencies. At Abingdon, where 900 electors were polled, the Returning Officer's expenses were £177, giving an average of 4*s.* per elector; but in Barnstaple, where 1,650 electors were polled, the expenses were £92, a cost of 1*s.* 2*d.* per head. Taking boroughs of medium size, I find that at Warrington, where 6,000 electors were polled, the Returning Officer's expenses amounted to £630, or about 2*s.* per head; whereas, at Burnley, where I suppose the electors were moved by the economy which distinguishes their Representative, 7,600 were polled at an expenditure of £153, or 5*d*. per head. Coming to the very large boroughs, I find that in Lambeth 50,000 electors were polled at an expenditure of £1,557, being an average of about 8*d*. per head; but in Leeds, the polling of 49,000 electors only cost £559, or 3*d*. per head. I think that demonstrates very clearly that wherever we find inequalities of this kind we may assume that the lower value and not the higher value is the true one; and, therefore, I think I should not be taking too sanguine a view if I say that if this Bill were passed the Returning Officers' expenses generally would be diminished, possibly by more than one-half, because, as the expenditure would be met by the various Municipalities, it would be open to criticism and revision. As it is, the cost is almost ridiculously small. I have estimated that the total cost of the average annual rate required will amount to one-eighth of a farthing in the pound—that is to say, if we take the cost of a General Election—and the fact is that we have one every four years on the average—we find that it would require a rate of half-a-farthing in the pound for the year of the Election. I know, however, that there is a very great objection to do anything which would tend to increase the local rates, the whole theory of the Conservative Party at present being to throw local rates as much as possible, not on local bodies, but upon the Consolidated Fund. There will, however, be far less likelihood of extravagance if the expenses are thrown on the rates than there will be if they are paid out of the Consolidated Fund; and a Motion to make the expenditure Imperial has been already rejected by a large majority. We are told that if this Bill is passed, we shall see a greater number of candidates than we do at the present moment. I am inclined to think that is true only to a limited extent; and, if it is true, I am inclined to think it is not an unmitigated evil. I believe it would be better for this House if, instead of being divided into Liberal and Conservative camps, we had an independent feeling which, under the provisions of the Bill, I think we should have. One important fact should not be forgotten in connection with the question. There are constituencies in the United Kingdom which have never been contested on account of the enormous expense that would be incurred; and I contend that it would be better to have a surplus of candidates than we should have such a gross scandal as we have—namely, some constituencies in which there have not been contests for a quarter of a century, or, as in some cases, since the passing of the first Reform Act. The practice of foreign countries is favourable to my proposal. In a Return published last year it is set forth that in Austria, Hungary, France, and Italy, all necessary election expenses are paid out of national money—that is, out of the Consolidated Funds. In Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, and Denmark, the election expenses are paid out of the local rates, as I propose in the present Bill. These facts show that there is a universal consensus of opinion that the necessary expenses should be paid by the electors themselves, and not by the candidates. The candidate, by offering himself to a constituency to serve them, confers a great favour on a constituency; and the expenses that a candidate would, in any case, have to incur, would, no doubt, be heavy enough. It may be said that the Returning Officers' expenses amount to but a small proportion of the whole expenditure; but that is not so, for although in many cases the saving of the official expenses will make but little difference to the candidates, still, in the case of working-men candidates, it will be found that the Returning Officers' expenses amount to a considerable proportion of the whole expenses incurred on their behalf. There is, no doubt, the evil of the multiplication of candidates as a possible one to be guarded against if this Bill be passed; and several proposals have been made with regard to this evil. My hon. Friend the Member for Frome (Mr. H. B. Samuelson), as far as I know, however, has proposed the only one likely to be available—namely, that a candidate not polling a certain number of votes should be fined a fixed sum, or compelled to pay his share of the election expenses; but it is open to many of the same objections as the present plan, and therefore I propose a better method, and a method which is uniformly adopted in almost every other country, and the second part of the Bill, which has not yet been mooted in this country, has been brought in to effect that purpose. I propose, in the second part of the Bill, that if a candidate does not gain an absolute majority of the electors he shall not be elected, and that there shall be a second election, to be decided by a relative majority of votes. A sub-section of the clause also omits what are known as the three-cornered constituencies, where it would be difficult to apply the section. I trust, however, before the Bill passes into law, that three-cornered constituencies will have gone the way of all flesh. I should now like to say a few words with regard to the proceedings of the various political associations that have sprung up on both sides during the last few years. When I first brought in this Bill there was a division taken upon it, and in the course of some discussion, the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) said he regarded the Bill with suspicion, as I was the nominee of a Caucus—that very much dreaded and detested body. Well, Sir, I can say that the provisions of the Bill are meant, if to do anything, to neutralize the power of the Caucus. If a candidate is appointed by the managers of a Party that the electors do not like, the electors have at present no power to object to the selection made. For instance, at Wigan, during the spring of last year, there was a contested election, when there were two candidates in the field. The borough is one which contains a considerable Irish vote, and where, the working-man element being rather strong, it might be presumed that there was also a certain amount of the English vote which was opposed to the Government on the burning question—namely, the application of exceptional laws to Ireland. What happened was this. The Conservative went to the poll on the ordinary platform of the Party, and the Liberal went to the poll, and, in order to secure the Irish vote, pledged himself to oppose the Bill which the Government was then fighting for so determinedly in the House. Therefore, those Liberals who voted for that candidate were in the position of persons who voted against the Government; and the result of that was that if a moderate Liberal elector of that constituency wanted to show he supported the Government in the crisis, he had only the option of voting for the Conservative candidate, and the Liberal candidate, in spite of the Irish vote, was thrown out by a considerable majority. What I contend is, that if this Bill had been in operation we should have had three candidates—a Conservative candidate, a candidate receiving the support of the Irish electors, and a candidate who would have received the votes of the Ministerialists in the borough; and I think it would have been a valuable indication to the Government if they had been able, without having the accusation of splitting the Party cast in their teeth, to run such candidates as would have given them a clear test of the feeling of the country. In that way they would have been able to have learnt whether it was with them or against them. With regard to the action of Liberal associations throughout the country, that action, as is well known, has been introduced very largely in order to prevent splits in the Party organization, and the running of superfluous candidates; and that they succeeded at the last General Election, in 1880, is evident from the fact that there is only one seat in the Kingdom—that in the Tower Hamlets—which has been lost to the Party, and which did not finally result in representing the feelings of the electors, as there were too many candidates running for the seat, and votes were thrown away upon candidates who had no chance of success. In 1874 we find that no less than 13 seats were absolutely thrown away by the fact of so many splits taking place in the ranks of the Liberal Party, in consequence of which candidates were run upon whom votes were thrown away, and which, if they had been given to another candidate, would have been sufficient to carry the election. Whilst I say this, I do not wish to see standing at every election a cut-and-dried Liberal or a cut-and-dried Conservative, for I hold that we should have independent candidates as well as independent speech in a constituency. Under the present system, however, we have sometimes found that a candidate will go down to a constituency and will be addressed by a minority of the electors, who hold strong views on some particular point. He will be asked to give a pledge on some particular question, and he consents, often to the detriment of his own moral character, either because he knows that he is not likely to have the opportunity practically to carry it out, or because he will be able in some way to get out of his pledge in the future. We have seen that to be the case on both sides, in order to secure the Irish vote, or the temperance vote, or the suffrages of those in favour of the county franchise. But if there was such a law as is proposed in the machinery of the Bill, each Party would be enabled to bring forward a candidate of its own, and so discover what was the exact amount of support that would be given to their views, so that if their candidate was beaten he could retire before the second ballot. In foreign countries the system I propose is almost of universal application; and there the question of expenditure is really considered to be one of no practical importance at all. In England, which is much wealthier than other countries, the question of expenditure will be still more insignificant and trifling. I do not believe that second elections in this country would number one in 40, although in Continental countries they number one in six or one in eight, because among our own political Parties it is a settled custom to run a Liberal against a Conservative. Nor do I believe that the expense of elections, once placed in the hands of Municipalities, would be large. In conclusion, I will give expression to the hope that the Government will assist me to carry the Bill, which I believe will be found a successful measure, and not an unpopular one in the country. I beg to move its second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Ashton Dilke.*)

Mr. J. R. YORKE, in opposing the Motion, said, that, in his opinion, it was not expedient to charge any portion of the expenses of Parliamentary candidates upon the ratepayers. The hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Ashton Dilke) seemed to be one of those happy people who took a delight in all proceedings connected with elections, and who thought those proceedings could not be too much prolonged. He appeared to approach the question from a feeling that the more the candidates the merrier would be the contest; but that was not his (Mr. J. R. Yorke's) own feeling when he contemplated the number of candidates which would be started by the crotchetmongers throughout the country, and the prolonged turmoil which would be inevitable through the two contests it was now proposed to institute instead of one election. He therefore condemned the proposal as unnecessary and, to some extent, cruel to the candidates, as subjecting them to additional torture. The expense of an election depended upon the time it occupied; and under the Bill there would be a period before nomination, the period between the nomination of the first election, and then a period of not less than five, and not more than eight, days before the second election. What the consequent expense would be he would leave to the imagination of hon. Members, who already smarted under the cost of the present system, with its official, its permissive, and its illegitimate heads of expenditure. The measure had, indeed, so narrow a scope that it would scarcely be worth opposition were it not for the principle which it involved. Besides, there were several expenses attendant upon a Parliamentary election; but the Bill dealt with only one, and no adequate reason had been shown for transferring the expense of elections from persons now willing to bear it to persons who would be very unwilling to bear it indeed—namely, the ratepayers. The hon. Member had referred to other countries; but he had not attempted to show that the system in operation there was attended by any special advantages. If the present election arrangements were to be interfered with at all, he thought there was an overwhelming case in favour of placing such charges on the National Exchequer, for he was at a loss to see how the expenses of the election of Members of Parliament who were to deal with Imperial interests could fairly be made a charge upon the rates. The ratepayers, indeed, were at present looking forward to the promised settlement of the whole question rather in the direction of relief than of an increase of their burdens, as was now proposed. The second part of the proposal was entirely new to the English Constitution, and he was opposed to it on the ground that it would needlessly multiply contests, introduce into public life the unpleasantness inevitable to prolonged strife, and lower the character of the Representatives of the people in that House. A class of candidates would, no doubt, be enabled to come forward who were at present debarred from doing so; but men were what their opportunities made them, and, as a rule, it was not desirable that a working man should represent a large body of his fellow-countrymen. In the ranks of labour men of exceptional gifts were occasionally found. Such men had done honour to their order in that House, and no one could pretend that the question of money had ever jeopardized their election. Funds for popular candidates were always forthcoming. He did not believe that any genuine working-class representative was ever prevented by the want of pecuniary means from being elected to that House. The real difficulty with working men was how to support themselves when they were in the House of Commons, seeing that an annual subsidy, which would be requisite for the purpose, was different from a lump sum. He thought it unfair to throw the cost of the Bribery Commissioners upon the ratepayers belonging to the incriminated boroughs; and especially there was one point which he wished to put forward, and that was what the position of women would be under this Bill. He had always held that a woman who was in possession of property, or who occupied a house which would entitle a man to a vote, ought not to be prevented from voting. He had never gone further. Now, in the case of a Bribery Commission, it appeared very hard that women who had never had an opportunity of being bribed or of demonstrating their superior virtue, should be called upon to pay for the misconduct of their male neighbours who enjoyed the franchise. But this Bill would inflict a permanent, instead of an occasional, injustice, for those women would be charged with a rateable proportion of the costs of elections. He trusted the House would not accept this measure. He noticed that the silver side of the shield was turned towards them, and that Ministers who before supported the measure were now conspicuous by their absence. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department, indeed, in 1871, said that, partly by their own fault and partly by the fault of others, Her Majesty's Government had fallen out with more than one class of the community; they had fallen out with the Army and with the licensed victuallers; but that Bill would do still greater mischief, because it would throw further taxation on the shoulders of the whole community. But, if that was the case in 1871, the argument was still stronger now, seeing that since then the community had been made to suffer from the imposition of additional burdens, such as the Education rate and other charges. He was glad to see that the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General had come into the House. In 1871 the right hon. Gentleman somewhat complained of the lukewarm manner in which the Prime Minister dealt with the question. But, inasmuch as this year a large and comprehensive measure had been brought in by the hon. and learned Attorney General, dealing with all other branches of the Election question, but not mentioning this, he trusted the Government had changed their minds, and would not be found voting for the second reading. For his own part, he felt he had discharged his duty to the long-suffering ratepayers by resisting this attempt to throw an additional burden upon backs too little able to bear this grievance.

MR. BROADHURST said, it was with very great pleasure that he had observed that the hon. Gentleman who had opposed the Motion for the second reading of the Bill (Mr. J. R. Yorke) had said very little in favour of the course he had taken, and practically nothing against the clause which provided for the Returning Officers' expenses. It was in that clause he (Mr. Broadhurst) was chiefly interested. In effect, it was not wholly one for the purpose of relieving working men from the difficulties of Parliamentary expenses; but it was a proposal rather for the object of giving a wider choice of candidates to the constituencies. There were two questions always put when the name of a candidate was mentioned. The first probably was, What were his politics? And the second was sure to be, What was his power to meet the expenses of the election? And it was very often the case that the second question ultimately came to be the most important, because, whatever his politics might be, or his capacity to represent the constituency faithfully, unless he was able to meet the enormous cost of the election, his chance of being returned was poor indeed. In his opinion, the ratepayers ought to bear the burden of the expenses; and, whilst the hon. Gentleman the Mover of the Bill (Mr. Ashton Dilke) had shown that under it the additional cost to the rates would be very small indeed—so small that it was hardly worthy of discussion—yet the advantages to the candidate would be enormous, the hon. Member for East Gloucestershire (Mr. J. R. Yorke) said that working men would find very little difficulty in meeting the cost of Parliamentary contests. He begged to assure the hon. Member that that was not the case. The difficulties were enormous indeed, and one of the most aggravating and irksome difficulties was that of the Returning Officers' charges. By the recent laws regulating elections, it was necessary for a candidate to pay a deposit before he could legally become a candidate at all, and that brought about in some cases a most peculiar and contradictory state of things. In his (Mr. Broadhurst's) own case, in the borough of Stoke-upon-Trent, there were four candidates at the last General Election. His hon. Colleague, and those upon his side, were hoping they would be reduced to three. He himself was secretly praying that there would be either five or only two, because, according to the number of candidates on the day of nomination would be the relative cost to each. As it was, he found very great difficulty to obtain the £250 that he had to pay way by of deposit before he could be legally a candidate. That was an obstacle that Parliament should remove at once; and, as a matter of good taste, all rich men who were capable of meeting the expenses should vote for the Bill in order to remove the difficulties that stood in the way of their less fortunate fellow-countrymen. He did not think there was any force in the objection that working men would make frivolous proposals of candidates, as no one would be so interested in keeping the number of candidates down as the ratepayers themselves. He did not believe either that there would be any great increase in the number of labour candidates. With regard to the general opinion on the subject, he could say, from his own experience, that he had never addressed a public meeting during the last two years in aid of a proposal similar to this at which there was any opposition offered to it. Another powerful reason why Parliament should remove these expenses from candidates was, that while they were called upon, and were willing, to pay these large sums of money for seats in Parliament, the constituencies could not be persuaded from the belief that Members had some pecuniary interest in obtaining a seat in the House, their argument being that if there were so many who were willing to pay those large sums for seats in the House there must be some means of recompense. The sooner such an impression was removed the better. He, therefore, cordially supported the second reading, and hoped that hon. Gentlemen opposite would permit them to take a division upon the question.

Mr. GREGORY opposed the Bill, contending that there was no need at the present time for any such legislation, and that no sufficient reason had been shown for any change in the present system. He was unwilling that anything should be added to the already heavy burdens upon the ratepayers, and could not vote for a measure which would impose upon candidates the anxiety of a second election within eight days of the first. He had no confidence in the predictions that the cost would be infinitesimally small, as he had seen so many similar prophecies falsified by the result. Just the same thing had been said of the Education rate, which in some instances had risen to 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* in the pound. As things were, the present expenses were not generally felt by gentlemen who presented themselves as candidates, or who were properly qualified to be brought forward for seats in the House. The hon. Member who had just spoken (Mr. Broadhurst) admitted that labour candidates were not generally prejudiced as things were, and he did not think the Bill would add to their number. But it would, if carried, certainly lead to a large increase in the number of candidates, by encouraging persons to come forward who would not be *bonâ fide* ones, and who, at their own will, would be able to add to the burdens of the locality. It was said that the agricultural labourers would not have the same means of returning their own candidates as were possessed by the large towns. Well, the county franchise had not yet been extended, and that question, therefore, had not yet arisen. But the agricultural labourers had not been unable to provide means for their unions and other objects, and he (Mr. Gregory) did not doubt they would be able to do so also for election purposes. Besides, the Returning Officer's expenses were only a fraction of the total expenses of a candidate, and were far less than the other expenses necessarily incurred. The second part of the Bill, dealing with re-elections in certain cases, he thought was simply extravagant and preposterous, and the result would be to make life intolerable to the man who had to be elected a second time within eight days after his first election. As no benefit would, in his opinion, be derived from the measure, he should decidedly vote against the second reading.

MR. SERJEANT SIMON said, he regretted that he could not support the Bill in its present complex form. The first part of it embraced a proposal he had over and over again supported in the House. Indeed, two Sessions ago he had himself brought in a Bill on the subject. The objection as to the expenses falling on the ratepayers was, in his opinion, of no weight. They would be infinitesimal, and, therefore, he could not agree with the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) that there would be a pressure on the ratepayers. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Stoke (Mr Broadhurst) had shown it would not be a farthing in the pound. But, even if it were otherwise, he (Mr. Serjeant Simon) thought that the ratepayers ought to pay for the privilege of representation in the House of Commons; and the ground upon which he supported the first part of the Bill was not on economic grounds, but because he was of opinion that the present system of payment by Members of the legal machinery for conducting an election was an entire reversal of the principle of representation. If it was a privilege to be represented in the House of Commons, those who enjoyed that privilege ought to pay for the legal machinery which was necessary to conduct the election. The present state of things reversed the relation between the Member and the constituents. Instead of being a person who was conferring a benefit on the community, it represented him him as a person who was receiving a favour at the hands of the constituency. The present system was a prolific source of corruption, because the constituencies were taught to regard the candidate as a person whom they were benefiting. As a rule, only rich men could come forward as candidates, because it was only they who could incur the expenses of election. He himself had fought three contested elections, and, therefore, knew the trouble and misery of a contest. He regretted that his hon. Friend (Mr. Ashton Dilke) had introduced the proposal of a second election, as he thought it was useless and dangerous. Life would be positively miserable if a man after going through one contest had to go through a second, and perhaps a third, for there might not be an absolute majority of electors in the second any more than in the first election. Where were they to stop? He was sorry that a useful measure had been spoilt by the introduction of such a proposal. Under the circumstances, he could not support the Bill, though he would not vote against it, because the first part was a proposition of his own. He should walk out without voting. ["No, no!"] He really did not know what the principle of the Bill was—whether it was contained in the former or the latter proposals, and he certainly could not support the latter.

SIR MASSEY LOPES said, he opposed the Bill on the ground that it was a proposal to impose additional expense upon the ratepapers of particular localities, which ought to be paid out of the National Exchequer. They had been told that the addition which the proposal of the Bill would make to local rates would be very small. That might be so; but the Conservative Party objected not so much on the matter of cost, as on the matter of principle, and he could not understand, if the House were to pass the Bill, how they could oppose the payment of Members of Parliament. They might depend upon it that, if they conceded this point, the inevitable consequence would be a proposal to pay Members of Parliament. The principle was not a novel one, but had been before the House six or seven times. A Bill to the same effect was introduced in 1867 by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, the present Postmaster General, when it was carried by a small majority of about 3. It was again introduced in 1871, when it was strenuously opposed by the hon. and learned Gentleman the present Attorney General and the right hon. and learned Gentleman the present Home Secretary, both of whom were Tellers against it. The Home Secretary then made a forcible speech on the subject. Proposals to the same effect were brought forward in 1872-3, and defeated by large majorities. The Bill was both impolitic and unjust; impolitic, because it was very undesirable that the Representatives of the people should be more under the control of their constituents than they were at present. They did not want in the House of Commons machines and delegates; they wanted Gentlemen able to exercise their own judgment, and to give their own free expression of opinion upon questions that came before them. If this proposal were carried it would tend to put Members of Parliament more under local influence than they were at present. It was unjust, because owners of personal property would be exempted from paying the expenses; while the owners of real property, already burdened too highly, would have an additional burden thrown upon them in having to defray them. The analogy of Municipal elections did not apply, for the candidates had simply to perform local duties and were elected for local purposes, whereas Members of that House dealt with national matters. The effect of the Bill, too, would be to promote Parliamentary contests, to bring into the field men who were anxious to air their own projects, and largely to increase the number of candidates who would be able to gratify their personal ambition at the expense of the constituency. The local rates had already to bear the expense of registration, which was an expense which ought to fall on the National Exchequer, and he did not wish to go further in the same direction. He was satisfied that the professed object—namely, to introduce more working-class Members of Parliament — would not be secured by the Bill. He did not object to working men's candidates; he should like to see more of them, and he was sure that Conservatives generally would welcome a greater number of them than were in the House at present. But the Bill would not add to their number, while it would certainly interfere most seriously with the dignity, patriotism, and independence of Members of Parliament.

Mr. ANDERSON said, that the hon. Baronet the Member for South Devon (Sir Massey Lopes) had just said he would like to see a larger number of labour Representatives in the House, and yet he objected to remove what constituted the chief obstacle in the way of their coming here. The hon. Baronet said the object would not be attained, even if the Bill were carried; and what he meant by that he (Mr. Anderson) supposed was, that the other expenses were so high that still the labour candidates would not be able to secure election. Still, the hon. Baronet said that if the Bill were carried, the number of candidates would be greatly increased; and he (Mr. Anderson) would ask, would not the other expenses tend to check the multiplication of candidates in the same way that it would check the number of labour candidates? The hon. Baronet was not entitled to both of these consequences, but must take the one or the other, as the one destroyed the other. He (Mr. Anderson) thought if the Bill were carried, with certain necessary modifications that it would be requisite to introduce into it in Committee, it would remove the great obstacle that working men had to obtaining seats in Parliament. Already they had a few very able men of that class, and very good Members they were, and he joined with the hon. Baronet in wishing there were more of them, because the number they had was very small as compared with the proportion that working men bore in the electorate. But the principal reason he supported the Bill, or at least the 1st clause, which threw the expenses of the Returning Officer on the constituency, was that the candidate had no sort of control over those expenses. All the other expenses connected with the election were more or less in the hands of the candidate and his committee; but when they came to the expenses of the Returning Officers he was absolutely helpless, and had simply to pay down a large sum of money that was expended by people over whom he had no control. He thought it was a fair argument that in all our other elections the public paid such expenses, not merely the Municipal elections, but the School Board and Parochial Board elections; and he did not see why there should be any difference in Parliamentary elections. He admitted, however, the Bill ought to be guarded;

and the Bill, as it stood at present, was entirely unguarded, for there was nothing to prevent any number of candidates coming forward, and there was no kind of stipulation—as there had been in all the other Bills on this subject—that, unless a candidate carried a given proportion of votes, he should be punished by being made to pay the expenses of it, as far as his share of them went. Under the Municipal Election Act, at present candidates had nothing to pay, and the result was sometimes very curious. It happened the other day in his own constituency that one gentleman got himself nominated in some three, four, or five different wards, thus putting all those wards to the expense and trouble of a contest, which was a great abuse; because, if elected in all of them, he could only sit for one. That was an abuse, and in the same way, under this Bill as it stood, a candidate might get himself nominated in a dozen different constituencies, and put them all to the expense of a contest. That would certainly be an abuse; but there was nothing to prevent proper safeguards being put into the Bill at some other stage. As regarded the 2nd clause, he did not take the same view as the hon. and learned Member for Dewsbury (Mr. Serjeant Simon), who declined to vote for the Bill because that clause was in it. He (Mr. Anderson) objected to that clause just as much as the hon. and learned Gentleman; but the course he should take would be to support the Bill in its leading clause, and in Committee endeavour to get the 2nd clause thrown out, and that was the course he would recommend the hon. and learned Gentleman to take. He thought the 2nd clause was a distinct blot on the Bill. It tended to complicate the matter, and produce a confusion in the desire to support the Bill, which, otherwise, on its merits, the Bill was fairly entitled to. For these reasons he should support the second reading; but would endeavour to get the objectionable clause thrown out afterwards.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, he did not consider that there was anything to complain of under the present system. The hon. and learned Member for Dewsbury (Mr. Serjeant Simon) had stated that he had fought three contested elections. As the hon. and learned Member had won all those elections he had not much reason for complaining. He (Mr. R. N. Fowler) had fought five contested elections, and only won two. Consequently, he had more reason to complain of the present system than the hon. and learned Member for Dewsbury had. It was said that gentlemen were deterred from becoming candidates in consequence of the expense attaching to candidature. When the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General lost his seat for Brighton, the borough of Hackney, at its own expense, returned the right hon. Gentleman. He also believed the return of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster for Birmingham did not cost him 1*d.* He did not think anyone who was sufficiently distinguished for a large number of people to desire to see him in Parliament was ever kept out on the score of expense, while the present system acted as a deterrent to candidates who had no claim to election. He apprehended that the larger the constituencies were the greater would be the number of candidates. If this Bill were passed the country would be flooded with "bogus" candidates, simply desirous of bringing themselves and their crotchets before the public. This would be the case at General Elections, but much more the case at by-elections, where men who were obscure would strive to attain that importance in the country for which a by-election afforded special facilities. It seemed to him that the present system acted as a deterrent upon men coming forward who had no claim to a seat in that House, and who did not enjoy the confidence of any large section of any constituency; and, believing that the Bill, by removing that deterrent, would cause very great evils, he should vote against it.

Mr. HIBBERT said, he rose for the purpose of saying a word or two with respect to the views of the Government on this question. He thought the House must feel a sense of satisfaction at the tone of moderation which had prevailed on both sides. The hon. Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. Ashton Dilke), in introducing the Bill, stated that on the second reading of the Bill, which included the first proposal, in a previous Session, it was carried at that time, although the Government of the day were in opposition to it, the Government of the day being then the Conservative Party; but a little later, when a Liberal Government was in Office, and a similar proposal was made, it was not carried; and he (Mr. Hibbert) thought his better part would be, if he was to offer the support of the Government, to say as little as possible about the former action of Parliament on the subject. His hon. Friend the Member for East Gloucestershire (Mr. J. R. Yorke), who had moved the rejection of the Bill, seemed to think he (Mr. Hibbert) was an impartial person in his views on the question; but he was not so impartial as the hon. Member thought, for he had voted on every occasion for the proposal contained in the 1st clause; and, therefore, he had great pleasure now in giving his support to the proposal, and also in giving the support of the Government to it. His hon. Friend had stated that the proposal of the returning expenses was a small matter, and that the amount needed would be very small; but there was no doubt the opposition to the Bill was based not on the amount of the expense thrown on the rates, but on the principle. There was a distinction between this proposal and other matters of expense to which objection was made as falling upon local rates. In this case, the extension of expenditure upon the localities which were interested in the return of Members would be borne by those localities; but if it fell upon the national purse, of course, all persons throughout the country would have to pay, whether they were privileged to return Members or not. Every borough had not the privilege of returning a Member of Parliament; and, certainly, if exceptions were made in cases of this kind, it would not be objected that the expenses should fall rather upon the rates than upon the national purse. It was objected by the hon. Baronet the Member for South Devon (Sir Massey Lopes) that, if this expense was allowed to fall upon the rates, there would probably before long be a demand that the Members' expenses should be borne in the same way. That he (Mr. Hibbert) considered was a very long way off, and he did not think it was a proposal which would meet with very large support in the present House of Commons, or in the country; and if such a proposition was ever made, it would be upon a fair discussion as to whether the expense of such payment should be thrown on the local rates, or on the national funds. But, upon the main question, as to whether the cost of what were called Returning Officers' expenses—that was, the necessary expenses of the machinery of an election—should be paid by the candidate, or should be paid by the localities interested in the return of the Members, then, he thought, there were very strong reasons why a change should be made, and that the expense should cease to be paid by the candidates, and should be thrown upon the rates. This proposal he did not support merely because its working would admit the working man, because he did not think legislation should be carried out with the view of promoting class interests of any kind; but on broader grounds, he said that what had to do with the proper machinery of returning a Member of Parliament, ought to be not only conducted by the localities interested, but ought to be paid for by them; and he thought it would not be difficult to show that the very fact of candidates being called to pay these necessary expenses had been one very great reason why other expenses which were not so legitimate, and practices which were in a great many cases illegal, had by degrees grown up, and money had been so very lavishly expended in the various elections of the country. On the ground, therefore, that the change would lead to a greater economy, he also supported the proposal. He believed that if elections were conducted at the expense of the locality there would be very much smaller settlements made for Returning Officers' expenses, and that what had been charged in such cases would be found in some cases to far exceed what was necessary for the purpose. He was told on good authority that before the last Election the Returning Officers in the Metropolis held a meeting, at which they came to an agreement to demand even a larger sum for expenses than was allowed under the Act passed a few years ago, and detailed in the Schedule of the Act. On the ground, then, that this measure would clear the way to greater purity of election, as he thought; on the ground, also, of leading to greater economy, and on the ground of giving all classes more freely an opportunity of seeking the suffrages of the various boroughs or counties, he thought the 1st clause of the Bill deserved the support of the House. At the same time he felt bound to say that he agreed with his hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) in his remarks that the clause did want some provisions which should, to a certain extent, prevent any large acquisition of what were called "bogus" candidates. The Bill of his right hon. Friend the Postmaster General did contain such a proposal. It provided that in case a certain proportion of votes was not given for any candidate, a part of the money which had been paid for the Returning Officer's expenses should be taken from him and not returned; but that in the case of a proper proportion of the votes being cast, the amount of money paid for the admission of a candidate should be returned to the candidate. In Committee, he should propose, if the Bill passed the second reading, that some such provision should be made, and probably it would be accepted by his hon. Friend. As to the 2nd clause of the Bill, he must say that he could not give the support of the Government to the proposal except to this extent. The Government were willing that the Bill should be read a second time; but they would take a discussion upon it in Committee, and he did not wish in what he had said to commit the Government in any way upon the 2nd clause. There were, no doubt, great objections against it; and, no doubt, there were strong reasons for it, that some such change was in existence in all countries, with the exception of Spain. With the understanding that the Government were only committed to the second reading of the Bill, and that the 2nd clause was open to question, he should support the Motion.

MR. J. G. TALBOT said, that it was curious to find that the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Hibbert), as representing the Government, should get up and say that, although he did not like the Bill as a whole, he was, nevertheless, prepared to give to it the support of the Government. The hon. Gentleman wanted to modify the 1st clause, and said he would oppose the 2nd.

MR. HIBBERT: I ought to have said, if I did not sufficiently explain myself, that if the 1st clause is adopted, it will require some additional provision being made to prevent "bogus" candidates coming forward.

MR. J. G. TALBOT said, that that was with regard to the 1st clause. The 1st clause was to be modified, and the 2nd expunged. Was that so?

MR. HIBBERT: Hear, hear!

MR. J. G. TALBOT: That was rather a remarkable proceeding. There was no precedent for throwing the expense on the ratepayers. No one could complain of what the hon. Member for Newcastle-on-Tyne (Mr. Ashton Dilke) had done; but it was matter of some complaint that Her Majesty's Government should have treated the matter so slightingly. In fact, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert), the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Evelyn Ashley), and the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Fawcett) were the only occupants of the Treasury Bench. All the Members of the Cabinet were absent, and only one of the Members of the Government, representing the Local Government Board, came forward to support a Bill which contained an important principle, inasmuch as it sought to amend the representation of the people. The practice hitherto had always been that the expenses at elections should be borne by the candidates themselves. The matter was not, perhaps, of first-rate importance; but still alterations of the Constitution ought not to be made in that manner. If the Government really wished that this important change should take place, why did not one of their chief authorities come forward and say so boldly? He (Mr. J. G. Talbot) was one of the few Members who had no Returning Officer's expenses, and he was also returned by an absolute majority of the electors, and therefore he could not have any personal objections to the measure; but he thought there were one or two sound and Constitutional objections to a proposition of this sort being brought forward in the manner it had been. To some extent this was a sentimental grievance. What was desired was that all kinds of persons should be at liberty to come forward and seek the suffrages of the electors. Looking at the matter practically, that was not a desirable state of things. It was no use mincing matters, nor representing things as they are not. The fact was that representation in Parliament was a matter of serious and earnest business. It had been said that this was a measure to increase the number of the working men

Members of that House. Well, he had no objection to a working man being in the House; but if, however, those persons wished to represent constituencies, they should be prepared, like other candidates, to devote their lives to the Business of that House. This representation was not a thing to be taken up and put down at pleasure; and unless a man was able by himself, or through his friends, to pay the moderate Returning Officer's fees now demanded, could it be supposed that he was a fit and proper person to sit in that House? Was it right that this attempt to change our present system should be made in so unsatisfactory a manner? As to the second portion of the Bill, it had been so much objected to by all the Members who supported the first section, that it would not be worth his while to spend any time in criticizing it. After all, this was merely tinkering at a great question. If they were to consider the question of the representation of the people, let them do so broadly on the invitation of the Ministers of the Crown. If they were to have Reform Bills, let them not have them in the form of tinkerings on Wednesday afternoons, but on the responsibility of Her Majesty's Government, so that the House might know what they were going to vote upon.

Mr. CROPPER, in opposing the Bill, said, that he considered the 2nd clause to be a deterrent to every hon. Member, as no one was anxious to prolong the excitement of a contested election. If the 1st clause of the Bill were passed in its present form, constituencies would run the risk of having all sorts of candidates thrust upon them; and it was possible that, in the event of an election taking place, there might be found in every borough returning Members to that House a Temperance candidate, a Home Rule candidate, and candidates representing all other kind of crotchets so well known to hon. Members. In fact, ambitious persons might put up for three or four places, not only to get a name, but in the hope that by some lucky chance they might get into Parliament. In reference to the allusions which had been made to the question of paying Members for their services, he would remind the House that that was not the only place where men gave their services for nothing. The whole magistracy of this country gave their services for nothing. He had no doubt that some time or other Her Majesty's Government would bring in a measure embodying the best part of the Bill; but, in its present form, he could not support it.

Mr. FAWCETT said, he hoped that, when he rose to say a few words in support of the Bill, it would not be supposed for a single moment that he intended to supply the want that had been complained of—the absence of leading Members of the Government on the occasion of this debate. He hoped it would not be thought unnatural that he should say a few words in favour of a proposal which he had advocated in season and out of season, both when Liberal and when Conservative Governments had been in Office. He had brought it forward on seven different occasions, and had met with various results. The first time the subject was brought forward was when the Conservative Government was in Office in 1868. It was carried twice in Committee on the Corrupt Practices Bill, and it was only at the very last moment that it was rejected. The next time the proposal was brought forward it was only lost by the very narrow majority of 3. On the subsequent occasions, he was sorry to say, it fared worse, and was rejected by increasing majorities. The hon. Member for East Gloucestershire (Mr. J. R. Yorke) had expressed the hope that he (Mr. Fawcett) had changed his opinion in reference to this proposal; but he had not changed his opinion, and should certainly support the principle of the Bill, because the more he thought of this quesquestion, the more it seemed to him that it embodied a principle which it was of increasing importance that that House should recognize and accept. A great deal had been said, as had often been said before, about the effect that this proposal of throwing the expenses upon the rates would have in encouraging the number of candidates at a contested election; but it appeared to him that if the proposal were properly safeguarded it would tend in the exactly opposite direction; for, at present, constituencies were interested in extravagance, whereas, if this proposition were carried out, constituencies would be interested in economy. If at the present time it appeared that there was not likely to be a contest, it was perfectly well known that a certain number of hundreds of pounds which would otherwise be spent would not be spent; and, under these circumstances, the persons who would participate in the advantages of that expenditure were naturally interested in creating a contest. But supposing this Bill were carried out, who would suffer from an unnecessary contest? It would not be the candidate who was subjected to a vexatious contest, but the constituency, and the consequence would be that the whole public sentiment of the constituency would be against the person who had thrown that unnecessary expense upon the ratepayers. But it was often said that the great argument in favour of making the constituencies responsible for the expenses would be that it would have the effect of bringing forward more working-men candidates. That was very desirable; but he always thought it was unfortunate to discuss this proposition on that narrow issue. He hoped one result of that measure would be, not only to admit working men more readily into that House, but to throw the doors of that House more widely open to those who did not possess a great amount of wealth. But the great importance of the measure, as he (Mr. Fawcett) viewed it, consisted in the fact that it was the recognition of a principle, and that principle was simply this—that a Member who came into that House ought to feel that he undertook a great and important duty—one that he ought not to play with; and, that being the case, it seemed to him of the first consequence that everything should be done to make the constituencies feel that a man who undertook that duty, and discharged it faithfully, ought not to have to pay for the privilege of doing it; and that, at any rate, they should, as far as possible, lessen and lighten the pecuniary burden which might be imposed upon him in the discharge of that public and local duty. It seemed to him that, from that point of view, this measure would improve and place upon their true footing the relations which should exist between Members and constituencies. A great deal had been said in the course of the debate about the second part of the Bill, and one of his chief reasons for troubling the House with these few remarks was that there should be no doubt upon that point. Certainly he should be sorry if his hon. Friend who had brought in the Bill (Mr. Ashton Dilke) should for a moment suppose that in voting for the second reading of the Bill he was voting for the 2nd clause of the Bill. He objected to that 2nd clause, not only on the grounds that had been stated by hon. Members on both sides of the House, but for a wider and a different reason. If anyone would look to the Bill of his hon. Friend, and see the conditions with which he had found it necessary to surround that clause, it at once became evident that it would be almost impossible to work that clause in constituencies which returned more than one or more than two Members. In a few years time the subject of Parliamentary Reform, and the great question of the re-distribution of seats would become questions of absorbing importance to that House. He knew that in expressing the opinions he was about to express, he was expressing opinions which many hon. Members on that side of the House did not share; but he felt that whenever the question of re-distribution should again have to be considered, it was of the first importance that they should not drift in the direction of single-Member constituencies, but that they should have constituences in which two or three or four Members could be returned, so that not only the majority should have a chance of being represented, but that different sections of opinion should have a chance of being represented in proportion to their voting strength. That being the case, he should be sorry if, by a side wind, as it were, he were in any way made to support a proposal which would render it very difficult to have constituencies in future with two, three, or four Members. Another objection which had been urged to the Bill was one which had been brought forward by the hon. Baronet the Member for South Devon (Sir Massey Lopes), who had always taken such a great interest in the question of local taxation. He said that if the charges were to be transferred from the candidates, they ought to be transferred to the Consolidated Fund, and should not be thrown upon local taxation. He (Mr. Fawcett) was as anxious as the hon. Baronet could possibly be that no charges should unnecessarily be thrown upon local taxation; but it seemed to him that there was an insuperable objection to that proposal of throwing it on a public fund. Public money was too often considered to be no one's money, and it was supposed that the Consolidated Fund was a great source of wealth which could be drawn upon at will, and by drawing upon which no one became the poorer. If, therefore, they paid these expenses out of the Consolidated Fund, they interested the constituencies in extravagance; whereas, if they paid them out of the local rates, they interested them in economy; and, moreover, it had always appeared to him that the principle of maintaining the local as well as the Imperial character of representation had been felt by the Conservative as well as the Liberal Party. He would not delay the debate at that hour of the afternoon with any further observations. This question could be raised in many different ways. It could be brought up in connection with the Corrupt Practices Bill or the Ballot Bill. But he could not resume his seat without expressing his satisfaction at the announcement that had been made that afternoon, on the part of the Government, that at length the principle was recognized by the Government that constituencies and not candidates should in future be responsible for the necessary expenses of elections. In recognizing and supporting that principle, he believed an important step had been taken to place the relations between constituencies and Representatives on an improved basis, and not a little would thus be done to place the representative system of this country on a more satisfactory basis. Under these circumstances, he rejoiced in the announcement that had been made on behalf of the Government by his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Hibbert); and, with the qualifications which he had stated, he should certainly give his cordial support to the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON, in opposing the Motion for the second reading of the Bill, said, he was surprised to find that a Ministry who professed to be the friends of the ratepayers were supporting a proposal to lay upon that body an additional charge of something like £300,000 whenever a General Election took place. He was not sure that it was desirable to have no property qualification; in any case, the present law produced some of the effects of a property qualification. Men who aspired to a place in that House should have some independent means and some leisure. He was utterly unable to see how a skilled artizan, or a *bonâ fide* working man, could, after a hard day's toil, come down to the House, and sit up to any hour of the night, as hon. Members were obliged to do. For precisely the same reason, he objected to professional men, whose whole time was employed in their profession, being Members of Parliament. He was prepared to vote against officers on full pay being eligible as Members, and for the same reason he had voted against the admission of clergymen. It was singular that no one had attempted to explain the second part of the Bill, which referred to "absolute and relative" majorities. He confessed he did not know what was meant by a "relative majority," and had supposed, after the condemnation of the phrase "bare majority," that any such epithet was un-Parliamentary. However, his objection to the Bill was that it would add, no matter how slightly, to the local burdens; and he should, therefore, vote against the second reading. The Members on the Opposition side of the House were fighting for a great principle, and that principle was that no addition should be made to the rates.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked what was the real objection felt by hon. Members opposite to the Bill? The hon. Gentleman the Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton) had stated it very fairly. He said that at present there was a high property qualification necessary to enable Gentlemen to become Members of that House, and he desired that that property qualification should continue. According to the hon. Member's view, it was the business of the electors, not to ask anyone what his political views were, but to select some wealthy neighbour as their Representative, to do what he liked, because he knew infinitely better than the constituency. He (Mr. Labouchere), however, wished to point out that the world was not divided into men who had nothing and men who were rich. There were a number of persons in the country who, being possessed of £300 or £400 a-year—too small an income to allow them to stand for a constituency under the existing system, on account of the heavy expenses an election entailed—would, under other and more favourable circumstances, be able to obtain a seat in that House, and who would make useful Members of it. It was out of the question to say that these expenses were very little, because in some constituencies, especially in counties, they were very great. He was very glad that the Government had stated that they were in favour of the principle of the Bill, and he was also very glad that they intended to oppose the 2nd clause in Committee, for he was decidedly opposed to the introduction of the double system of election. It was satisfactory to hear the opinion boldly expressed by them that the expenses in question should be thrown on the ratepayers, and he hoped that the Bill would become law.

MR. LEWIS said, he thought the House had just reason to complain of the absence of Members of the Government when a Bill of that sort, making two vital changes which were totally unconnected with each other, was being considered. Hon. Members knew perfectly well, from the course of proceedings that went on, that the Government had no opinion. Members of the Cabinet, when this new Reform Bill came on, took care to desert the House, and sent the most amiable and respected, but still a subsidiary, Member of the Government to represent their opinions. Did the Government think that way of playing fast and loose with a question of Reform, which, *inter alia*, introduced the French practice at elections, would satisfy their Friends in the House or in the country? The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Hibbert) proposed to take his knife and cut the 1st clause of the Bill into little bits, and cut out Clause 2 altogether. That was not the sort of reform which would satisfy the aspirations of the Radical Party or the Birmingham Caucus. They wanted something far stronger and more drastic than the milk-and-water proposals of the Bill. The Government had themselves a Bill dealing with the election expenses, for that was the real object of the Bill of his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General with regard to the Corrupt Practices Bill; but they had not ventured to put such a proposal as this in that Bill. Yet that Wednesday afternoon, with the Front Ministerial Bench deserted, they were asked to pass that Reform Bill *in petto*, for the purpose of satisfying hon. Members below the Gangway, and showing that there were some Radical Members of the Government who were prepared to play helter-skelter with the Constitution, and, for that afternoon, at any rate, would show how Radical they were. He himself happened to be in a peculiar position, because he had voted for Clause 1 in the last Parliament; but he thought that the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General mistook what Clause 1 was.

MR. FAWCETT said, that he had never proposed that all expenses should be thrown on the rates. He had limited it to the Returning Officers' expenses.

MR. LEWIS said, he should like to give the House an opportunity of voting on Clause 1, although his own opinion differed from that of most of those on the Opposition Benches. He believed the result of that portion of the measure would be that they would have every wretched "ism" on the Liberal side represented by a candidate at elections. He believed one result would be that the Conservative Party would benefit by the expenses of elections being thrown on the constituencies, because the Vegetarians, the Dipsomaniacs, and Hypochondriacs would have a candidate, every conceivable opinion of the smallest and most minute character in the Liberal Party, from the lowest class of working men upwards, would be represented at the poll; and he believed that in many constituencies, where an unfortunate Conservative candidate could not at the present time show his face, they would find the Conservative candidate at the head of the poll, attended by all the Radical "isms" a long way below him. That was a result he should be glad to see; but he would rather not see that if it involved the sacrifice of a principle. He himself believed that there was a great deal to be said in favour of the 1st clause of the Bill, for it was in the interest of the Conservative Party; but it was not popular with the Party, for reasons which it was not necessary to go into. Still, he should have voted for it, as he had done on a previous occasion;

but he declined to be dragged through the Lobbies with that double-barrelled Reform Bill, merely on the idea that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board would be able to convince the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Ashton Dilke) that he ought to submit to the physical deformity which he proposed to inflict on the Bill —namely, to cut out Clause 2 and leave only a part of Clause 1. There seemed, however, to be no probability that there would ever be any practical step taken by this great Legislature during 1882. They would probably end, as they had begun, with a considerable amount of speechmaking, and no legislative results. Every step that was taken by the Liberal Government seemed to be directed to that end—utterly to destroy every capacity of legislation for 1882. They might, therefore, just as well discuss that Bill as anything else; and, so far as he could judge, that seemed to be the opinion of Ministers of the Crown who had absented themselves on this occasion. He protested, however, against the Government voting in favour of the second reading of a Bill, the main principle of which they disapproved.

Mr. D. DAVIES said, he rose for the purpose of opposing the Bill "body and soul." The ratepayers had enough to pay, and did not want to be further burdened. There were plenty of candidates willing to pay their own expenses, and they were a better class of candidates than those who would go upon the rates. The right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General had said there would be a less amount of expenditure; but he (Mr. D. Davies) could not agree with him in that, for he believed there would be much greater expenditure if this Bill became law. There would be a contest at every General Election in every constituency. Now, at the last two General Elections he had had no contest. But that was not for want of candidates, because on the last occasion three gentlemen from London came down, and, having looked at the place, went away again. If his constituents, who were Liberals, had to pay the expenses, of course those gentlemen would have contested his seat; but when they knew that they would have to pay expenses they did not like the look of matters. He should, therefore, stand to his guns, although he voted against the Government.

Mr. DUCKHAM said, he could not support the Bill, as he did not approve of its principle. He saw no connection between paying the expenses of local elections out of rates and the proposal to pay the election expenses of Members of Parliament. Neither did he think that the ratepayers of England should have any additional burdens imposed upon them, as would be the case if the Bill became law. At present they had a great many burdens placed upon them for national objects which they ought not to bear; and if those expenses were added those burdens would be further increased. He considered the measure would be most iniquitous. He protested against the Bill, and regretted that the Government had announced their intention of supporting it.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 87; Noes 85: Majority 2.—(Div. List, No. 65.)

Bill *committed* for *To-morrow*.

MOTIONS.

INCLOSURE (CEFN DRAWEN) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hibbert, Bill to confirm the Provisional Order for the inclosure of certain lands known as Cefn Drawen Common, situate in the parish of Glascwm, in the county of Radnor, in pursuance of a Report of the Inclosure Commissioners for England and Wales, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Hibbert and Secretary Sir William Harcourt.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 126.]

INCLOSURE (BETTWS DISSERTH) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hibbert, Bill to confirm the Provisional Order for the inclosure of certain lands known as Bettws Disserth, situate in the parish of Bettws Disserth, in the county of Radnor, in pursuance of a Report of the Inclosure Commissioners for England and Wales, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Hibbert and Secretary Sir William Harcourt.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 127.]

INCLOSURE (ASHLESIDE) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hibbert, Bill to confirm the Provisional Order for the inclosure of certain lands known as Ashleside Common, situate in the parish of Coverham, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, in pursuance of a Report of the Inclosure Commissioners for England and

Wales, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HIBBERT and Secretary Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 128.]

IRISH REPRODUCTIVE LOAN FUND ACT (1874) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. BLAKE, Bill to amend "The Irish Reproductive Loan Fund Act, 1874," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. BLAKE, Colonel COLTHURST, Colonel NOLAN, Mr. O'SHEA, Mr. O'CONNOR POWER, and Mr. COLLINS.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 133.]

PARISH REGISTERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. BORLASE, Bill to make provision for the better preservation of the ancient Parochial Registers of England and Wales, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. BORLASE, Mr. BRYCE, Mr. MELLOR, and Mr. COCHRANE-PATRICK.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 132.]

MILITARY MANŒUVRES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Secretary CHILDERS, Bill for making provision for facilitating the Manœuvres of Troops to be assembled during the present Summer, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Secretary CHILDERS and Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 134.]

House adjourned at Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 20*th April*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—*Sat First in Parliament*—The Lord Boston, after the death of his father.

PUBLIC BILLS — *First Reading* — Elementary Education Provisional Orders Confirmation (Finchley, &c.) * (63).

Committee—Report—Duke of Albany (Establishment) * (58).

Their Lordships met at Four o'clock;—

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROVISIONAL ORDERS CONFIRMATION (FINCHLEY, &C.) BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Education Department under "The Elementary Education Act, 1870," to enable the School Boards for Finchley, Llanarth, and Upper Dylais, to put in force the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, and the Acts amending the same—Was *presented* by The LORD PRESIDENT; read 1ª, and *referred* to the Examiners. (No. 63.)

And having gone through the Business on the Paper, without debate—

House adjourned at a quarter past Four o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 20*th April*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—Canals, *appointed.*

SUPPLY — *considered in Committee* — *Resolutions* [April 3] *reported.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Water Provisional Orders * [135]; Gas Provisional Orders * [136].

Select Committee — *Report* — Arklow Harbour * [96-137].

Third Reading—Army (Annual) * [105], and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS—THE "CITY OF LIMERICK."

MR. RYLANDS asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether it is intended to hold an inquiry into the loss of the steamer "City of Limerick."

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The *City of Limerick* was detained by the Board of Trade some time ago; but the case was carried to a Court of Survey. The vessel was unconditionally released by the Court of Survey and allowed to proceed to sea. The owners have since commenced an action against the Board of Trade for damages and costs of the detention. That case will, I hope, be heard in the course of a few days by the Court of Appeal. While it is *sub judice* it is, of course, not desirable to institute any other inquiry. When the case is decided by the Final Court of Appeal, I will consider whether a further inquiry should not be instituted.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MESSRS. HELY AND DOWLING.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will take into consideration the cases of two farmers from Hollywood, county Wicklow, named

Hely and Dowling, who have been in custody for the last four months in Dundalk Gaol, and will, in consideration of the peaceable condition of the county, order their release?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the cases of these men had been considered; but he could not recommend their release.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — PROCLAMATION OF COUNTY WICKLOW.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has seen the following statement in "Wicklow News Letter" of Saturday last, the local Conservative Journal:—

> "Although the disease of agrarian disturbance has been somewhat prevalent on the western side of the county, not only have the greater and most important districts been entirely free from it, but even in those places where it has been represented as epidemic, rumour and current reports have exaggerated the real state of things. . . . The two cases representing the serious crime of the Baltinglass district for half a year were both dealt with by Justice Harrison on Friday last; one of them was the unlawfully exposing a child, and was punished by a week's imprisonment; the other, a trumpery case of Boycotting, in which the accused, a woman, being found guilty by the jury on the charge of intimidation, was ordered to come up for judgment when called on;"

and, whether, in consideration of the peace and good order prevailing, he will recommend the Lord Lieutenant to revoke the Orders in Council under which the county is proscribed and proclaimed?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that although, generally speaking, the present state of the county Wicklow was exceptionally quiet, he did not, as yet, see his way to the release of the political prisoners belonging to that part of Ireland.

RETURN No. 88 (REVENUE, TAXATION AND POPULATION)—PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION.

Sir JOHN HAY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he will lay upon the Table, as a Supplement to Return No. 88, the number of Members of Parliament which each of the three divisions of the United Kingdom would obtain if the 658 Members were allotted, in accordance with the contribution of each to the Imperial Revenue?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: The information which the right hon. and gallant Member now asks was omitted at my request from the Return moved for by the hon. Member for Stafford. My reason for objecting to the insertion of it was, and is, that there are doubts how far the figures in the Returns represent the true incidence of taxation in the Three Kingdoms; and this being so, it is not advisable to insert in an official Return figures resting on an uncertain basis. Anyone who cares to do so can readily make the calculation for himself.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE POSTMISTRESS OF ARRAN ISLAND.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is a fact that Mary Henion, who has held the office of postmistress in Arran Island for the last twenty years, has been dismissed in consequence of her son being arrested under the Coercion Act; whether during her long service she fulfilled her duties to the satisfaction of the Post Office authorities; and, whether her summary dismissal because of the suspected wrong doing of her son has been sanctioned by him?

Mr. FAWCETT: In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that it is not the fact that Mrs. Henion, postmistress of Arran Island, has been dismissed in consequence of the arrest of her son under the Coercion Act. For some time past the duties of the Arran Island Post Office have not been conducted in a satisfactory manner; and it is on this account, and not on account of the son's arrest, that the office has been placed in other hands.

Mr. REDMOND: Did the dismissal come immediately after the arrest?

Mr. FAWCETT: It came after; but I had had the matter under consideration for some time.

EGYPT—THE BAY OF ASSAB.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that Her Majesty's Government have recommended the Egyptian Government to enter into a Convention with the Governments of Great Britain and Italy for the cession to Italy of a portion of territory in the Bay of Assab, on the West Coast of the Red Sea; whether this action is at variance with the policy hitherto followed by Her Majesty's Government as regards the claims of Foreign Governments to obtain territorial settlements on the Egyptian Coast of the Red Sea; and, if so, what are the reasons which have led to this change of policy; whether the Government of the Khedive have remonstrated against the pressure sought to be put upon them in this matter, and have refused to sign the Convention; what is the present state of the negotiations; and, whether there is any objection to communicate to Parliament the text of the proposed Convention, and the Correspondence that has taken place in respect thereto?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Her Majesty's Government have recommended the Turkish and Egyptian Governments to enter into a Convention with Italy, defining and limiting the rights of the latter country in respect to the territories at Assab, acquired and occupied by the Rubattino Company in the first instance, and subsequently by the Italian Government. They considered that it was for the interest of Egypt that such a Convention should be concluded in order to avoid the complications that might arise if the Italian occupation of Assab were maintained on an unrecognized and undefined footing, and with a view of obtaining the recognition by Italy of the Sovereignty of the Sultan, and authority of the Khedive, over the West Coast of the Red Sea. The proposed Convention stipulated that the establishment at Assab should have a purely commercial character, and contain provisions for the prohibition of the traffic in arms and of the Slave Trade. The Egyptian Government has refused the Convention; but correspondence on the subject is still going on, and the Papers could not be laid on the Table without the consent of the other Governments concerned. With regard to the hon. Member's suggestion that the action taken in this matter is at variance with the policy hitherto followed by Her Majesty's Government, as regards the claim of Foreign Governments to obtain territorial settlements on the Egyptian Coast of the Red Sea, I must point out that Her Majesty's Government had to deal with accomplished facts, and with a territorial settlement already obtained, and that they took the course which, under the circumstances, seemed best calculated to protect the interests of this country and of Egypt.

Mr. BOURKE: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman can inform the House with whom the negotiations were first carried on between the Company and the territorial authority in Africa—whether it was the Native Tribes, or the Egyptian Government, or the Sultan?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The Company appear to have obtained concessions from various local Sultans, and they actually occupied their settlements at Assab Bay a considerable time ago. I think that while the right hon. Gentleman was in Office the Italian flag was flying there.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS said, that in consequence of the answer of the hon. Baronet he should deem it his duty to bring the subject under the notice of the House and to move a Resolution.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MESSRS. JAMES DOWLING, DENIS SOMERS, TERENCE BYRNE, SIMON MALONE, AND ARTHUR MOLONEY.

Mr. LALOR (for Mr. Arthur O'Connor) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the neighbourhood of Monasterevan, in Kildare, has remained free from outrages; whether Messrs. James Dowling, Denis Somers, Terence Byrne, Simon Malone, and Arthur Moloney, of that district, were arrested on suspicion; whether Messrs. Terence Byrne and Denis Somers have been liberated; and, whether the same considerations which led him to consent to their liberation will apply to the cases of Messrs. Dowling, Malone, and Moloney?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that most of these men had been released. The cases of the remaining four prisoners had been considered—one had been released, and the other three could not with safety be released at present.

Mr. LALOR asked why it was that James Dowling was refused the ordinary parole of three days?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he should get Notice of that Question.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—THE RETURN FOR QUARTER TO 21st MARCH.

Mr. LALOR (for Mr. Arthur O'Connor) asked the Chief Secretary to the

Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will lay upon the Table Return showing the number of Evictions in the quarter ended 31st March 1882 (in continuation of Return, No. 9, of the present Session), and of the Judgments for the Recovery of Land entered up in the High Court of Justice (Ireland), and of the Ejectment Decrees granted during the same period (in continuation of Return, No. 10, of the present Session)?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had ordered these Returns, and hoped to lay them on the Table on Tuesday.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—DUTY OF PROTECTING "EMERGENCY MEN."

Mr. LALOR (for Mr. Arthur O'Connor) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether twenty men of the Kilkenny Constabulary Forces were employed from the 5th to the 23rd September last in "protecting" Emergency men on the property of Mr. Boyd, of Tinwere, Durrow, Queen's County, with extra pay at 3*s*. 6*d*. a-day; whether they were relieved by an equal number of the Queen's County Constabulary, drafted from different points of the county, who did the same duty, and were placed in the same circumstances as the Kilkenny men; whether it is true that a large number of the Kilkenny Constabulary were employed at Mr. Keating's residence at Woodgift, in county Kilkenny, for some three months, also receiving the 3*s*. 6*d*. a-day extra pay; whether application was made, in proper form, for the allowance by the Queen's County constables employed as stated; and, whether any, and, if so, what, answer was made to it; and, upon what ground the allowance is granted to one body and withheld from the other?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the men alluded to in the first instance received 2*s*. 6*d*. a-day extra pay while on duty at Durrow. They were replaced by men of the Queen's County, which was the place in which they were stationed. The station was reduced to 11 men, and they were lodged in the police barrack. The County Inspector did not think there was any necessity for extra pay for these men. The men employed at Woodgift received 3*s*. 6*d*. per day extra pay; but they were lodged in an outhouse, and in the opinion of the officers were entitled to this extra pay.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE SUB-COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a pledge was given by the Government that the names of the Sub-Commissioners would be laid before Parliament; and, whether any Return giving this information has been laid upon the Table; and, if not, in what manner a list of the names can be obtained?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, the Return would be presented to-day; but the Members of the House could very easily ascertain the names without this Return.

Mr. HEALY said, that as there always appeared to be some difficulty in obtaining Returns upon Irish matters, he would like to know from the Chief Secretary when they might expect the Return he had promised himself with reference to the prisoners under the Coercion Act?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he believed in a day or two.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MAJOR BOND, R.M.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the three months for which Major Bond was engaged are now up; and, if so, whether the appointment has been renewed or confirmed?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: The three months expired about the beginning of this month. He is now, like other magistrates, on one month's notice. It is not the case that he has been re-appointed for three months. At a month's notice his services could, if necessary, be dispensed with.

Mr. HEALY inquired whether it was the intention of the Government to retain Major Bond from month to month?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: That will depend on the condition of the country. There is no intention of giving him notice immediately.

OFFICIAL SALARIES—MR. ALGERNON WEST.

Mr. W. J. CORBET (for Mr. Biggar) asked the Financial Secretary to the

Treasury, Whether it is not a fact that Mr. Algernon West, C.B., the Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, holds the post of Gentleman Usher to the Queen at a salary of £180 per annum, or thereabouts; and, if so, why his salary, as such, is not, in accordance with the instructions of the Public Accounts Committee, shown on the face of the Revenue Estimates, in addition to his salary of £2,000 as Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: As regards the first portion of the Question, the hon. Member is, as far as I am aware, correctly informed. The Committee of Public Accounts recommended that when a public officer receives a grant or temporary increase to his salary in respect to special services, the fact of such increase should be shown either on the Estimate or on the Appropriation Account of the Department to which he belongs. Payments made by Her Majesty out of Her Civil List to officers of Her Household do not fall within the recommendation of the Committee; and the Treasury have not required such payments to be noted in Estimates or Accounts.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—THE GORT BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been drawn to a resolution passed by the Gort Board of Guardians, requesting that their Chairman might be released from prison; and, if he would kindly accede to the prayer of the Guardians?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that he had seen the resolution in question, and that the case would shortly be reconsidered.

ARMY ORGANIZATION—ROYAL ARTILLERY AND ROYAL ENGINEERS—OFFICERS' RETIREMENT.

MR. STEWART MACLIVER asked the Secretary of State of War, If there is any Clause or Regulation in the Royal Warrant for Pay and Promotion, or in the Corrigenda Warrant, under which the Colonels and Lieutenant Colonels of the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers, who obtained that rank prior to the 1st October 1877, can be compelled, against their wishes, to retire, or remain unemployed if they do not retire?

MR. CHILDERS: In reply to my hon. Friend, I have to state that under the Warrant of the 25th of June, 1881, now in force, of which the Corrigenda Warrant forms a part, there is no regulation compelling the officers to whom he refers to retire before the ages named in the Warrant, which are 60, 59, or 58, according to circumstances. These ages are earlier than those named in the former Warrant of 1878, and Her Majesty has undoubted power further to reduce them if thought necessary. As to employment, the Secretary of State has absolute power to approve the employment of such officers recommended by the Commander-in-Chief as he may think fit.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—EDITORS OF NEWSPAPERS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT.

MR. LALOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it the fact that suspects who are now in gaol under the Coercion Act, and who are owners and editors of newspapers, are permitted to write for their journals, provided they shall not refer to imprisonment or to Government; and that in all doubtful cases the governor of the prison shall forward the manuscript of a leading article to the authorities of Dublin Castle; and, if it be not a fact that, in consequence of such regulations, leading articles have been kept back for a fortnight?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, it was a fact that prisoners confined under the Protection Act were permitted to write for their journals, upon condition that they did not in any way carry on agitation or proceedings which would be thought necessary to detain them. When the Governor of the prison considered articles or communications to be objectionable, he informed the persons concerned that the communications would not be forwarded. The person could then request the Governor to forward them to him (Mr. W. E. Forster) or the Under Secretary. He was not aware that leading articles had been kept back for a fortnight.

MR. LALOR asked if it was not a fact that the editors were not allowed to mention anything in regard to prisoners, nor in regard to the Government of the country?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, undoubtedly the editors could not, from the prisons, write articles complaining against the Government or their treatment.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—"PAT."

Mr. LALOR asked the Postmaster General, If it is by his orders that the comic paper "Pat," published in Dublin, is not allowed to pass through the Post Office, particularly when directed by Members of this House to their friends?

Mr. FAWCETT: I have made inquiry with reference to the Question of the hon. Member, and I find that nothing is known of any copies of *Pat* having been arrested in their passage through the post, either in this country or in Ireland. Certainly, I have given no instructions upon the subject.

Mr. LALOR said, that if the right hon. Gentleman would apply to him privately, he would inform him of cases in which the paper in question had been arrested at the Post Office.

Mr. FAWCETT: If the hon. Gentleman will call upon me, I will gladly inquire into any case, details of which may be communicated to me.

ARMY—PAYMENT OF PENSIONS.

Mr. O'SHEA asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he is aware that considerable disappointment and inconvenience have, in many cases, been occasioned by the delay which has occurred in sending out orders for the payment of Army pensions under the new system; and, whether he will take steps to add to the great advantages which the new system confers on the pensioners, by arranging that in future all orders for the payment of Pensions shall be issued within a week of the date upon which the latter fall due?

Mr. GORST also asked, Whether the effect of the new Regulations for payment of Military and Naval Pensions through the Post Office has not been to cause a delay in the receipt of pensions, in some cases, of upwards of fifteen days; and, whether arrangements will in future be made for sending money orders to persons entitled to pensions at such dates as will admit of their receiving their pensions on the days on which they are due?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to my hon. and gallant Friend (Mr. O'Shea), I have to thank him for the commendation which he has given to the new system of paying pensions. As might be expected on the first introduction of the entirely novel plan, there has been some little friction, and this has been aggravated by two circumstances; one, that, in consequence of the very large sum (£700,000) required, it could not be drawn from the Exchequer, under the present or former system, until a few days after the beginning of the financial year; and the second that the first day of payment fell in the Easter holidays—in fact, on the Saturday between Good Friday and Easter Sunday. But in spite of this the payments, on an average, in many districts will be completed at earlier dates than under the former system. I have given orders under which, in the three other quarters of the year, the payments will begin on the 1st of the month, and in April on the very earliest practicable day after the 1st, and this should secure the object of the latter part of the Question. It must be borne in mind that all these pensions are payments in advance—not, like salaries, after the completion of the service. This answer, I think, fully meets the Question of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst).

Mr. GORST asked whether the answer applied to Naval pensions?

Mr. CHILDERS: Yes; all payments, whether for Naval or Military pensions, are made through the Post Office.

IRELAND—MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD—CIRCULAR BY THE INSPECTOR OF POLICE, COUNTY CLARE.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that on Tuesday last Mr. Clifford Lloyd, special magistrate for Clare, interfered to prevent the erection of huts to shelter a large number of evicted families at Tulla, in that county, although a site for the huts had been secured from the legal possessor of the ground, and although twelve huts had been actually built, and six others were in course of construction; whether Mr. Lloyd declared the building of the huts to be illegal, ordered the builder to leave the place that evening, and told him that if he did not leave he would be arrested; whether, if the facts be as stated, the policy of the Government is to prevent the sheltering of evicted tenants through the sympathy of their neighbours, aided by benevolent action in their behalf; whether the following circular respecting Mr. Clifford Lloyd, or a circular to the like effect, has been issued by the County Inspector of Constabulary in Clare to the Sub-Inspectors under his command:—

> "Ennis, 4th March, 1882.
>
> "As there is too good reason for the belief that every possible means will be used to assassinate Mr. C. Lloyd, it behoves the men of this county to be on the alert to prevent it:
>
> "Men proceeding on his escort should be men of great determination, as well as steadiness, and even on suspicion of an attempt should at once use their firearms, to prevent the bare possibility of an attempt on that gentleman's life:
>
> "If men should accidentally commit an error in shooting any person, on suspicion of that person being about to commit murder, I shall exonerate them by coming forward and producing this document:
>
> "H. Smith,
> "1st Co. Inspector;"

whether a similar circular was issued by the County Inspector of Constabulary in Limerick; and, whether both circulars were issued in obedience to instructions from the Inspector General of Constabulary; and, if so, whether the Government were cognizant of these proceedings, and approved of them?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: The first part of this Question refers to the prevention of the erection of huts provided for families at Tulla. I received notice of the Question yesterday at Dublin, and telegraphed it on to Mr. Clifford Lloyd for his observations. I have received a telegraphic despatch from him this morning, which I will read, and which, in fact, he wished me to read to the House—

> "The grossest intimidation is being practised by the Land League upon tenants. Fearing death, they are prevented in many instances paying their rents, and under League intimidation and inducement suffer eviction. When evicted, in order to keep a grip of the soil, the Land League built huts on other tenants' lands, who dare not refuse their lands for the purpose, many are glad to do so—(*i. e.*, to give their lands), and the Land League then give permission to the owners to pay their rent to avoid eviction. Money is collected about the county for the huts, no one daring to refuse to contribute. The plea of charity is shallow and untrue. The huts are meant to be and are the standing menace and intimidation to prevent the owner letting his land, and to intimidate any persons from entering it. Any person taking any such farm as tenant or caretaker, would at present, in the counties of Limerick and Clare, be murdered. After grave consideration, and with the view of protecting the lives and property of those within my jurisdiction, I have determined to put the law in force against any persons guilty of such acts of intimidation and lawlessness. As regards the evicted tenants near Tulla, many of them have privately paid their rents, but are not permitted by the Land League to return into their farms, but are forced to consent to occupy the Land League huts. On my individual authority as a magistrate I ordered the police to warn all persons engaged in this lawlessness to at once desist on pain of arrest, and warned an emissary of the Land League in Tulla to leave the county at once, which she did. I am also acting in a similar manner throughout the counties of Limerick and Clare, and am prepared to defend my action in a Court of Law. I yesterday upbraided several tenants, who were in fear of being evicted on Lord Cloncurry's property, for not standing together and defying the Land League's tyranny, sooner than submit to what they were undergoing. Their reply in the presence of other officers was, 'Life is sweet, sir; we should be shot if we did not obey.'"

With regard to the second part of the Question, as to the protection of Mr. Clifford Lloyd, I believe that no instructions have been issued to the police with reference to it; but if the hon. Member will repeat his Question on another day, I will see what information can be obtained from the County Inspector on the subject.

Mr. SEXTON said, he should not repeat the Question, and he would conclude with a Motion. He had the best evidence that this infamous Circular had been issued by the County Inspector of Constabulary in the County of Clare. It had come to him from a member of the Irish Bar, and upon the authority of one of the most respected priests in that county. He would read the Circular to the House—

> "Ennis, 4th March, 1882.
>
> "As there is too good reason for the belief that every possible means will be used to assassinate Mr. C. Lloyd, it behoves the men of this county to be on the alert to prevent it."

So far, no one would for a moment question the propriety of the Circular. Let the County Inspector and his men, and the whole of the Constabulary Force, and the whole British Army in Ireland be on the alert to prevent it. Let Mr. Clifford Lloyd have an escort before and behind him, and on each flank, and let them use every precaution that human ingenuity could suggest to prevent his assassination. But the Circular went on to say—

> "Men proceeding on his escort should be men of great determination, as well as steadiness; and even on suspicion of an attempt should at once use their firearms, to prevent the bare possibility of an attempt on that gentleman's life. If men should accidentally commit an error in shooting any person, on suspicion of that person being about to commit murder, I shall exonerate them by coming forward and producing this document."

And the Circular was signed "H. Smith, 1st Co. Inspector." Who was H. Smith, first County Inspector? He was a person who was no more fit to be an Archbishop than he was to be an officer of police. He was the person who, at the head of his police force, used the language of a lunatic at Miltown, where he faced an infuriated crowd, and, presenting a revolver at them, cried out—"You cowardly dogs, come on." This was a peace officer who, instead of showing tact and self-command at a crisis, tried to inflame the passions of the people by threats of physical violence which were most likely to produce the state of things which would entitle him to shoot down the people. He had no doubt the Circular was issued; and now what would be the effect of such a document as that going into the hands of the police? Was the life of Mr. Clifford Lloyd, in the estimation of the House, or of the Government, or of the law, of greater value than that of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, or of the Viceroy? The Viceroy or the Chief Secretary proceeded through the country with ample guards, no doubt, but not with instructions given to the police which not only surpassed but directly contravened the law of the land. The House knew what was the law of the land. If a man's life was threatened he was entitled, in defence of his life, to wound or kill; or if public officers were placed in charge of any person, and an attack were made upon that person, they were entitled, in defence of his life, to wound or kill. But what an extraordinary travesty of the law was contained in this Circular! It was not required that there should be an attack, or even a threat; but it was left to the absolute discretion of the humblest constable in Clare, with his loaded rifle on his arm, to determine at what moment he should shoot and kill any of Her Majesty's subjects. Mr. Clifford Lloyd had an ample escort by night and by day. Let the House consider the effect of this Circular. A man opening a gate or leaving a field to go on to the highway, or mounting a stile, or jumping over a hedge, or appearing to lounge in a doubtful manner at the corner of a road, if he was seen by any member of the escort was now liable to be shot—nay, was almost certain to be shot, for the danger to a policeman consisted, not in shooting, but in not shooting. The County Inspector was to the policeman the fountain of honour and of faith, and the sole source of promotion. The policeman knew that if he did not fire he would be reproved, and perhaps dismissed; while if he fired and killed a man, he would be exonerated from blame, and would be considered a man of steadiness and determination. He asked if that would not be the result of such a document, and if it was not a monstrous travesty of all law, that, instead of waiting for some overt proof of guilt, every common policeman was allowed to be the judge of a man's intentions. The effect of that document would be that the highways of the county of Clare would be denied to the people, for it would be impossible for a man wishing to regard his life to go on a highway where Mr. Clifford Lloyd might pass. He denounced that Circular, in presence of the House, as a gross, scandalous, and barbarous incitement to murder. He asked, was that one of the resources of civilization? Was the life it was issued to protect so very valuable—so much more valuable than that of the Chief Secretary or the Lord Lieutenant? He called for the withdrawal of the Circular, and he asked the Chief Secretary to inquire from the County Inspector whether he issued it. It was a singular evasion of the question that, instead of referring to the man who issued the Circular, he should refer to Mr. Clifford Lloyd. The question should not be asked from Mr. Clifford Lloyd, but the official bull-dog who put his revolver in the face of the crowd was the man who should answer it. He repeated that the Irish Party could not suffer such a document as that to remain abroad without demanding its immediate withdrawal. As for Mr. Clifford Lloyd himself, he did not intend to waste many words upon that gentleman. He was that sort of pliant instrument which despotic Governments, in times of confusion, always found ready to their hands. He was by nature, as well as by his present function, a tyrant. He had no regard for age or youth, or respect for sex. He had signalized every day of his career as a magistrate by some act of tyranny and insult. He began by caning the people in the streets of Kilmallock. His next achievement was the arrest of a boy of six or seven years old, and afterwards prosecuted some ladies on a baseless charge which he was obliged to withdraw in his own Court, not with shame—for shame was impossible to such a nature —but with confusion. Instead of allaying the passions of the people, he had done everything in his power to aggravate disturbance in his district, with the result that it was now one of the most unquiet in the country. Was it any wonder that they found his example imitated in a thousand forms throughout the country? But he knew he was a pet of the Chief Secretary. The year before last the right hon. Gentleman told a Resident Magistrate that Mr. Clifford Lloyd was the only honest man amongst them.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I entirely deny that statement.

Mr. SEXTON: Mr. Speaker, I can only repeat my observation.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not entitled to make that assertion after the disclaimer of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. SEXTON: Sir, I shall not contest the right hon. Gentleman's statement. I shall only say that the statement was made to me by a clergyman, who declared that he had it from a Resident Magistrate.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is bound to withdraw his observations, after the statement of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. SEXTON said, he withdrew his remarks, and only said that much to justify himself. They had an instance of such conduct on Sunday night last, when a policeman in Waterford rushed into a shop where a respectable woman was engaged at the window reading the *United Ireland*, seized her, threw her down, and, kneeling upon her, searched her in an indecent manner. Such an outrage, if committed in Bulgaria, would well serve to excite the horror of a Mid Lothian audience. But why was so much care taken of the life of Mr. Clifford Lloyd? What care had he taken of the lives of the Irish people that his own life should be considered sacrosanct? He (Mr. Sexton) must assume that Circular to be issued until he found that it was not. These poor tenants would never have been evicted if the Government, with their Land Act, had provided a humane and statesmanlike method of dealing with arrears. These tenants would not have been evicted if the Government had provided a plan by which the action of the Courts could be rapidly brought to bear on the case of the tenants. These tenants could get no satisfaction from their landlords as to arrears, or as to their current rents. And how did the Government treat these defenceless tenants? By the process of the law they were evicted; and when public funds, subscribed by the Irish people and their friends, were applied to the erection of huts to shelter them, Mr. Clifford Lloyd declared the erection of those huts to be illegal, because they had been got up by an illegal association. The Ladies' Land League was not an illegal association, although there was an assertion to that effect. Earl Cowper issued a Proclamation against the National Land League, but not against the Ladies' Land League. He refrained from doing that, and left it to one of those convenient subordinates at Dublin Castle. He would there notice a curious discrepancy between the reason given by Mr. Clifford Lloyd and the reason given by the Attorney General for Ireland for interfering with the erection of these huts.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): I gave no reason; I gave a hypothetical opinion on the statement of the hon. Member.

Mr. SEXTON said, that the Attorney General for Ireland gave a hypothetical opinion, which might be treated as an absolute opinion, considering how the facts stood. The right hon. and learned Gentleman's official zeal sometimes outran his official discretion, and he said Mr. Clifford Lloyd would be entitled to arrest people under the Common Law.

He (Mr. Sexton) thought the Attorney General for Ireland would have told him that Mr. Clifford Lloyd would be entitled to arrest people under an uncommon law—namely, the Coercion Act of last year. If Mr. Clifford Lloyd acted on that law, he would ask, why did he not suppress the Ladies' Land League? The Land League had been declared to be illegal by the highest tribunal; but the Ladies' Land League had not. It was by the arrest of individual after individual belonging to the Land League that the Government had endeavoured to put it down. Why had they not proceeded by the same process against the members of the Ladies' Land League? The Attorney General for Ireland had discovered something in the Common Law that no one knew of before. He (Mr. Sexton) asked the attention of the Attorney General for England and the Lord Advocate for Scotland to this—that the Attorney General for Ireland declared that, while the Coercion Act entitled the authorities to arrest anyone who was suspected of having committed an illegal act, the Common Law went much further, for it entitled the Government to arrest and imprison persons, not for anything they had done, but upon the vaguest suspicion of something they might hereafter do. The Common Law rested upon decisions. Would the Attorney General for Ireland name any decision of any Court in any century in England, Ireland, or Scotland, which sanctioned the imprisonment of persons who had been turned out of their homes and left shelterless on the roadside, because they accepted the shelter offered them by their neighbours? That the shelter given to these tenants was legally provided for them could not be disputed. Five of the huts were erected on the land of one man, who had as good a right to have those huts there as the Attorney General for Ireland had to sit on the Treasury Bench. [An hon. MEMBER: A better.] Yes; because his was a permanent right. The other huts had been erected on the land of men who, though not its owners, were its legal possessors. As to the monstrous suggestion that this had been done as part of a system of intimidation by the Land League, he dismissed it as unworthy of attention. There never was an organization which occupied such a grand historic position as the Land League did at that moment. It started with two objects. One was to prevent rack-renting. The Liberal Party said they had achieved that; and therefore they had taken a leaf out of the Land League book. The other object was to make the tenants the owners of the farms. The Tory Party were now taking that leaf out of the book of the Land League. And the Land League occupied this position—that the two great English Parties were at the present moment plagiarists of its policy. He asked the Government to pause, even on the verge of the abyss that was before them. They had gone far enough against the people. Were the poor peasants to be turned out of their homes, and, being left without any means of shelter, to be driven over the precipice of despair? He begged to remind the Government of the story related by Plutarch regarding the Pro-Consul who told the Islanders to whom he had been sent to collect taxes that he had on his side a great God—the God of Force; when the Islanders informed him that they had on their side two Gods—the Gods of Poverty and Despair. He might say that the Gods of Poverty and Despair were on the side of the Irish peasants; and he warned the Government not to employ the God of Force too much. The right hon. Gentleman might say the people could go into the workhouse. They knew the feelings of aversion with which the Irish people regarded the workhouses. The humblest peasant would rather die than accept the charity of a workhouse. But why should they be asked to accept it, seeing that their neighbours had offered them sites for shelters, and that money publicly subscribed by their own countrymen was available to enable them to provide that shelter? What did the action of the Government mean? He would read to the House a document which he received the previous night from Mr. Murphy, Clerk of the Tullamore Board of Guardians. The Board had, on the 18th instant, the application of Pat Meehan, his wife, and six children, for outdoor relief. Meehan was a carpenter employed by Mr. Kelly, of Dublin, who was the contractor for the erection of wooden huts on the property of Major Molony, of Tullow. Mr. Clifford Lloyd stopped the work, warning the contractor that he was working for an illegal society, and Meehan was left without employment. The Guardians, after considering the case, resolved that the facts be inserted on the minutes, and that a copy thereof be sent by the Clerk to Mr. Sexton, with a request that the matter be brought before Parliament. The Guardians regretted that, under the present Poor Law, they could not grant outdoor relief to the applicants; and as it was probable that many such cases would arise under the present Liberal Ministry, they should be acquainted with the facts. A hundred times had they been told, in tones of deepest solemnity, that the object of the Government was to enable people to earn their living in Ireland. Would they enable Pat Meehan to earn his living? The poor man was in this dilemma—the Government would not let him build his hut, and the Guardians could not grant him outdoor relief—was he to gratify one of the whims of Mr. Clifford Lloyd to enter the workhouse? The Land Act was merely to be worked at the rate of a tortoise, while the sheriff and the bailiff were to proceed with evictions at the speed of the hare, and the people forced from their homes were to be left without shelter. Language could not possibly exaggerate the gravity of the situation. Must it be the final resource of civilization that the Irish peasants should be driven to starve and die in the ditches of their native land? He knew not how to convey to the House his sense of the great gravity and solemnity of the situation; but he felt bound to say that the idea of the Attorney General for Ireland was the least defensible and least rational he had ever heard. He said the people were not to be allowed to build huts lest they might watch their farms. Did the Attorney General for Ireland expect that, in the present state of public feeling, agriculturists would take those farms? The right hon. and learned Gentleman knew very well that they must be held by Emergency men. He was not accounting for the feeling which made such things necessary, neither was he defending it. He was simply pointing out the fact; and he wished to know what did the right hon. and learned Gentleman gain, in the interests of law and order, by banishing a few farmers from that particular district, while they left a few hundred others in it? Would not those who remained hold the same feelings as those who were sent away? Suppose some families were exiled from any particular district by the right hon. and learned Gentleman's new reading of the Common Law, and the whim of Mr. Clifford Lloyd, what was to be the distance within which the Common Law would operate? If the evicted tenants went only five miles distant from their farms, would this new reading of the Common Law declare them to be still too near? Must it be 10 or 20 miles—must they leave the country altogether? Who was to be the judge? If those evicted people were allowed to have a roof over their heads and food to eat, and to cherish some hope that they would be restored to their homes, was it not more probable that they would not resort to any act of violence than if they were driven away, and the lowest passions of the Bashi Bazouk vented upon them? If those people were driven away from their own district with feelings like those he had described rankling in their hearts, was it not more than likely that one of them might come back to do harm? He protested in the name of reason, of law, and of public right against the law of the land being travestied and outraged by any Pasha in the County Clare. He told the Government plainly that unless they withdrew this Circular, which was inciting the police to murder the people, and gave an assurance that tenants evicted from their farms through default of the Government would be allowed to live on at least as good conditions as the beasts of the field, he should think it his duty to rise up in that House and apply to the situation brought about by the Government such language as he thought proper. He cared not for the consequences personal to himself. He should be sorry to be forced to tell the people of Ireland what he thought, either of the action they ought to take or of the attitude they ought to preserve with regard to such barbarity. But if that occasion should arrive, he should fling to the winds every consideration except the thought that innocent men, women, and children were being hunted like wolves in the name of the resources of civilization. He begged to move the adjournment of the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Before alluding to this Circular and the action of Mr. Clifford Lloyd, there are one or two extraneous remarks of the hon. Gentleman which I cannot pass unnoticed. I am glad to take this opportunity of saying that the Proclamation which was issued by the Lord Lieutenant included the Ladies' Land League just as well as any other League. [Mr. HEALY: Why did you not suppress it?] Any public meetings of the Ladies' Land League can be suppressed just in the same way as any meeting of the Land League to which the hon. Member belongs. The hon. Member (Mr. Sexton) taunts us with the fact that women belonging to the Ladies' Land League have not been arrested as "suspects." Undoubtedly, they have not been arrested. The hon. Member seems to wish to drive us to do so; but our course will be guided by what we consider best for the peace of Ireland, and the taunts and sneers of the hon. Member will have no influence upon our action in the matter. In regard to the hon. Member's remarks on Mr. Clifford Lloyd, I wish to repeat what I said before, that I believe Mr. Clifford Lloyd has stood between hundreds of men, women, and children in Ireland and death, or at least maiming, persecution, and ruin. It is unfair—it is more unfair than even I should have expected, and that is saying a good deal—that charges which have been over and over again disproved should be again repeated, as if there is no doubt about them. Nothing could have been so much disproved as the original charge of caning the people to the full belief of Members of this House, yet the hon. Member for Sligo gets up and repeats it as if it had never been disproved, and states that the same thing happened in Waterford. Again, in regard to County Inspector Smith, the statement about him has been denied by him, and I have given the denial; but the hon. Member repeats the statement as if no denial had ever been made. We come to the Circular itself. I stated in my answer that Mr. Clifford Lloyd said he knew nothing about it, and that if the Question was repeated I would give what information I could about it. I have communicated with both County Inspectors, and I have heard from one and not from the other. The hon. Member might have waited till I was able to give him a complete answer. I have certainly reason to believe that the Inspector for the county of Clare did issue the Circular. I know nothing about the other. As regards the Inspector General of Constabulary, I am sure he knew nothing about it, nor were the Government cognizant of its being issued; but I make this statement—that I think the last two paragraphs of the document ought not to have been issued in the manner in which they were. But when the hon. Member states that people have been endangered by it, I believe nothing of the sort. The Circular is dated the 4th of March. That is some time ago, and no danger followed. If he asks me what its practical effect has been, its practical effect has been to prevent the people from shooting at Mr. Clifford Lloyd. [Mr. SEXTON: The people did not know about the Circular.] I do not know that—these things get out. This is undoubtedly true—that Mr. Clifford Lloyd has made himself obnoxious to the men who commit murder and instigate to murder; that he is hated by them; that there are attempts to assassinate him; that a price has been put upon his head—that is notorious; and that there is a combination and conspiracy to assassinate him; of that there is no doubt, and undoubtedly he ought to be protected. I suppose what was in the mind of the Inspector when he issued this Circular—which I think, and will tell him, he ought not to have issued with these last two paragraphs—was that the cowardly ruffians who would be likely to shoot at Mr. Clifford Lloyd from behind a hedge would not do it if they thought they would be in danger. They would be in very little danger if everybody waited until they were first fired at. That is a risk which a man has to run; and though Mr. Clifford Lloyd would not have allowed that Circular to go out himself, that was a risk which the Inspector, no doubt, thought ought to be provided for. Therefore, with too much zeal probably, he issued the Circular as it stood; but it was undoubtedly true that these murders, which had happened one after another, happened in this way—that those who committed them had no more notion of suffering harm from them than had the men who instigated them to do it. They fired from behind a hedge, and then ran away; and if they thought they would be in danger before they fired, they would be very much more careful about it. But it is a risk that a man ought to run, and that Mr. Clifford Lloyd is ready to run. In regard to what has been stated about the Land League huts, it is a matter which must be judged of according to the circumstances of each particular case. Generally speaking, I have stated both to the landlords and Constabulary officers and to the representatives of the tenants that it is a perfectly legal matter for huts to be erected in charity to the evicted tenants, but that they may also be erected for purposes of intimidation; and having been in that district myself, and having had the Reports of Mr. Clifford Lloyd and the men who have been intimidated and threatened, I believe it is the fact that the erection of some of these huts lead to, and are merely for the purpose of, intimidation, which Mr. Clifford Lloyd was bound to prevent. The hon. Member gets up and supposes that we have no dangers to contend with in those districts; but they are dangers with regard to which we should be unworthy of the name of officers of Her Majesty's Government if we did not do our best to contend with them, and endeavour to prevent them. The hon. Member conveyed the impression that no one would venture to take a farm from which a tenant had been evicted. [MR. SEXTON: Very unlikely.] But a man has a right to take such a farm. What we know perfectly well to be the case is, that hundreds of people are evicted from farms because they are not allowed to pay their rents. And, under such circumstances, is the Government to stand by and do nothing? Is the Government to stand by and say that whoever may have the courage to take such a farm is not to be protected and supported? The hon. Member seems to ask us to stand by altogether, and let the protection of the law be of no avail; to acknowledge that we have no power to protect that man; and, in fact, to let lawlessness, disorder, and outrage prevail in that country, instead of making the attempt, which we are making, and in which, notwithstanding all the opposition we experience, we believe we shall succeed—namely, to make the law prevail. The hon. Member alluded to a case to which Mr. Clifford Lloyd had referred, relating to arrears—I suppose he alluded to the case of Lord Cloncurry's tenants. That case, however, has nothing to do with the arrears question; it is scarcely possible, in fact, to find a case so inappropriate. It is one of the many cases in which the tenants—at any rate, some of them—are very sorry that they did not pay their rents; prosperous men, well-off, who have found that because they trusted in the stories that were told them by the emissaries of the Land League as to their being safe, have been evicted.

MR. SEXTON: I never referred to the case of Lord Cloncurry.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Mr. Clifford Lloyd did; and the consequence is they find that they have lost their holdings, which have been sold for a mere song, and, with tears in their eyes, they have lamented it. Mr. Clifford Lloyd practically said to them—"Why were you such fools and cowards?" "Life is sweet," they replied; "we were afraid of being shot." And why were they in danger of being shot? Because of the instigation of the "no rent" policy, which is the curse of them now; and in regard to which Mr. Clifford Lloyd must be protected and saved from planned assassination, because he has more than most others been instrumental in defeating that conspiracy.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, that the speech of the Chief Secretary had given one more proof of the failure of the coercion policy of the Government. Nothing whatever had been accomplished in the way of restoring peace or order by the coercion policy, and it had only tended to bring forward a new kind of agitation in the country. The hon. Member for Sligo had made something by pressing his Motion at once, for he had obtained something like a repudiation of this most extraordinary Circular from the Chief Secretary two or three days sooner than if he had postponed his Question. It was not a very strong or earnest repudiation; but, at the same time, it was a disclaimer of any Ministerial justification for the policy which dictated the Circular. That document, he said, gave a licence to the police which the general of an invading army never did claim for the troops under him. When the Germans invaded France it was ordered that any civilian who took arms against them should be tried and shot if found guilty; but it was never said that a man should be shot in cold blood on mere suspicion that he might take arms against them. As to the Land League huts, the monstrous suggestion was that the neighbours of an evicted tenant should not be allowed to shelter him near the farm from which he had been evicted. A man was not only to be removed from the farm, but he was not to be allowed to remain under shelter in the neighbourhood. This was in the old and bitter sense—in the Scriptural sense — exterminating a nation. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of these huts as if they were a line of fortresses. They were huts put up to shelter men, women, and children who had been ruthlessly evicted. Did the right hon. Gentleman imagine that men were less dangerous when they were unhoused, and had not a roof to cover them, than when they were preserved from the inclemency of the weather? The Prime Minister had talked of "social revolution;" but the Government were by their action bringing about a social convulsion, and were certainly not taking a course which was calculated to restore peace to Ireland. As long as they sanctioned such proceedings, it was impossible to have peace in Ireland. There was no country in the world where such conduct would not stir up the passions of the people.

Mr. LEAMY said, he thought it was quite evident that in the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman Mr. Clifford Lloyd, like the King, "can do no wrong" in Ireland. They had several times attacked him in that House, and he had always found a very warm defender in the right hon. Gentleman; but there was one question with regard to him put in that House, not by an Irish Member, but by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), which the right hon. Gentleman had never answered. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham said that Judge Barry stated at the last Assizes in the county Clare that the outrages which had occurred in that county for the two months prior to the Assizes were twice as numerous as in the corresponding months of the previous year. He would like to have some explanation of that from the Chief Secretary. If, as he said, wherever Mr. Clifford Lloyd went there was peace, how came it that the outrages in the county were actually double when he was in it to what they were before he went there? The right hon. Gentleman admitted that this Police Circular was issued. He was under the impression that the ingenuity of Dublin Castle and of the police officials in the matter of Circulars had long since been exhausted.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I have already stated that at the Castle they knew nothing about this Circular. I never heard anything at all about it until yesterday; but I suspect, from a telegram I have received, that it was issued; but no information to that effect has ever been received by the authorities in Dublin.

Mr. LEAMY said, he was glad of that interruption from the right hon. Gentleman, and he invited the attention of the Radical Party to this fact. The Irish Members had often and often during the debate on the Coercion Bill last year pointed out that the law would be carried into execution, not by the Chief Secretary, but by the police throughout the country. Now they had the facts demonstrated beyond all doubt. If such a Circular had been issued by the Third Section in Russia, the whole English Press would have cried out against it. But here in Ireland, at their very doors, the police issued this infamous Circular, and the Chief Secretary for more than a month knew nothing about it. But the Chief Secretary thought that the last two paragraphs ought not to have been written—the paragraphs in which this Inspector stated that if one of his men shot down an innocent person by mistake he, the Inspector, would exonerate the policeman, setting aside altogether the verdicts of a Coroner's Jury, and the result of magisterial investigation or a trial by jury. With regard to the erection of huts, the question they had to ask was this—and they expected an answer from the Attorney General for Ireland—at what distance from a man's farm did it become illegal to erect a hut? Was it or was it not legal for a farmer, having land of his own, to let a house be built upon it? Did it become illegal to give it to evicted tenants? If that was illegal, under what circumstances did the erection of the hut become illegal? Were they not alone going to suspect the occupant of the house, but also the house itself that was in process of building? Their neighbours were ever the best friends of evicted tenants. If the latter were driven away from their own parishes they would either fail in obtaining assistance, or be subjected to the shame of accepting it from the hands of strangers. He did not suppose there was very much use in bringing the action of Mr. Clifford Lloyd before that House. He had, indeed, long ceased to expect any defence of public rights from the occupants of the Benches opposite; but men had lately attempted to say in Ireland that the Chief Secretary was not responsible for these petty tyrannies, but now they had achieved, at any rate, that much good, that they had brought home to the Irish people that not alone did he permit Mr. Clifford Lloyd to act in this way, but that by doing so he was winning the approbation of the right hon. Gentleman. He would only say, in conclusion, that if the Ladies' Land League was to be put down it might become the duty of the Catholic priests, as perhaps the only organization with which the Liberal Government was afraid to deal, to look after evicted tenants, and assist in putting up houses for them. These houses would continue to be put up in spite of anything that Mr. Clifford Lloyd or any of his friends might do. They were threatened with more coercion for Ireland. He would only tell the Ministers that there was no form of coercion which they could devise which had not been tried in Ireland in vain in the attempt to break the national spirit. The Irish people defied coercion. Did the right hon. Gentleman think that they were forgetful of 1798, and the barbarous cruelties that were then practised upon the people of Ireland? He told English Ministers that they might bring in their coercion and they would defy them, as they defied them before. He told them their coercion policy would fail, as they were compelled to admit through the mouth of the Prime Minister it had failed. He told them now if they brought in more coercion it would fail also; it would only serve to strengthen and consolidate the spirit of hatred in Ireland against the rule of foreigners. When they tried coercion in Ireland before they failed, even though the Irish race was then confined within the four seas of Ireland. To-day the Irish were scattered throughout the world, united as they never were united before, and he told them they dare not bring in more coercion.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY said, he thought the House ought not to be misled by anything that had been said on the other side. There were two classes of evicted tenants in Ireland. There were the tenants who were cruelly and wickedly evicted because they were utterly unable to pay the arrears which had accrued on account of disastrous seasons. Such tenants were evicted in the West of Ireland. He asked, what did the Land League do for them? What huts did they erect for them? None at all. What did they do to show their sympathy for those unfortunate creatures who were evicted on the hill sides of Connemara? Nothing. Perhaps there might be some small sum of money awarded which might or might not have been distributed, and which had given them no effectual relief; but, on the other hand, the Land League huts were erected in places in which they were intended to be nests of insurrection and insubordination. For his part, he thought that any tenants who were evicted under circumstances which they could not help themselves, who were evicted, as they had been in the county Clare and in many other places, from the terrorism of the Land League, which decreed that if they did not obey their behests they should be shot, for these persons huts and shelter should be provided; and, therefore, he could not for one moment justify this Circular of Mr. Clifford Lloyd. But if hon. Gentlemen whose indignation had been so great against persons whom they thought might in future be shot by mistake by the police had shown equal indignation against those who had already murdered their fellow-countrymen it would have come with more grace from them. They had heard a good deal of what might happen if this abominable Circular were acted upon. He called it abominable. In no other country but Ireland would it be possible, in his belief, that an Executive officer could issue it. It should speak to the House trumpet-tongued of what they whose voices were never attended to on that side of the House or the other had always been saying—that the Executive in Ireland, the permanent officials, from the highest to the lowest, had been utterly inefficient, and were utterly unable even to perform the ordinary duties of government. Did not this Circular show of what the permanent officials were made? And there had been other objectionable Circulars of this kind which had been issued and then withdrawn. But that apart, what he rose to protest against was this indignation against the Executive, and this assumption of great benevolence on the part of the Land League, who had utterly neglected the really unprotected and miserable creatures in the West of Ireland who were evicted wholesale, and who were unable to pay that for which they had been evicted. If huts had been erected for these people it would have done credit to hon. Gentlemen opposite and their organization; but nothing was done. These people could not make political capital for this organization; and, therefore, they were left to suffer as poor men, women, and children had suffered, who, if they had been able to reflect glory on the head of that Association who had done so much to ruin the country, would have had their sufferings brought forward often enough in that House.

Mr. HEALY, referring to the blame cast by the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry) on the Land League for neglecting the smaller tenants in the West of Ireland, explained that the League had only a limited amount of funds at its disposal, and, of course, could not expend more than it possessed. The hon. Member's income for one year would amount to more than the whole of the Land League funds. The Land League, accordingly, was only able to give small donations in each case, proportionate to what they considered the requirements of the case and the exigency of the country demanded. If the Land League was to do what should be done for the tenants of Ireland, in 20 or 30 days the whole of its money would be eaten up. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had made an extraordinary statement. He said that, in the first place, Dublin Castle knew nothing about this Circular which was issued on the instructions of the Inspector General to the County Inspector. What he wanted to know was, the Inspector General having given instructions that the Circular was to be issued, was it no part of his duty to see what it was?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, there was no statement in the Question to the effect that the Inspector General knew anything about the Circular.

Mr. HEALY said, that everything could not be stated at once; but Irish Members were acquainted with that fact as well as of the issue of the Circular itself. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would be astonished to hear that they had their sources of information as well as he had his, and that occasionally, perhaps, they were as accurately informed. With regard to the right hon. Gentleman's non-acquaintance with the Circular, he ventured to remind him of this extraordinary fact. The Circular was dated the 4th of March. On the 3rd of March the right hon. Gentleman himself was down in Clare, and Inspector Smith accompanied him. Of course, they were obliged to respect any statement made by the right hon. Gentleman; but when the Circular was dated the 4th of March, and when they knew the opinion the right hon. Gentleman had regarding Mr. Clifford Lloyd, he would like to ask—were no instructions given by him, was nothing at all said by Mr. Smith to him on the subject? What power had Mr. County Inspector Smith, a mere subordinate, over life and death?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Do I understand the hon. Member to challenge what I have said? My statement was that I knew nothing about the Circular at that time. Does he say that I did? Does he wish to convey that insinuation in any shape or form?

Mr. HEALY: If the right hon. Gentleman has misunderstood the statement I have made to the House he will have an opportunity of reply, to use the words of Mr. Speaker, "by the indulgence of the House." I would remind the right hon. Gentleman that when I interrupted him on a recent occasion he told me that I was importing new manners into the House. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to restrain himself for the two or three minutes during which I shall address the House.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to Order, because I do not apprehend that it is a question upon which there can be any discussion. The question has been put by the right hon. Gentleman as to whether or not the hon. Member was imputing to him a false statement. ["No!"] That is what I understand. I do not for a moment say that the hon. Member for Wexford was imputing a false statement; but I understood the Chief Secretary for Ireland asked the question whether he did or did not intend to impute such a statement to him, and I think the House is entitled to have an answer to that question.

MR. HEALY: It is quite touching to observe the liveliness with which right hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the Table support each other. I would remind right hon. Gentlemen that I know my rights in this House as well as they know theirs; but I understand the Chief Secretary for Ireland——

MR. SPEAKER: I would warn the hon. Member that he is bound to accept the disavowal of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant.

MR. HEALY: Perfectly, Mr. Speaker. You have exactly stated the position, Sir. Outside this House we resume our liberty of appreciation; and I will now resume the somewhat broken thread of this somewhat interrupted speech. They were bound to accept the statement of the right hon. Gentleman; but there had been nothing imported into the House which obliged them to accept the statements of Mr. Clifford Lloyd. He would deny that he was bound to accept Mr. Clifford Lloyd's statement, or Mr. Inspector Smith's denial. He had known Mr. Clifford Lloyd before, and had been the first to bring that gentleman's conduct before the House. He (Mr. Healy) was in the town of Drogheda on the 1st of January, 1881, and, after having dispersed a meeting, Mr. Clifford Lloyd had said to the people—"If you don't disperse quickly I will fire upon you." He (Mr. Healy) had brought that matter before the House, and had obtained the votes of several English hon. Members in support of the Motion which he had then made. Mr. Clifford Lloyd had denied his statement; but he (Mr. Healy) had heard him with his own ears, and, with the unfortunate incident of the town of Drogheda in his mind, he was unable to accept Mr. Clifford Lloyd's denial. What the Irish Members would accept was the evidence of impartial persons; they surely could not be blamed if they hesitated to accept the denials of incriminated parties. Was it not a fact that since Mr. Clifford Lloyd had been placed in Clare and Limerick there had been more murders in that district than in the rest of Ireland in the same time? The fact was that Mr. Clifford Lloyd was a firebrand, as had been stated even by Mr. Whitworth, the brother of the hon. Member for Drogheda. Mr. Boyd Kinnear, a well-known Scotch writer and lawyer, in his letters in *The Daily News*, stated that he was down in Kilmallock, attending some of the trials held by Mr. Clifford Lloyd, and some of the most scathing condemnations about Mr. Clifford Lloyd had been written by Mr. Kinnear. It was a strange and terrible fact that this Circular rendered a man liable to be shot on mere suspicion. If the Chief Secretary suspected a man he might arrest him; if his subordinates suspected a man they might shoot him. To such a strange pass had things now come in Ireland! If such a Circular had been issued to the Zaptiehs and Bashi-Bazouks of Bulgaria, the House would have heard a very different account of it from the Treasury Bench. On the introduction of the Land Act the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "We have now been engaged for two or three weary months with the dreary business of coercion, and we have entered now into the path of conciliation."

Was this one of the steps in "the path of conciliation," to shoot persons on suspicion? It was impossible to conciliate the country by such methods. The Government should recollect that they had to deal with to-morrow as well as to-day. The officials of the Government in Ireland might make a desert and call it peace, but Ireland was a part of the United Kingdom; and when engaged in a struggle with some Foreign Power England might feel the effect of the proceedings of Mr. Clifford Lloyd. England's battles in the past had been fought by the arms and hearts of Irishmen; but English recruiting sergeants might find a difficulty in future in finding recruits in Mr. Clifford Lloyd's district. When England was engaged in a deadly struggle with some foreign foe, they would hear addressed from the Treasury Bench to the Irish people, not words of menace, as they did now, but supplications for assistance and support. They had to ask the right hon. Gentleman, Was he determined that the erection of these huts should be put a stop to? He stated that the Ladies' Land League was an illegal association? If so, why was it not proclaimed? He stated that he had not arrested any of them under the Coercion Act; but he sent them to gaol for six months, and they were kept in their cells for 22 hours out of the 24. There was no need for the Coercion Act for arresting women when he had got the law of Edward III. The people of Ireland were being put out by the score and by the hundred in the year following that Act which was to bring peace to the country. They were expelled from their homes mainly because of the arrears which the Chief Secretary treated with so much indifference when he (Mr. Healy) sought to introduce a clause into the Land Act dealing with the question. Now, when the unfortunate people were driven out on the roadside, he would not allow huts to be erected for their shelter. Was it more likely to promote the peace of the country to compel the unfortunate inhabitants of these huts to roam about from farm to farm than to allow them being comfortably housed by the Land League? The Chief Secretary for Ireland thought these people should go to the workhouse. He would probably like to see them once more going by the hundred into the poorhouse, or across the Atlantic in the emigrant ship. If the right hon. Gentleman wished to obtain credit for his benevolence, let him allow those unfortunate people to obtain protection from those who were willing to protect them. Not one of them believed Mr. Clifford Lloyd. Nobody who knew him could believe him. The testimony of any man who could consent to become the instrument of the British Government in the way Mr. Clifford Lloyd had done was not worth a moment's credence. He was hated as much in Ireland as Major Sirr was in 1798; and so long as he and persons like him were employed to carry out the dirty work which was going on in Ireland in the name of law and order, so long would law and order be despised.

Mr. SHAW said, there were two subjects before the House—the question of the Circular and the question of the huts. Three weeks ago he was shown the Circular by an hon. Member to whom it was sent, and he advised him strongly not to ask any Question about it until he had ascertained whether it was genuine, for he could not believe that any man in the position of the County Inspector of Clare would think of issuing such a Circular. He did not think he would have issued the Circular in the first place without consulting his superiors in Dublin; and if those superiors had any fitness at all for their position, he could not imagine that they would allow it to be issued. If documents of this kind were allowed to be issued, he could only say that the fact gave a reason for an immense deal of the confusion that was going on in Ireland. He could not imagine that there was any real head or government of the police in Ireland. The idea of the Inspector of one of the most disturbed counties in Ireland issuing a Circular of that kind without the bidding of his superiors in Dublin Castle was, to say the least of it, the most absurd that he could imagine. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that the two last paragraphs were exceedingly improper; but he (Mr. Shaw) had expected the right hon. Gentleman to go much further. Did they intend to leave that Inspector in the county of Clare? He did not want to have him dismissed from the Force, because he might have a family; but if a man of that kind were left in a county like Clare, which was full of difficulty and disturbance, it would be the most injudicious thing in the world, and ought not to be countenanced for a moment by the Government. He thought it would be worth while for the House to inquire how it was that the Irish Police Force was governed or regulated at all. Were officers of this kind throughout the country left entirely to their own discretion as to the issuing of Circulars and the management of the people? The matter was most important for those who lived in Ireland. He knew himself gentlemen in command of the police in Ireland. He was happy to say the remark only applied to a few, who in case of difficulty ought to be locked up, or kept out of the way, for they were most unfit to manage in a case of difficulty. As a general rule, the men in command of the police were men of great judgment and sense, and discharged the duties committed to them with great propriety; but, as he had said, there were some of them, and he believed this man was one, who, on the occasion of any trouble or difficulty, should be locked up themselves. As to the huts, it was well known that they were being erected for the last six or eight months in many parts of Ireland. He never heard before that they were illegal. He maintained that there was not a single case of the building of a hut in any part of Ireland which was not as much a menace as in the county of Clare. He really thought that the Government, before going to this extreme length, should have sent down some independent authority, some proved and experienced man, to inquire into the circumstances, and not have left the matter entirely to Mr. Clifford Lloyd, no matter how valuable a servant of the Government he might be. He would not stop to inquire into the justice or injustice of the evictions; but it was a fact that hundreds of people were driven out on the roadside; and it was a very extreme thing to say that dwellings should not be erected to shelter these people. It was too extreme a step to take without having sent down an independent person to inquire into the circumstances. He could not sit down without asking the Government whether they intended to go on in this way for ever? How long did they intend that this kind of thing should go on—war, absolute war, between the people of Ireland and the forces of the country? A policeman on suspicion might shoot a man. The man, as a matter of course, might shoot the policeman. It was absolutely clear that in Clare and the district surrounding it, there was a war going on, and the Government seemed to take one wrong step after another, in suppressing it. So far as he could judge they might go on in this course for years, and the thing would never come to an end. The crisis required a different policy. It required something stronger and bolder than anything yet done. If the Government were not prepared to take another course than that now being pursued, he believed the state of Ireland would go from bad to worse.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY said, it was some satisfaction to hear the Circular condemned; but that was not enough. The Circular was a gross violation of the law of the land, and a direct encouragement to violence on the part of the people. If they wanted the people of Ireland to accept the authority of the law, they must respect the law themselves. This County Inspector Smith, charged as he was with functions of the greatest moment, had no right to hold so important a position in the county of Clare after issuing such a Circular. If the right hon. Gentleman would remove County Inspector Smith from a place where he was about to commit such crimes, he would do more to restore law and order than Mr. Smith and Mr. Clifford Lloyd could do. Unless the people saw that a man who did such a thing would be punished, the Government could not expect to see law and order restored. Let not the right hon. Gentleman shrink from doing to the author of this Circular what would be done if such a document were issued in any part of England. He trusted that the building of huts would not be prevented, unless it was proved that there was something illegal in it. It had been said by some that the tenants were not free to pay their rents for fear of being murdered, while others denied it. But one fact was worth a great deal of argument. He could bring forward the case of tenants who, wishing to remit their rents to the landlord, were obliged to go into a town far from their farms in order to evade outrage. [The hon. Gentleman here read a letter from a trader in Cork to the landlord, stating that such-and-such of his tenants asked him to send him a cheque in payment of their rent, and to have a receipt sent back to the writer, so that "Captain Moonlight" might be doubly baffled.] But while these things occurred, they were no excuse for illegality on the part of the Government or their officials. On the contrary, the fact that the people were threatened by illegal associations ought to be a reason why the Government should give no excuse for outrage by any illegality on their part. If they wished to get the law respected the best way to do so was to punish those who failed to respect it.

MR. REDMOND said, he sincerely trusted that the speech of the hon. Member for Cork County (Mr. Shaw) would have due effect on the mind of the House, coming as it did from a Gentleman who had never given any assistance to the Land League, and to whom the Prime Minister and the Chief Secretary for Ireland were fond of going for advice. [MR. CALLAN: No!] That hon. Gentleman had told the Government—what everybody knew would have happened—that their coercion policy in Ireland had been a dismal and melancholy failure. Their repression and their conciliation had been alike half-hearted. If the Government believed not in conciliation, but in repression, their policy ought to be more whole-hearted. But if they believed in conciliation then why did they allow these things to go on? The facts elicited with reference to the Police Circular were such as should startle the minds of hon. Members who have been hitherto content to allow Ireland to be governed without too curiously inquiring the methods by which it was done. The worst thing about the Circular was that it was issued without the knowledge of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, or the Irish Executive in Dublin Castle. The fact that such a Circular could be issued by a subordinate official without the knowledge or approval of the Executive in Dublin was the strongest condemnation of the present system of government in Ireland. The people could only conclude from such facts that each petty official was invested with power, not only over liberty, but over life in that country. In dealing with the subject of evictions the Chief Secretary for Ireland had dwelt upon the case of a father having been intimidated by his son from paying his rent; but the right hon. Gentleman must be aware that the majority of the evictions were not evictions of tenants who could pay rents, but who refused to pay. The most remarkable cases of evictions recently were those now being carried out on Lord Cloncurry's estate. Those tenants had offered to pay a fair rent at a reasonable reduction; but, so far from accepting such an arrangement, the landlord had announced that, not only would he not give that reduction, but that he would not permit the tenants to remain on their holdings unless they consented to pay an increased rent in future. The evictions now proceeding in Ireland were, to a large extent, the direct consequence of the course which the Government had pursued. The first time that the question of the arrears of impossible rent came before the House was when the Compensation for Disturbance Bill was introduced. What, then, was the attitude taken by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and by the Government? The House was told that, in consequence of partial famine, hundreds and thousands were unable to pay their rents, that they were threatened with eviction, which was tantamount to a sentence of starvation and death; and the right hon. Gentleman stated that he could not consent to be the instrument of carrying out injustice towards those unfortunate people. He now denounced the right hon. Gentleman as having acted dishonestly in that respect. If the right hon. Gentleman had been an honest politician or an honest man he would have taken a different course. [*Cries of* "Order!" *and* "Withdraw!"]

Mr. GOSCHEN: I ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether the hon. Member is in Order in using the words—"If the right hon. Gentleman had been an honest politician or an honest man?"

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for New Ross must be quite aware that an observation of that kind is un-Parliamentary, and I call upon him to withdraw it.

Mr. REDMOND: I am sorry, Sir, that the Rules of the House militate against telling the truth. [*Cries of* "Oh!" *and* "Name him!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has not withdrawn the expression which I declared to be un-Parliamentary.

Mr. REDMOND: I rise, Sir, for the purpose of withdrawing the expression; and I would only say this—that I am sorry it is not in my power, within the Rules of Parliament, to make use of the expression. [*Cries of* "Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: I consider the conduct of the hon. Member offensive to this House. I consider his conduct, not only offensive to this House, but also especially offensive to the right hon. Member who has been addressed in the manner in which the hon. Member has addressed him. And I feel bound to Name Mr. Redmond as having disregarded the authority of the Chair.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, I have to move, in consequence of the statement which you have just made, that Mr. Redmond be suspended from the service of the House during the remainder of this day's Sitting.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Mr. Redmond be suspended from the service of the House during the remainder of this day's sitting."—(*The Marquess of Hartington.*)

Mr. Speaker having put the Question, declared that, in his judgment, "The Ayes have it." This not being agreed to, Mr. SPEAKER directed the House to be cleared for a division. Mr. HEALY having offered himself as one of the Tellers for the Noes, Mr. SPEAKER requested that hon. Gentleman to name a second Teller. Whereupon——

MR. HEALY, addressing Mr. Speaker, sitting and covered, said—I wish to name as my co-Teller, Mr. Redmond, the hon. Member for New Ross. On the point of Order, I would remind you, Sir, that on previous occasions, when an hon. Member has been proposed to be suspended—and I myself last year had twice the honour of being suspended by the decision of the House—on each occasion I took part in the division and voted against the Motion. I submit that an hon. Member who is about to be suspended is equally entitled to tell as to vote. The hon. Member for New Ross is a Member of this House—he has not yet been suspended for the remainder of this day's Sitting—and, in acting as a Teller, he would only be carrying out his function as a Member of this House. The Speaker, I contend, has no power or authority to cut off the hon. Member for New Ross before the House has clothed him with that authority by agreeing to the Motion.

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member is not prepared to name a second Teller, I must declare that "The Ayes have it."

MR. HEALY: Well, Sir, if you rule that you must take that course, I will name the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) as second Teller.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 207; Noes 12: Majority 195.—(Div. List, No. 66.)

Mr. SPEAKER then directed Mr. REDMOND to withdraw, and he withdrew accordingly.

Question again proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: As, Sir, the Question "That this House do now adjourn" is again before us, I wish to say a single word, in order that there may be no misunderstanding as to the view taken by a large number of Gentlemen on this side of the House who have not taken any part in the discussion. As we understand, a Question has been addressed to the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland with regard to this Circular. He has informed the House that he was not aware, until his attention was called to it, that such a Circular had been issued, and he has expressed dissatisfaction with the phraseology of the last two sentences of that Circular, which he has reason to believe has been issued. I presume that, that being the case, the Government will take such steps as they may think proper in the matter; but I am anxious that it should be clearly understood that the House, while trusting the Government will take all proper steps in that matter, fully supports the Government in those measures they may find to be necessary, in the present critical state of Ireland, for the preservation of law and order. I wish also strongly to impress upon the Government that there is no disposition whatever, either in this country or in Ireland, to weaken the hands of those who are charged with a very difficult duty; and I would further express my own personal hope, as well as the desire of others, that nothing which has passed or may be said shall be allowed to have the effect of discouraging or weakening the efforts of those gallant men—the Constabulary of Ireland, who, performing their duty under circumstances of great trial, require to be supported. Moreover, I need hardly say that I think nothing that has passed will give, or can be twisted into giving, any impression that there will be any less care taken to protect Mr. Clifford Lloyd in the discharge of his duties, which, as far as we understand, he is performing with great courage.

MR. O'CONNOR POWER said, he rose for the purpose of supporting, in the fewest possible words, the views taken by the hon. Member for Cork County (Mr. Shaw). He had nothing to say with regard to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of Her Majesty's Opposition to which they had just listened; but he wished to contrast briefly the demand which was made upon the Chief Secretary for Ireland by the hon. Member for the County of Cork with that which was made by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) and the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy). It was unnecessary to follow the hon. Member for Sligo into the variety of subjects upon which he entered; but he wished to endorse most fully the criticisms of the hon. Member upon this Constabulary Circular. All the hon. Member for Sligo asked was that if the Circular were found to be authentic, it should be withdrawn by the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He did not ask for the withdrawal of the Inspector of Police, nor did the hon. Member for Longford. He wished to make an observation as a somewhat indirect reply to the speech of the Leader of the Opposition. It was not right that the public should imagine that because they condemned the issue of this Circular they also condemned energetic action on the part of those responsible for the administration of the law in Ireland. He, as the Representative of an Irish county, was as anxious for the preservation of law and order in Ireland as the English Gentlemen who so warmly endorsed the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition. But the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) was perfectly justified in calling attention to this Circular. When the Chief Secretary for Ireland was questioned about the document, he pleaded for more time to make inquiries, although in possession of the fact that the Circular had been issued. That was not candid treatment of the House. They had had some experience of the manner in which the Chief Secretary for Ireland threw his protection over officials of this description doing imprudent or illegal acts. He alluded to the case of the Chief Inspector of the town of Ballina. Although not in the habit of "bullyragging," as they would say in Ireland, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, yet, when he found an official in Ireland setting an example of violation of the law, he felt that it was more necessary to deal with him than with an ordinary citizen, because an official was looked upon by the general population as setting them an example of strict and careful observance of the law. In the case of this Sub-Inspector, he had issued a Circular of an atrocious character, which was distinctly an incentive to violence on the part of the people, and they called for a withdrawal of that Circular. It must not be thought that they objected to proper and legitimate means being taken to enforce the law. On the contrary, it was necessary that the primary duties of civilization and government should be discharged by someone; and in the presence of a great popular movement, those upon whom these arduous duties fell would, from time to time, make themselves unpopular even by a legitimate discharge of their duties. But, so far from promoting the peace of the country by extra legal measures, they were simply playing into the hands of those who kept Ireland in a state of perpetual disturbance. The hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond), whom he regretted to say had incurred the penalties of the House, though in a manner in which he could not endorse his action, made a statement in the course of his speech which ought to be corrected. He said that the Chief Secretary for Ireland was in the habit of consulting the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Shaw) in matters of Irish policy. He had also been reputed to share the distinguished honour of the political confidence of the right hon. Gentleman. He was able to say on behalf of the hon. Member for Cork County, as well as for himself, that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had not thought either of them worthy of being consulted. Nor, indeed, had the right hon. Gentleman taken into confidence a single Representative from Ireland with regard to his Irish policy. He was talking lately to a Gentleman who represented a very large constituency in Ireland, who was returned to the House of Commons as an avowed supporter of the Liberal Government, and he had asked him if he did not think the position of the Chief Secretary for Ireland was a very arduous and critical one, first of all because the Irish Tory Members were opposed to him, and he would not get much sympathy from them, and the Members of the active Party were also opposed to him, while even those he ruled among did not rally round him? He had added that he supposed the moderate Home Rulers possessed his confidence, and that as the right hon. Gentleman was not an Irishman and was not acquainted with Irish institutions, he took the trouble of asking them how the Government in Ireland should be carried on. His hon. Friend told him that the Chief Secretary for Ireland had never asked him a single question about the government of Ireland since he had taken his seat on the Front Government Bench. If the right hon. Gentleman had any doubt about that he would be very happy to tell him who the hon. Member was. It was this supercilious conduct in reference to the opinions of Irish Members which had arrayed against the right hon. Gentleman all classes of the Irish Representatives. He was just reminded that another Irish Liberal Member, a staunch supporter of the Government, the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. C. Russell), had, during the Recess, issued a manifesto to the Irish people in which he too complained that the Chief Secretary took no means to ascertain for himself what were the opinions of the Irish Liberal Members. As there were several Irish Members on the Ministerial side of the House, he should be glad if any of them could contradict that statement; but it was not likely they would, because by doing so they would assume a share of responsibility for the policy of the right hon. Gentleman. As soon as the land agitation had reached national proportions, he felt that a revolution was approaching, and his attitude was shaped by his recollection of what had happened in other countries on the occurrence of great popular re-actions to overthrow systems opposed to the well-being of those countries. A revolution was going on in Ireland—there could be no doubt about that; and though it might be made by the Land League, it was not provoked by the Land League. The men who provoked revolutions usually belonged to one class, and the men who made them to another; but very often those revolutions were carried beyond the bounds of reason and justice, and, unfortunately, they saw countries deluged in the blood of their best and bravest; and he said to Her Majesty's Government, and to his hon. Friends, were they going to stain the modern history of Ireland with the blood of tenant and landlord? Were they going to keep up the heartburnings and antipathies that had raged between the two classes in the country for years? It would be the highest duty of Irish Representatives to prevent such terrible results if they could. Responsibility for the condition of Ireland was not confined to the Government or to the official class; they were all responsible. No Irish Member who forgot the terrible responsibility which rested upon the whole body in times like these could claim to be a patriot. Feeling that responsibility, he was in favour of the just, but firm and unswerving administration of the law, and of the swift punishment, with all the legal forms of justice, of the perpetrators of crime and outrage. But justice could not be served or peace promoted by allowing any portion of the official class to set examples of illegality and terrorism. For these reasons he joined his hon. Friend the Member for Cork in expressing a hope that Her Majesty's Government and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland—who, he believed, was anxious to do his duty to Ireland, though he also begged leave to say that he did not know how—would become alive to the duties they had to perform, and that the English Parliament would ultimately discover that there was no way of settling the Irish question but by overturning the present system of Irish administration, vitiated as it was by traditions of the past which Englishmen were ashamed of, and which Irishmen remembered only with feelings of inextinguishable hatred.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, I think this discussion is wandering somewhat far from the starting-point; and unless some attempt is made to recall it to its original purpose, the inconvenience, which is already great, of raising irregular discussions in this way will be much aggravated. The question which we began to discuss was, I conceive, the Question which was raised on the Paper by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton)—namely, regarding the conduct of certain County Inspectors in the issue of a Circular, which was quoted. But the question which we have now begun to discuss is the general condition of Ireland, the policy of this country towards Ireland during a great number of years, and, more especially, the conduct of the Chief Secretary in consulting, or otherwise, certain Members representing Irish constituencies. I cannot help thinking that if the discussion is to be protracted, it ought, at all events, to be confined to the original questions raised. The hon. Member who has just sat down has charged my right hon. Friend with some want of candour in the answer he has given the House; but I think that the charge is altogether unfounded. My right hon. Friend telegraphed for information to enable him to answer the Question; he has not received complete information. He has received a telegraphic reply from one County Inspector which led him to believe that a Circular like that quoted from had been issued; but from the other County Inspectors he had received no reply at all, and he was altogether without any statement which these County Inspectors might desire to furnish in explanation of their action. In these circumstances I think my right hon. Friend was justified in asking the hon. Member to defer his Question until he was in a position to give an answer with full knowledge. But when the Question was further pressed, my right hon. Friend did not feel justified in keeping back the fact that he had reason to believe that such a Circular had been issued in one county; but he was perfectly justified in previously asking for more time, in order that all the facts might be laid before the House. With reference to the remark of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, I quite agree with him that not one word ought to be said—and I do not think one word has been said by the Chief Secretary for Ireland—which can, in the slightest degree, lead anyone in Ireland to suppose that the Government are in the least indifferent to the charge laid upon the Constabulary to protect the magistrates in the discharge of their duty. We are aware of the great responsibility which rests upon the Constabulary, upon whom devolves the protection of magistrates, who avowedly occupy a dangerous position, and who discharge their duties, as we believe, honestly and fearlessly. No doubt, a great responsibility rests upon the Constabulary charged with the protection of these magistrates, and it would be far from the intention of anyone to utter a word which could hamper them in doing anything which is necessary. My right hon. Friend has said that he is unable to justify a portion of the Circular alleged to have been issued. It is a painful duty to utter one word which would seem to show a want of confidence or approval as regards men placed in such a difficult position. We have a right to call upon them to display courage and zeal; but we have also the right to demand from them the exercise of discretion. But until my right hon. Friend has received a full explanation from these gentlemen, it would be unfair to them, and it would not be fair to the House, to ask him to pass an opinion on their conduct. I trust, in these circumstances, that this discussion, already unnecessarily prolonged, may be allowed to close.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, there were two questions which he wished to ask, respecting which he heard nothing from the noble Lord. He entirely agreed with the hon. Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power) with regard to his observations upon the desirability of visiting strong official displeasure upon the author of this Circular; but he would like to know from someone on the Government Benches whether any assurance would be given that the constables would be informed in future that no Circulars were to be issued until they had been submitted to the authorities in Dublin; and next, that Mr. Clifford Lloyd and others would be instructed that the huts might be allowed to be erected? He had expected to hear that the erection of them had been forbidden, because of some new reading of the Coercion Act; but they had been told that it was not done under the Coercion Act or under Statute Law, but that it was in accordance with the Common Law of this country. As he understood it, the Common Law was derived from the dictation of text writers and from the decision of Judges. Perhaps the Attorney General for Ireland would be good enough to explain what text writer or what Judge had laid it down as the Common Law of England, Ireland, and Scotland, that when a person was evicted from his own farm, and his neighbour, on a freehold, erected a shelter for him, that any Executive officer of this Realm might interfere and forbid the building of his hut?

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN said, he had great hesitation in recommending any Member to take a course contrary to that which he seemed inclined to follow; but he would venture respectfully to suggest to his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) the desirability of withdrawing his Motion after the statement of the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India. He would have been glad if the Government could at once have declared their intention to withdraw Inspector Smith from Clare and repudiate his Circular; but the noble Lord had stated that the Ministers were not completely informed as to the issuing of the Circular, and that before taking any steps respecting it, they desired to have some further information. The request was a reasonable one, and after the discussion that had taken place a few days' delay would not do any disservice to the cause which the hon. Member for Sligo had so ably pleaded. He could repeat the Question on a subsequent occasion, and, if necessary, renew the debate. He was conscious that hon. Members viewed these oft-recurring Irish discussions with something like despair. The subject overshadowed everything else. It was the last thing they seriously debated before the Recess, and it was the first thing after their re-assembling. It confronted them at every turn—at Question time and at Adjournment. There were more Notices of Motion and Bills on the Order Book of the House respecting Ireland than on any other three or four topics. There was no aspect of the question that the eye could survey with satisfaction, or that the mind could dwell upon with hope. In the interest of the country, of the House, and of the Government, it was imperative that the policy of the Ministry should be re-cast, and a new departure taken. No doubt, they had acted on information they possessed; but that information, as his hon. Friend the Member for Mayo had said, was purely official. They had collected their knowledge from one class of the community alone, and that the governing class, or, rather, Castle. They had neither contact nor sympathy with the Representatives of Irish popular opinion. From this defective knowledge they had made an incorrect diagnosis of the disease, and, in consequence of that error, their remedies had not succeeded. Coercion had failed, hopelessly failed, and deservedly failed. And the Land Act had not succeeded. They had treated a great democratic and social uprising as an ordinary agitation. They accused the hon. Gentlemen opposite of having created the movement. The reverse was the fact—the movement had created the hon. Gentlemen. They were the outcome and spokesmen of it. A year's experience had only gone to show that the remedial policy of the Ministry had not ensured a remedy, and their repressive policy had brought greater disorder. For their own interest the Government were bound to give immediate consideration to the subject, with a view of dealing with it under fresh conditions and in a different spirit to that which had hitherto characterized them. He did not wish to detain the House; but before sitting down he was anxious to say one word about the Chief Secretary for Ireland. No one had spoken more sharply against the policy that the right hon. Gentleman had pursued than he had done. He had condemned it from the first. Before it was adopted he had warned the House repeatedly as to the disastrous consequences that would flow from it. But, while he condemned the procedure of the Chief Secretary for Ireland as bitterly and as strongly as any man could do, he could not join with those who imputed to him unworthy motives. It was quite easy to disagree with a man and still respect his integrity. He disagreed with the Chief Secretary for Ireland far enough; but he would have no hand in the set that seemed to be made at him personally. The policy that the Chief Secretary for Ireland carried out was the policy of the Government and the policy of the Party. If he went, the Government should go; and if the Government went, the Party should go. Any credit that was due to the Administration for success would be shared alike, and any discredit that attached to them for failure should be participated in by them all. They were all Coercionists, and the right hon. Gentleman had simply been their instrument and agent. It would be shabby to single him out for sacrifice. This attempt to throw the odium of a false and fatal course on one Member would only recoil on the Party as a whole if pushed to a conclusion. He hoped, after the engagement of the Government that they would get further information and submit it to the House, that his hon. Friend would allow the Motion to be withdrawn.

Mr. SEXTON said, the high respect he had for the character and conduct of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Cowen), and the value he attached to the frank admission of the noble Marquess respecting County Inspector Smith, led him to respond to the appeal that had been made to him to withdraw the Motion. He must say, however, that it had not been proved that by any law these people should be kept from inhabiting these huts. He therefore thought they should have some assurance that these people should be allowed to inhabit the huts, as there would be more danger in sending them away than in allowing them to remain.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, he would not have risen to take part in the protracted debate, but that so many Questions had been put to him by hon. Members that he rose to give his reasons for the opinion he expressed on a previous occasion. That opinion was, that if it was found that the tenants in question were building huts for the purpose of watching the farm, and of doing mischief to persons taking the farm, or preventing them from taking the farm, that would be an offence against the Common Law, as any lawyer in the House was perfectly well aware.

Mr. CALLAN said, he thought that the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had exercised a wise discretion, although he did not agree with all that had fallen from the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Cowen). There was always a victim when a mistake had been made, and he hoped a victim would be made of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, because he believed that the right hon. Gentleman deserved it. He had set himself directly to oppose the popular voice of Ireland. The hon. Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry) said that in no other country than Ireland could such an abominable Circular have been issued. The hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Shaw) spoke of it as an atrocious Circular; but the Chief Secretary for Ireland had not said one word in condemnation of it. Was that fit and proper conduct for the Chief Secretary for Ireland? Was that the manner in which a responsible Officer of the Crown was to obtain the support of the Irish people in the maintenance of law and order? He had given an uncandid answer to the Question. The Question was whether a Circular had been issued by the County Inspector of Ennis, and no other officer was implicated. That debate would never have arisen if the Chief Secretary for Ireland had given a candid answer. He told them that he had had admission of the Circular, but had not said one word in condemnation of it. The Chief Secretary for Ireland took credit for the issue of the Circular, for he said that the practical effect of it was to prevent the shooting of Mr. Clifford Lloyd. The idea of a Chief Secretary for Ireland getting up in that House and admitting that till he saw that Circular yesterday he knew nothing about it. The hon. Member for Cork had advised the locking up of the Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors. He would advise the Government to lock up the Chief Secretary for Ireland if they wished to have peace and contentment in Ireland. He was far more mischievous than the Inspectors or the Sub-Inspectors. If they locked him up there might be some chance of law and order in Ireland. What was the Government of Ireland? Five gentlemen governed it. There was Mr. Burke, the Under Secretary, who was Castle clerk from his youth; Mr. Hillier, the Inspector General, who, when in a subordinate position, had more than one inquiry with regard to his conduct; and Mr. Anderson, a mongrel lawyer, half-attorney, half-barrister, who usurped very much the duties of an Attorney General; and then they had the two men who really did the business in Ireland, who made the machine run—two sound Conservatives—namely, Mr. Robinson and Mr. Kay. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had said that charges had been brought against Mr. Lloyd which had been disproved; but would he tell him (Mr. Callan) when there had been a chance of proving them? He was sorry that the Premier was not there; but probably, with the caution which distinguished him on some occasions, he had stayed away, knowing the direction the discussion would take. He hoped the discussion would have its effect on the country, and that that would be the last occasion on which they would see the Chief Secretary in the official position of Chief Secretary for Ireland. As long as he remained in that Office no Irish Member would put any trust in the administration of Irish affairs. ["Oh, oh!"] Had the Chief Secretary for Ireland conciliated a single person in the country? He hoped that the Chief Secretary for Ireland would never honour them with his presence in Ireland again.

Mr. SEXTON said, he had further considered the matter, and was prepared to state what he proposed to do. He would put down a Question for Monday concerning the huts, and the Chief Secretary for Ireland would have the interval for considering whether these people should be allowed to wander about through the district or inhabit the huts. He begged to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — PERSONS CLAIMING TO BE AMERICAN CITIZENS DETAINED UNDER THE ACT.

MR. SEXTON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government have asked the Government of the United States to undertake that, in the event of the release of the "suspects" claiming the rights of American citizenship, they would go, and remain, out of Ireland, or out of the United Kingdom; whether the American Government refused to give any such undertaking on the subject; whether, since the refusal in question, the United States Minister here has demanded that these suspects be at once released or put on trial; and, whether any Member of the Government is now in communication with the United States Minister in reference to the subject?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, I can only repeat the answer which I gave to the hon. Member on Tuesday last —namely, that I think it would be very inconvenient to make, in reply to this Question, any statement that would necessarily be an imperfect statement, as Papers will be very speedily laid on the Table.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN asked whether the Papers would be laid on the Table next week?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he could not state the exact date.

FORTH BRIDGE RAILWAY BILL— BOARD OF TRADE REPORT.

MR. ANDERSON asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether it is the intention of that Board to make any report upon the proposed Bridge over the River Forth (for the construction of which power is sought under the Forth Bridge Railway Bill now in dependence before the House), and upon the extent to which such Bridge may interfere with or otherwise affect the navigation of the Forth, and the access of vessels to the anchorage of St. Margaret's Hope; and, if not, what are the reasons for no such report being in contemplation?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, it is not the intention of the Board of Trade to make any Report on the proposed bridge over the River Forth. My hon. Friend is aware, probably, that this Bill has been referred to a Hybrid Committee, instead of, as is the ordinary course, a Private Bill Committee, and it appears to me that the question of navigation, involving, as it does, matters of detail, may very well be left in the hands of the Committee without coming before the Board of Trade, and I should point out, also, it is rather exceptional for the Board of Trade to make any Report.

MR. ANDERSON: Will the Board of Trade be represented on the Hybrid Committee, so that the safety of the public and the interests of navigation will be properly looked after?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The Board of Trade will not be represented on the Committee.

NAVY—CHATHAM DOCKYARD WORKMEN.

MR. GORST asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it is a fact that all the men employed under the Clerk of the Works Department in the Chatham Dockyard were discharged on Friday last; whether the men employed on Government work in this department will in future be hired and employed by Messrs. Foord and Sons of Rochester, instead of by the Government itself; whether a similar arrangement with the same contractors, which subsisted formerly, was discontinued some years ago in consequence of the abuses to which it gave rise; and, why the old system has been again revived?

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, there has been no discharge of hired workmen employed on the extension works at Chatham, except those whose services are no longer required, in consequence of the near completion of the works. As Messrs. Foord hold the contract for ordinary repairs, any men required for the execution of works under that contract must necessarily be hired by them; but so long as any men are required on the extension, they will continue to be hired by the Admiralty as at present. The arrangement under which the contractors for ordinary repairs for a time supplied men for the extension was discontinued in 1877, not on account of any abuses, but simply for the purpose of saving to the Government the contractors' profit on a transaction which the Government could equally well manage for itself. That arrangement was due to the representations of the hon. Member, and he did the public good service in the matter. There is no intention to revive that arrangement.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TRANSFER OF PRISONERS DETAINED UNDER THE ACT FROM CLONMEL GAOL TO NAAS.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the case that 22 suspects have been transferred from Clonmel Gaol to Naas, owing to fever having broken out in the former Gaol; and, whether one of the prisoners so transferred has now been taken ill; and, if so, what is the nature of the disease?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, it was true that 22 persons, confined under the Protection Act, were transferred from Clonmel to Naas Gaol. Fever broke out in Clonmel Gaol some time ago, and although there had been no case of fever in that prison for three weeks previously, it was thought better that the prisoners should be transferred. One of the prisoners so transferred had a feverish cold a day or two ago, but the two medical officers came to the conclusion that it was not fever. The man was now better.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact, as stated in the telegrams, that the political prisoners have been removed from Clonmel Gaol, on account of the prevalence there of fever, to the gaol at Naas, where no fever exists, bringing the infection with them; that the Naas prisoners refused to enter into the cells, and that the military were called in to compel them amid great excitement; and, whether he sanctioned this exercise of power by the military force to compel uninfected prisoners confined on mere suspicion to mix with prisoners from an infected gaol?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that it was true that these prisoners refused to return to their cells, and the Governor, after a good deal of remonstrance, found it necessary to obtain the assistance of 50 soldiers and a force of police to compel them to return to their cells.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked whether it was not possible to transfer those prisoners to any other prison?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, there was no reason to believe the man had taken fever in Clonmel. They had got the idea into their heads, perhaps not unnaturally, and they acted with insubordination, which had to be put a stop to. There was every reason to believe there was no foundation for it.

POLICE (SCOTLAND) — DISTURBANCES IN THE ISLAND OF SKYE.

Mr. FRASER-MACKINTOSH asked the Lord Advocate, If he can explain the circumstances under which fifty of the Glasgow Police Force have been sent to the Island of Skye; and, whether this step has been taken with his sanction, and on whom the cost will fall?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): Sir, for several months past the crofters—small tenants—at Braes, in the Island of Skye, have refused to pay any rent unless on condition of getting back a piece of hill grazing of which they say they were deprived some 17 or 18 years ago. In consequence of the crofters taking this position, Lord Macdonald, the proprietor, or his factor, sent a Sheriff's officer to Braes, on the 7th of this month, to serve summonses for the payment of rent, and also summonses for removal upon crofters. The Sheriff's officer was accompanied by an assistant, and also by a ground officer in the employment of Lord Macdonald. When they came to Braes, they were met and stopped by about 150 persons, who assaulted them, took from the Sheriff's officer the summonses, burned them on the spot, and at the same time threatened the officer with more serious violence if he returned. It was a clear case of premeditated assault on an officer executing a legal warrant, and I accordingly directed that four or five of the ringleaders who had been named should be apprehended and tried. The authorities of the county — Inverness-shire—stated that they believed that the force of constables at their disposal might not be adequate for the apprehension of the offenders, and they therefore applied to the police authorities at Glasgow for aid, under the provisions of the Glasgow Police Act, and the Glasgow authorities gave the services of the constables in regard to whom the Question is asked. These steps were taken with my approval, and the offenders were apprehended and lodged in prison yesterday morning with a view to their trial. The cost will fall on the county of Inverness-shire, as the constables were required for the vindication of the law in that county.

LAW AND JUSTICE—"GURNEY v. BRADLAUGH."

MR. P. A. TAYLOR asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether his attention has been drawn to the defendant's demurrer in Gurney v. Bradlaugh, now standing for argument in the Queen's Bench Division; whether the demurrer challenges the legality of certain proceedings of the House in similar terms to a demurrer in Stockdale v. Hansard; whether, since in the last named case the then Attorney General was instructed to appear and appeared, in the name of the defendant, in order to defend the privileges of this House, any Correspondence has taken place between either of the solicitors for the parties in Gurney v. Bradlaugh and any officer of this House; and, whether there is any objection to lay such Correspondence upon the Table?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): Sir, my attention has been called to the pleadings in the action of "Gurney *v.* Bradlaugh" in consequence of Mr. Speaker having placed them in my hands. They were forwarded to Mr. Speaker by the solicitors of Mr. Bradlaugh, accompanied by a courteous letter calling his attention to the questions involved. Having, at the request of Mr. Speaker, considered them in conjunction with the Solicitor General, it appeared to us that there was nothing in the issues raised which affected this House, so as to require any interference on its part or the intervention of the Law Officers on behalf of the House. In the case of "Stockdale *v.* Hansard," the action was brought against Messrs. Hansard in consequence of their having obeyed an Order of the House to print certain official Reports presented to Parliament, which were alleged to contain libellous matter; and it was thought that as the bringing the action was a contempt of the House, and that it was directly responsible for such publication, its agents ought to be protected, and the Attorney General was directed to defend the Officers of the House. But in this present case, no such considerations arise. With the action for penalties in itself the House is not concerned, although, no doubt, the result may be of interest and afford guidance to Members individually. The only correspondence which exists is the letter of Mr. Bradlaugh's solicitor forwarding the pleadings, and the reply of Mr. Speaker, in which he says that—

> "He sees no reason for his interfering in any way with the proceedings now pending in connection with the suit in question."

If the House should desire these two formal letters to be printed, I have the authority of Mr. Speaker to say that there is no objection to the wish being complied with; but probably my hon. Friend will not press the request.

STATE OF IRELAND—POLICE PROTECTION—MURDER OF A CARETAKER.

MR. CHAPLIN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that, in the case of Richmond Roach, a caretaker in the employ of the Emergency Committee in Dublin, and who was shot dead on the night of the 17th, on the property of Mr. Caldwall, near New Pallas, county Limerick, that special protection had been applied for and refused by the Irish Executive?

MR. LEWIS asked whether there was any truth in the report that the bailiff of Lord Leconfield had been murdered in the county of Clare?

MR. W. FORSTER, in reply, said, that, as far as he could learn, there was no foundation for the report just referred to by the hon. Member for Londonderry. With regard to the case mentioned in the Question of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire, he had telegraphed for specific information, and would give him a precise answer hereafter upon it. The statement he had already received was that there were four caretakers in this place. They were armed with Snider rifles, revolvers, and swords, and it was thought that they needed no special protection; but frequent police patrols were ordered in the district. The poor man who was murdered was murdered away from his post when he was alone. If his comrades had kept with him it was probable that he would not have been murdered.

COAL MINES—RECENT COLLIERY EXPLOSIONS.

MR. BURT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he will authorise the appointment of some competent legal man to represent the

Home Office at the Coroner's Inquests at Tudhoe and West Stanley Collieries, in order that a searching investigation may be made into the cause of the explosions and loss of life at those places?

MR. HIBBERT, in reply, said, his right hon. and learned Friend had given instructions to appoint a competent legal person to attend the inquests in question.

CORRUPT PRACTICES (DISFRANCHISEMENT) BILL—SUSPENDED BOROUGHS.

MR. LEWIS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, having regard to the serious questions affecting seven Constituencies at present deprived either wholly or in part of their representation in this House, and also relating to the conduct at recent Elections of two Cabinet Ministers, raised by the Amendment on the Second Reading of the Corrupt Practices (Disfranchisement) Bill, he will fix an early day, after the disposal of the Budget Resolutions, for the discussion on the Second Reading?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, on behalf of my right hon. Friend, I have to say that the Government are perfectly aware of the importance of the questions affecting several constituencies which are raised by the Bill referred to in the Question of the hon. Member. With reference, however, to a paragraph in the Question, I am unable to admit that the conduct of two Members of Her Majesty's Government has been impugned by anyone except the hon. Member himself. The fact is that both the right hon. Gentlemen referred to were examined by the Commissioners, and in neither case was the slightest censure passed on them. I am unable, therefore, to admit that the intention of the hon. Gentleman to bring forward certain not specified charges against them constitutes any degree of urgency; but the Government are conscious of the importance of the Bill, and it is with very great regret that I have to state that we are at this moment unable to fix a day for the discussion.

MR. LEWIS gave Notice that on that day week he would move the issue of new Writs for the cities of Gloucester and Chester, and that, with respect to Chester, he would then state the charge against the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board.

INLAND REVENUE—THE INCOME TAX (SCHEDULE B)—ENGLISH AND SCOTCH FARMERS.

MR. BIDDELL asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he was aware that an English farmer who paid a rent of £500 a-year for a farm, subject to a tithe of £120 and rates of £50 a-year, would pay an Income Tax of £5 12*s.* 10*d.* while a Scotch farmer, holding a farm of like value and subject to similar outgoings, would pay but £4 17*s.* 8*d.*; and, whether he will take this inequality (15 per cent.) into his consideration by reducing the Tax upon the English farmer?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Sir, the facts as stated in the Question are correct, and doubtless show an apparent inequality in the treatment of the two countries. But the system of assessment to Schedule B, which includes this inequality, has existed since 1842, and was, I believe, explained by Sir Robert Peel in imposing the Income Tax. The intention is in both countries to levy the tax according to the true income of the farmer.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—TUESDAYS.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, seeing that the House has already been counted out on many successive Tuesdays this Session, he will endeavour to secure the keeping of a House on such days in the future, so that the remaining Tuesdays of the Session may not also be wholly or mainly lost to the business of the Country?

The MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, I have to say it is impossible for the Government to undertake the responsibility for the performance of duty which certainly devolves upon the House itself. I believe it never has been considered that it is part of the duty of the Government to keep a House on Tuesday nights. If hon. Members do not take sufficient interest in the matters which are brought forward by independent Members, I do not think it is in the power of the Government to obviate the consequences. In fact, I am assured that it has been found to be absolutely impossible, when the attempt has been made, to secure the attendance of Members who might be willing to come to facilitate the progress of Government Business. They do not feel themselves bound to keep a House for independent Members. I have, however, to add that, partly in consequence of what has occurred, partly with the desire to obviate a further waste of time from such a cause, and partly, further, for the purpose of endeavouring to make some progress with the important measures the Government have on hand, we propose on Tuesday next, and on subsequent Tuesdays, to ask the House to sit at 2 o'clock. I would also add that I understand, on the authority of the authorities of the House, that sufficient progress has now been made with the transaction of Private Business to enable the House to meet for the transaction of Public Business somewhat earlier than it has hitherto done, and on Monday next, in the opinion of Mr. Speaker, the Public Business may be commenced at a quarter past 4 o'clock.

MR. GORST asked, Would the House have an opportunity of expressing an opinion on their proposed Tuesday Morning Sittings?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he did not think it was usual to make a Motion for the House to meet on Tuesday. The House usually ordered the consideration of a certain Bill to take place at 2 o'clock. He would not postpone any Bills for that purpose to-night. There was no intention of taking Friday Morning Sittings.

In reply to Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE,

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, that he was not able at that time to say what Government Business would be taken next Tuesday.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—:o:—

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

NAVY—STRENGTH OF THE NAVY.

RESOLUTION.

LORD HENRY LENNOX, in rising to call attention to the strength and condition of Her Majesty's Navy; and to move—

> "That, owing to the enormous increase in the Iron-clad Navies of the World, the Trade and Commerce of the Empire is endangered, and that it is desirable that steps should be at once taken to make an adequate addition to the strength of the Navy,"

said, that the difficulty of interesting the public on this subject was, strange to say, very great. The fact was, that from their cradle upwards Englishmen were taught to believe that England must needs be the mistress of the seas, and were accustomed to hear incessant praises of our Navy, and the reiterated statement that it was strong enough to meet all the Navies of the world. It had always been said that our Navy ought to be a match, not only for the Fleet of any one Power, but for those of any probable combination of Powers. That was the doctrine held at the beginning of this century, and he only regretted the prevalence of the delusion that our Navy was actually sufficient for that purpose in the present day. At the beginning of the century the victories that covered our naval heroes with glory were due to the excellence of our seamen and of our seamanship. A revolution, however, had taken place in shipbuilding, and another revolution, under the able direction of his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty, was also in progress, by which gunners and stokers were substituted for sailors. Several circumstances combined to make it more and more difficult for our Navy to maintain its old superiority. Eighteen years ago there were only four or five considerable Naval Powers. But now every single State endeavoured to possess men-of-war. Italy built enormous vessels that were unmatched by any of our own; and even China had steel gunboats with guns heavier than those of the *Inflexible.* And to say nothing of the fact that steam and electricity favoured rapid combinations, England was unquestionably more vulnerable now than formerly. Her Navy, it was evident, had always had to perform far more difficult duties than that of her most powerful neighbour. According to Admiral Fanshawe, England in 1805 had 83 line-of-battle ships in commission, while her enemies, France and Spain, had respectively 37 and 24; but when the hour of danger came we could assemble only 27 ships—the other 56 being engaged in protecting our Colonies and our trade—as against 33 vessels of the combined French and Spanish Fleets. He would venture to quote a few figures which would show the magnitude of the commercial interests that would have to be protected by our Navy. He found that the trade of the United Kingdom amounted in 1878 to £614,254,600, and our Colonial trade to no less than £964,000,000—that being more than a fourth of the trade of the world. The tonnage of the trading steamers during the same time was—British tonnage, 4,200,000; and French tonnage, 420,000. He quoted these figures to show the relative duties which the Fleets of the two countries had to perform in time of peace. Then, again, the increase of our food supply during the last few years had been most remarkable. In 1846 the imports of corn and flour into the United Kingdom amounted to 17 lbs. weight per head of the population. In 1858 it had risen to 70 lbs.; in 1865 to 93 lbs.; and in 1878 to 188 lbs. Our Colonies and Dependencies, too, which we had to defend embraced one-seventh of the land surface of the globe and nearly one-fourth of its population, and the total area was estimated at 7,647,000 miles, or more than 60 times the extent of other countries. The total area of the French Colonies was 335,629 square miles. In referring to the condition of the Fleet of our nearest neighbour he was not actuated by any feeling of hostility to the French Government or to the French nation. He wished that this country would remain on terms of the strongest amity with the French Government. Yet, above all things, he was an Englishman, and he thought it was his duty to call the attention of the House of Commons, and especially of the Admiralty, to the statement which he had made elsewhere, when he had not the advantage of the presence of the Secretary to the Admiralty. He began with a comparison of the two Fleets, and for that purpose he would begin with our iron-clad fleet absolutely built—that was to say, the iron-clads that were in commission and in reserve. There were 28 iron-clads. Of these, 14 were of the first class, 9 of the second class, and 5 were for coast defence. The French had now in reserve and in commission a total of 19. Of these, 9 were of the first class, 3 of the second class, and 5 for coast defence. Of the British Fleet, those that were at home at the present moment for the protection of our coasts were 9 first-class, 3 second-class, and 5 coast defences, making 17 in all. The French had at home 6 first-class, 4 second-class, and 4 coast defence vessels, making 14; so that while our iron-clad navy numbered 28, and the French 19, the ships at home were only 17 in our case and 14 in theirs. It was an absolute fact that of our 17 first-class seagoing iron-clads 3 were purchased during a panic by the late Government; and he thought the Secretary to the Admiralty and his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Wigton Burghs (Sir John Hay) would agree with him that ships bought in a time of panic were not likely to be of the class which you would deliberately select to be added to the Navy or would build in a dockyard. It was a most remarkable fact, and he hoped the House and the country would take it to heart, that while the French laid down a programme which they carried out carefully, steadily, and completely, our naval policy was a system of spasmodic efforts—at one time of going back for the purpose of economy, and at another time, in the face of a panic, of jumping in and buying what ships could be got. We had five coast defence vessels. He would say nothing of their seagoing qualities. They were ordered during the panic which followed upon the outbreak of the war between France and Germany. They were brought under the notice of the Committee of Designs and strongly condemned by Admiral Ryder. His right hon. Friend the late First Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. W. H. Smith), who was now present, declared in a work recently published that, in the opinion of the Committee, the coast defence vessels which were purchased in a time of panic were only able to go safely from port to port, and that in fine weather. There was another point to which he wished to draw attention, and that was that, while our iron-clads were knocking about in the Mediterranean and wearing out their engines and their boilers and straining themselves so that after four years' service an enormous sum was required to repair and refit them, the French vessels in reserve remained quietly in port and were as good as on the day they left the dockyard, the police duties being performed by what were called obsolete ships. He had been charged with leaving vessels out of his English list that ought to have been in it. All he could say was that he had never left out a single vessel from the list of iron-clad ships except those included in the Admiralty official documents as obsolete ships. [Mr. Trevelyan: Included in what list?] The ordinary Admiralty list. We knew now exactly how we stood. We had 28 iron-clads against 19, and 17 for home service against 14 which the French also had in reserve. The next part he had to deal with was the most important of all, and that was the building programme. In discussing the building programme of the two countries they must always remember one thing, and that was that wages were much lower in France than they were in England, and that the money voted by France for the Naval Estimates embodied a larger amount of work than the same amount of money in England. In the English Dockyards during the Administrations of Lord Northbrook and the right hon. Gentleman opposite, 15,963 men were employed; while this year that number was raised to 16,844, being an increase of 800 or 900 men. The policy which induced the hon. Member to sanction this increase he entirely approved of, and he congratulated the hon. Member upon it; but, after all, it was not an absolute increase, for large numbers of men were discharged last year, and a Supplementary Vote of £50,000 for overtime was the consequence. They now had 16,844 men; but the French had at least 22,500, or something between 5,000 and 6,000 more men than we had. During the French year, which was reckoned from January to the following December, they contemplated building 16,000 tons according to our reckoning, or 21,000 tons according to their own measurement, which included hulls and machinery, in 1882, and 26,000 in 1883, thus showing an increase of 5,000 tons in the year 1883. This was not a spasmodic effort or the result of panic on the part of France. It was a careful and well-measured system of carrying out the programme which they started with great vitality two years after a disastrous war, in 1872, which they revised in 1879, and which was to be completed in 1885. They would then have no less than 38 iron-clads, 12 second-class iron-clads for coast defences, which had been suspended during further torpedo experiments, 34 cruisers, troopships, and other vessels. Their determination to carry out this scheme was evinced by the enormous sums of money voted year by year for the purposes. In 1882, 269,342,422f., and in 1883, 280,618,343f. was to be applied to that object, though he was bound to say that 8,275,921f. only of that sum was a real increase in the Vote, the balance, amounting to 3,000,000f., accruing from the sale of old stores, one-fourth of the whole being devoted to the service of the New Construction Department. The Vote for this portion of the Service amounted in 1882 to 35,842,000f., and in the Estimates for 1883 to 40,336,400f.—that was to say, an increase of 5,000,000f. in the year 1883 as compared with 1882, and of 14,000,000f. as compared with the year 1881. If evidence were needed of the determination of successive French Governments to carry out the programme they had originally laid down, these figures would supply it. The French Government had also made estimates as to how far the work begun upon each of the new iron-clads had progressed in a manner similar to the plan of the hon. Gentleman. During the naval year in England, three iron-clads would be built and added to the Navy, seven would be commenced, and two so little advanced that they could hardly say they had been commenced. He would say they had been talked about. In the French Estimates for 1883, there would be five iron-clads built, nine commenced, and two talked about. That would give us in 1883 three more iron-clads than the French, but if we consider the French Dockyards, with their enormous staff and their unlimited Votes of Credit, and if both nations maintained their relative rate of naval progress, where should we be in 1885? These Estimates, moreover, for 1883, were moderate Estimates, were such as moderate men would accept, and they would not sanction any less; but they were not such Estimates as the "Grand Ministry" of M. Gambetta would have voted. By 1885 the French would have added to their Fleet a number of most powerful ships, and with steel armour. Five of these ships would have their guns protected by 18 inches of steel armour. Five others would have their guns protected by 16 inches of solid steel armour. Four of them would have at the water-line 20 inches of steel armour. Two of them would have at the water-line 21½ inches of steel armour, and four others would have 18 inches of steel armour. If the statement he had made was mythical, then the statements made before the French Chamber of Deputies were mythical too. They could not avoid coming to the conclusion that it was highly probable—nay, more than probable—that in 1885, France, who did not depend upon the sea for her food supplies, who had few Colonies, and an insignificant trade—France, who had a Standing Army of nearly 1,000,000, would have an armour-clad Fleet equal in number, if not superior, to that possessed by that Empire which used to be considered the mistress of the seas. He hoped that public opinion might be brought to bear, in some measure, on this subject, and that the Secretary of the Admiralty, who, while addressing audiences in the country, expressed his determination to keep up the strength and prestige of the Navy, would have the backbone to insist upon the making the necessary additions to the Navy. The additions to the French Navy would be completed much sooner than had been originally intended, and with this view arrangements had been made for pushing on the ships with still more activity. They would be finished, in fact, in three years, instead of six years. The immense additions which the Minister of Marine made to the Estimates were for the purpose of finishing the ships in three years. As to unarmoured ships, certainly we had made great efforts to add to our cruisers; not that England had done all that he could have wished to see done. While we had been very active in completing our cruisers, the French had not been idle either. They were building two first-class cruisers which would be able to steam at the rate of 10 knots an hour over 5,000 miles at a stretch. This must add greatly to the strength of the French Navy. With reference to the difference between the system of artillery adopted in France and that adopted by England, it seemed to him that, during the last 20 years, successive Governments in England appeared to have been asleep. They did not seem to have been able to keep pace with the naval artillery of France and Germany. There was one suggestion which he had very much at heart, and that was the absolute necessity of establishing a Department of Naval Ordnance. [" Hear, hear!"] He was very glad that the hon. and gallant Member (General Sir George Balfour) cheered that remark, as when he came to bring the subject before the House he would claim the support of the hon. and gallant Member. Perhaps one of the most important points of all was the *personnel* of the Navy. They could not guide ships and fight them without men. Attention had been called to the *personnel* of our Navy some years ago, and the folly was pointed out of looking upon the petty officers and seamen as fighting men. It was observed that 9,000 were stewards and others who could not be regarded as fighting men. They did not know how to hold a gun, as they had never been trained. What he wished to impress on his hon. Friends opposite was the advisability of introducing a system by which every man who appeared in the Estimates as connected with Vote 1 should be trained as a combatant. Our total of petty officers and men was 31,000, the French had over 35,000; and, in 1873, when it was argued in this country that the more powerful ships required a less number of men, in France the number of seamen was increased by 845, and the reason given was that it was required on account of the more powerful character of the ships. With regard to the Marines, that force had been reduced by the Government to the extent of 600. This year the Marine Force of Great Britain stood at 12,400, while that of France stood at 22,014. The French Marine Force formed, perhaps, the most highly-trained and valuable body of combatants in that country. He might mention that this was the force that defended Paris with the greatest success. In addition the French had a Marine Reserve Force of 10,752 highly-trained and disciplined men, so that their Marine Force really amounted to more than 32,000 men. Even if we were permitted to add our 4,000 Coastguards to our Marines, the preponderance in favour of France was found to be 16,354. What, he asked, could be the object of a Power which was not dependent upon foreign food supplies, which possessed but few Colonies, and which had only an insignificant trade to protect—what could be the object of her having, in addition to 1,000,000 men in arms, an iron-clad Fleet equal to or greater than that of the greatest maritime Powers, and a Marine Force larger than our own? On another occasion he should tell the House what class of ships he wished the Government to add to the Service of the country. He could not think that the Government would grudge such an addition to our Navy on the ground of expense, for the First Commissioner of Works was going to introduce a Bill which would legalize the expenditure of millions in building and gilding some new public palaces; and if the Government did not grudge money for such a purpose as that, they surely could not regret the sum which must be spent in improving the Navy. He had been told that it was unpatriotic to publish the facts which he had brought before the House. He agreed that it would be unpatriotic, if the facts were only known to the Secretary to the Admiralty and himself. But as they were known to every Government in Europe, and as the only people in the world who were ignorant of them were the English people, who were deeply interested in the subject, he thought he was taking a right course in giving publicity to the facts in question. He deprecated panic, and he deprecated optimism; the former, because, under its influence, the Government might fill the Navy with indifferent ships at a great cost, and the latter, because it might lead to a fatal assurance. It was optimism that characterized the French Army at the commencement of the Franco-Prussian War, and the result of that optimism was crash and ruin. He ventured to press upon the Secretary to the Admiralty the absolute necessity of asking for further funds in order that large additions might be made to our armour-clad and cruising navy. A demand of that kind made by the Government would be received with popular favour, for the taxpayers of this country would rejoice to see the Royal Navy in a thoroughly efficient state. The noble Lord concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

MR. BENTINCK said, that he had a Motion on the Paper somewhat similar to that of the noble Lord. But he was glad that his noble Friend had been able to bring forward his Motion first. In rising to second his noble Friend's Motion, he had only one fault to find, and that was that his noble Friend, by his exhaustive statement, had left him very little to say. He regarded this question as, perhaps, the most important question of the day, inasmuch as upon it the very existence of the country depended. It appeared strange that in the present condition of Europe, and in the present aspect of foreign affairs, there should be any doubt existing in this country as to the efficiency of the British Navy. Yet there was no doubt such doubts did exist, and he grieved to say that, in his opinion, they were well-founded. The first explanation that suggested itself to him as to the cause of this remarkable state of things was one which he had had occasion to bring before the attention of the House many years ago, without success, however, so far as convincing the House of the correctness of his views; but he was still convinced that the present condition of the inefficiency of the Navy—which he held to be a matter of fact—arose chiefly from the prevalence of the civilian element in the constitution of the Board of Admiralty. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Trevelyan) had stated the changes which it had been thought advisable to make in the constitution of that Board; but he naturally did not advert to any such doubts existing. In deprecating the presence of civilians in the most responsible positions on the Board, he (Mr. Bentinck) was not casting any slur upon those distinguished men. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty the other day, in introducing the Navy Estimates, accomplished that which was rarely achieved; he made the subject an interesting one to all classes. He was said to have made an eloquent speech—an opinion which he endorsed. Nobody doubted the hon. Member's talents, and nobody doubted the talents of the noble Lord who was at the head of the Department. Other distinguished men on the other side of the House, who were civilians, had also presided over the Admiralty Board, and nobody doubted their talents; but, in spite of their admitted ability, he contended that the real cause of what he might almost describe as the unnatural condition of the British Navy was to be ascribed to the presence of civilians in the more prominent positions at the Board of Admiralty. He made these remarks in no Party spirit. The question was entirely a general one; but he held that, in consequence of the present arrangement, the Navy virtually had no Representative in the Cabinet or in Parliament. The question was one of the utmost importance, and one which ought to be brought before the country. He would quote, in support of his views, the opinion of Admiral Sir George Cockburn, who said that our existing system was the most unsatisfactory one which could be well devised, and that the ultimate decision on important professional questions rested with men who could not, without elaborate explanations, understand professional statements or even expressions contained in professional documents. He (Mr. Bentinck) contended that the man who was to give opinions upon the condition and requirements of the Navy ought to be the man who was able to take command of a fleet, and to take it into action, and it was owing to the total want of such representation that the present painful condition of the Navy was to be attributed. He trusted, however, that the time would come when the advocacy of the cause which he was pleading would fall into better hands than his own and meet with better success. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty had told the House most truly that our safety depended upon our having plenty of armoured vessels, and yet it was perfectly plain, from a perusal of the Estimates, that our fleet of armoured ships fell far short of the necessities of our position. We had many more interests to defend than any other Power, and our Navy was being worn out with service in all parts of the world; while that of France, for instance, remained in harbour, ready for any emergency. Independently of that consideration, it was a doubtful question whether, in point of weight of guns and of speed, we were at present equal to the French Navy. The French had heavier guns and faster ships than we had. In the event of any combination of another Power with France against Britain, we should be in a position of inferiority. The superiority of our Navy was essential to our national existence, whilst the Navies of other Powers were to them comparatively unimportant. So great an authority as Admiral Sir Thomas Symonds held that in order to enjoy the same relative superiority as we did 100 years ago, we ought to possess 92 first-rate iron-clads. It should be remembered, moreover, that wars were now-a-days begun and ended in a few months, so that there would be no time after hostilities opened to remedy our naval shortcomings. In view of these facts, he was forced to the painful conclusion, though he was afraid the House of Commons would not allow itself to be convinced, that our naval position was at present utterly unsatisfactory, and that our national honour was in jeopardy.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "owing to the enormous increase in the Ironclad Navies of the World, the Trade and Commerce of the Empire is endangered, and that it is desirable that steps should be at once taken to make an adequate addition to the strength of the Navy,"—(*Lord Henry Lennox,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. GOURLEY said, he felt bound to say that the speech of the noble Lord (Lord Henry Lennox) was not only eloquent, but able and instructive. So far as he could understand, neither the present nor the late Boards of Admiralty seemed to have any policy with regard to the ships they built, which were of all sizes, and all sorts of power as regarded guns. The noble Lord showed very clearly that the French were now building ocean cruisers very much superior to any which we possessed. Our *Inconstant,* for example, could carry only two and a-half days' fuel, and the *Iris,* which was our latest type of cruiser, was incapable of steaming with her own fuel for more than five days. It was a suicidal policy and waste of money to build such vessels, while other countries had cruisers carrying more fuel, which, in case of pursuit, would inevitably escape from them. The noble Lord, therefore, in calling attention to what the French were doing and had done in this respect, did good service to the House and the country. Nor in the event of war would it be possible for us to convoy the large amount of property which we had afloat in our Mercantile Marine. If the Government would turn its attention to an amendment of the Treaty of Paris of 1856, it would take the right course. The Americans were no parties to that Treaty, for the simple reason that they knew it would be out of the power of any nation in these days of steam to convoy its ships and merchandize effectually. Such an extension of our naval power as would enable us to do so would be next to impossible. During the American Civil War the United States had a very large mercantile fleet, and three *Alabamas* destroyed the whole of their trade. If we happen to be at war with a nation which had only a few swift vessels, the very fact that these vessels were known to be in search of our ships would be the means of raising the amount of insurance to such a height that our trade would be driven into other hands. In his Report upon the Naval Reserve, Admiral Phillimore said he was positive that there was one fatal defect in connection with our in-shore reserve, or fighting ships—that was, their very deep draught of water, ranging from 17 to 18 feet. These vessels, such as the *Resistance*, the *Lord Warden*, and the *Hercules*, in the event of war, instead of being able to perform the duties of coasting reserve, would be compelled to seek shelter in some of our deep-water estuaries, either behind forts or behind torpedoes. Those vessels were so obsolete, and so utterly useless, either for ocean cruising or for fighting, that they would be totally incapable of competing with or beating vessels of a more modern type—even such vessels as were recently built by Sir William Armstrong's firm for the Chinese Government. That firm built a number of steel gunboats or floating batteries for in-shore fighting on the Coast of China. Why should our Government allow a possible hostile Power such as China to have a more useful class of ships than we possessed? It would be said that those Chinese vessels were unarmoured; but then our own were limited with respect to the power of their guns. If we could have some 20 vessels such as those of the Chinese Government, the draught of which was only 9 feet 6 inches, it would be very much better than to carry so many eggs in one basket in the shape of one large ship. In a contest with 10 or 20 such vessels an iron-clad, while she might sink a number of them, would herself ultimately be sunk. A comparison between the gunboats built for the Chinese Government and our own large iron-clads like the *Dreadnought* proved the superior advantages and convenience of the former for purpose of coast defence. He wished to impress on the Government that the time had come when some attention ought to be paid to the necessity of having some organized system in regard to the vessels we possessed for coast defence, as he understood there was no organized system of that kind, and he thought we should have vessels of an improved type, not of the same size of those which had been built for the Chinese Government, but much larger, with powerful guns. That might involve the expenditure of a large sum of money, perhaps, of something like £1,000,000; but he was sure that if there was one thing besides education on which the taxpayers of this country would be willing to spend £1,000,000, or even £2,000,000, without grudging, it was in having a thoroughly efficient Navy.

Sir JOHN HAY said, that the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Gourley) had alluded to very interesting topics, as to some of which he should have desired to follow him; but he himself had on the Paper for that day a Notice entirely in the same sense as that of his noble Friend the Member for Chichester (Lord Henry Lennox), and, perhaps, it would be better for him now to confine himself to the want of iron-clads, which he believed to be at present the great want of the Navy. They required large iron-clad ships to protect their base of operations, and they also wanted light vessels with heavy guns, for other purposes; but he would address the House on that matter of vital importance—the small number of iron-clads which we had for purposes of war—and he believed he would carry with him, though not, perhaps, to the same extent, the feelings of his hon. Friends the Secretary to the Admiralty and the Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Sir Thomas Brassey), who sat opposite. His noble Friend the Member for Chichester had placed before the House most clearly the condition of the Fleets of France and England; but he had not alluded, to any extent, to the Fleets of other countries, which must be taken into consideration when that subject was under discussion. In addition to the iron-clad Fleet of Great Britain and that of France, the numbers of which his noble Friend had given, they had the fact that Germany had 15 iron-clads and Italy had 18. He would not trouble the House with any reference to other Powers; but if, under any conditions, the Navies of France and Germany or Italy combined, they would outnumber us nearly two to one, looking at the duties which we had to perform. It must be remembered that our Navy had much more extensive duties than any other to perform; that our Colonies were in all parts of the world; that at no time was there in this country four months' provisions for our population; that it was necessary to convey along great lines of communication our food supplies, as well as to convey safely the commerce by which we bought those supplies. We had six great trade routes to attend to. There was the route through the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal to the East, passing under the guns, so to say, of the French, Spanish, Austrian, and Turkish Fleets; then there was the route by the Cape to our Australian Colonies; then the route by Cape Horn to the Pacific, with which we had trade, where Russia at Vladivostock, and France at Tahiti and Noumea, as well as the South American Republics had always iron-clad ships, and that was also the route home from Australia; then there were the routes to the West Indies, North America, and the Baltic. All along those routes there were 20,000 British mercantile vessels to be protected, and 12,000 Colonial and Indian — 32,000 ships that had to be convoyed and protected in time of war. For those duties what force had we to show? He would only speak with regard to the iron-clad fleet, because that was the base of operations of all our small ships and frigates. Many foreign countries had fortified harbours in distant parts of the world. France had three fortified harbours in the Pacific, and in the Indian and Pacific Oceans she kept, he believed, some smaller vessels and one iron-clad. It was only necessary for France to have one iron-clad far away from home; but this country kept 11 iron-clads on service in distant parts, even in time of peace. According to figures which he did not think could be controverted, in 1885 the British Navy would consist of 38 armour-clad ships and 20 obsolete vessels, besides one iron-clad which, he believed, it was intended to build. It was with great dissatisfaction, however, that he saw the *Vixen*, the *Viper*, the *Waterwitch*, the *Scorpion*, and the *Wivern* included in the list of ships which were of service to the country. They might be useful enough for the defence of harbours; but as some of them had only 3-inch armour, and none were of great speed, they should not be placed in the fighting line and reckoned among the 20 obsolete vessels. Among the 38 iron-clads, the *Cyclops*, the *Hydra*, the *Hescate*, and the *Gorgon* were ships which had been reported upon as not being satisfactory seagoing iron-clads, though of use under certain conditions. Taking those four away, the number of armour-clad vessels was reduced to 34, while the list of obsolete vessels was reduced to 15, by the five he had mentioned being deducted. The French Navy consisted of 33 new vessels and 23 obsolete ships, exclusive of 11 other vessels not serviceable, except under certain conditions. The result was, that this country would only be able to place 39 iron-clads against 56 of France. Great exertions had been made by France to complete her Navy. In 1872, after recovering from her disasters, she set to work to complete her Navy at a time when the Naval Expenditure of this country was being reduced. From 1860 to 1870 the Naval Expenditure of Great Britain averaged more than £12,000,000 a-year; but from 1870 to 1880 it had averaged a little more than £10,000,000. Except in the year in which the Turkish iron-clads were purchased, the Naval Expenditure of this country had not exceeded in any single year £11,000,000 since 1870; £2,000,000 a-year had been saved during the last 12 years, and that £24,000,000 represented exactly the amount of iron-clad shipping, of which they were short. Representing, as it did, 48 iron-clads, in his opinion, the relative proportion he had shown to exist between the Navies of France and England ought not to be the rule. Italy and Germany also had respectively 15 and 18 iron-clad vessels. England was thus becoming a second-class Naval Power. If the £24,000,000 saved since 1870 had been spent, they would now have had about 48 more iron-clad vessels, which would not be at all too many, and would only represent the French and Italian Navies combined. There were 166 iron-clad vessels in the world; in his opinion, this country ought to possess as many of these as any two Great Powers put together. The question was how the state of things which now existed could be remedied. Many iron-clads could not be built at the same time; but he believed that 12 could be built at one time, besides those building at the Dockyards. They would take three years in building, and the expense could be spread over that period at the rate of £2,000,000 a-year. In his opinion, the country expected the Navy to be brought up to the strength he had indicated. He hoped to hear from the Admiralty that the deficiencies in the protection of this country, which were owing to parsimony during the last 10 years, would be made up by expenditure, which would not be an extraordinary expenditure, but merely a going back to the rate of expenditure when Lord Palmerston was Premier and the present Premier was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that an iron-clad Fleet would be created which would restore us to the position of the first Naval Power in Europe.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, this debate had been anticipated by the Government for a considerable time; but it was a little difficult to know what line the Representatives of the Board of Admiralty should take. This was an extremely delicate subject for discussion, because it consisted of comparing our Fleet with that of a friendly Power, for the purpose of stimulating the production at the Admiralty. The details of the French Fleet were very familiar, he had no doubt, to the late Government; but up to the present time it had not been the custom to recommend the Navy Estimates by referring to the strength of a friendly Power, any more than it was the custom to recommend the Army Estimates by referring to the Force of any particular Power on the Continent. The noble Lord had made a speech which was marked with ability and considerable knowledge, and undoubtedly it was his (Mr. Trevelyan's) duty to say something, and he would say it as speedily as possible. Calculations relating to the strength of particular iron-clads were sure to differ. No one could have read what had been written without seeing that it was the most elastic of all topics. For instance, the noble Lord gave the names of first-class iron-clads available at home and abroad for the defence of the country as 10 first-class sea-going ships and four doubtful ones on the side of the English, and seven on the side of the French. According to the information of the Admiralty, out of these seven French iron-clads only four had been completed at all, and of the other three two had never yet been classed by any authority, except the noble Lord, as first-class iron-clad ships. There was not one of the 14 English ships alluded to by the noble Lord which was not ready for sea at a moment's notice. That was, in itself, a very great difference. Again, the noble Lord spoke of the speed of the French ships as exceeding that of English ships; but the noble Lord, he thought, was not aware that of those French ships only two had been tried for speed, and it was extremely doubtful whether they would ever fulfil the speed which they were supposed to have, while the speed of the 14 English ships was as well known as though they were packets trading between Liverpool and New York. The noble Lord spoke of four of our iron-clads as being scarcely sea-going ships; and he said they were bought during a panic. With regard to the *Rupert*, she had a most successful commission under Captain Gordon. The commission, he thought, was for three years, in which she encountered severe weather in the Mediterranean. The *Hotspur* went to sea for a year, and a favourable account was given of her by the Naval Lords. The noble Lord said that 16,000 workmen were employed in our principal Dockyards. Sixteen thousand were employed last year, and 16,800 this year. He did not know whether the noble Lord included Malta among the six principal Dockyards; if he did, then there were employed this year in our principal Dockyards 17,600 workmen. The noble Lord, however, had raised a much more serious difficulty on the question of quality. In regard to the Sea Force, they must consider what the ships were, and what the men were who would have to fight in them. The noble Lord talked of our only having 12,400 Marines, while the French had a powerful Marine Force of 30,000 men. There was really no comparison between our Marines and those of the French. Our Marines were amphibious—they were really seamen; whereas the French Marines were the Colonial Army. They were nothing more nor less than the First Army Corps for foreign service. The noble Lord, in his pamphlet, made a comparison between the tonnage of the English Dockyards and the tonnage of the French Dockyards. So far as he could judge, the noble Lord had committed a grave error, which had unfortunately been before the country in a very attractive form during the last six weeks. The noble Lord, in his pamphlet, said the French proposed in 1882 to provide 21,600 tons of armour-clad ships, and the English only 11,000 tons; but he thought the noble Lord now admitted that the calculation was wrong, because he took what was called the displacement tonnage, whereas we calculated by the proportion of the weight of the hull, as was always done in the shipbuilding accounts. If both calculations were brought to a common standard, the English estimate would be 11,466, and the French 15,250 tons. But the English always worked up nearly to their programme; whereas in 1878 and 1880 the French fell 5,000 tons below the estimate of each year, and, so far as they could judge, that was the amount to which they always fell below their estimate; and in the case of 1882 the difference in the calculation of the 10 ships amounted to 17·3-100ths, or a ship and three-quarters. The noble Lord had also raised the question of the French expenditure. He quoted the French Estimates of 1882; but he (Mr. Trevelyan) declined to enter into that, because the French year began in January and ours in April. The French Estimates were voted in July, and a certain part in December, and until they were voted they could not know what they were to be. But it was very different with the English Estimates; and as the French year 1881 was coincident with nine months of our year of 1881-2, he maintained that they had no right to compare the year 1881-2 with the French year 1882, with which it was coincident for only three months. The noble Lord had said that, according to the best judgment he could form, the French Estimates for the year 1882 were £9,500,000, or 238,000,000 francs. The Admiralty had carefully examined the figures, and came to the conclusion that £8,500,000 was nearer the mark than £9,500,000; and a person of great authority had said there ought to be a further deduction of 18,000,000 francs. But he would not accept that reduction, and was content to leave the figures at 214,000,000 francs —that was £8,500,000 of our money. Then the noble Lord talked of two French ships with 100-ton guns.

Lord HENRY LENNOX said, he never alluded in his speech to any ships with 100-ton guns. He only alluded to the subject in a pamphlet which was not under the notice of the House, and the figures were taken from the interesting book published by a Colleague of the hon. Member the Secretary to the Admiralty.

Mr. TREVELYAN begged to withdraw anything he had said as to the 100-ton guns. The noble Lord spoke of French ships to be armed with the 72 and 75-ton guns, and compared them very unfavourably with the ships we proposed to arm with the 60 or 64-ton gun, which was, as far as he could gather, an actually heavier gun than that which the French had decided upon. He had chosen those instances for the purpose of showing how impossible it would be to lay the state of the Navy before the country by entering minutely into the figures which were given by previous speakers. He did not wish to say anything that could be attributed to a Party motive; but it was absolutely necessary in discussing this question, when hon. Members rose to call for a rapid increase of shipbuilding, for the Admiralty to put itself right, and to show that an increased rate of shipbuilding was certainly not a matter in which they were wanting. In regard to the efficiency of the Fleet for the time being, he quite allowed that the present Government were absolutely responsible. The Government that had been in Office for a year or two ought to have brought the Fleet into a thoroughly efficient state by attending to repairs; but, as regards the numbers of the Fleet, it could not be denied that previous Governments were responsible. It was the Government of four years ago that were responsible. The Government might have followed the obvious course of taking a cursory view of the English and French Navies respectively, for the purpose of showing that the French had a real Fleet, whereas ours was a mere phantom Fleet, and of gaining popularity by such a course. But they took a course more consonant with the loyalty which ought to subsist between two successive Governments, and assumed that their Predecessors had good reason for adopting the course which they had followed. They, therefore, went quietly and steadily to work to ascertain the real state of things. Now, what was the actual conduct of the late Government, which was just as well aware as the present Government were of what the French were doing? In 1874-5—the year they came into Office—they built 8,457 tons of iron ships. In 1875-6, while efficiently and thoroughly repairing the Fleet, they built 14,276 tons. Then, in 1876-7, they built 11,448 tons. In 1877-8, they built 7,113 and bought 14,808 tons of vessels more or less complete. So that during their first four years of Office they built at the rate of more than 10,000 tons of iron-clad shipping a-year, and likewise purchased 14,000 tons more. But after that the late Government began to relax their efforts. In 1878-9 they built only 8,430 tons; in 1879-80, 7,427 tons; and in the Estimates of 1880-1 the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith) only proposed to build 7,231 tons. When Lord Northbrook became First Lord of the Admiralty, it became their business to examine the state of our own and Foreign Navies, and the conclusion at which they arrived was, that the time had come when they ought to increase the rate of iron shipping; and so, without making any noise about it, they began building the ships which the right hon. Gentleman opposite had commenced at a faster rate. In 1880-1, instead of 7,231 tons, Lord Northbrook actually built 9,235, and in 1881-2, 10,816 tons; and this latter estimate was adhered to within 100, or, he might say, 40 tons. In the coming year his noble Friend proposed to build no less than 11,466 tons. That was the quiet and unsensational, and not ineffectual, way in which they had dealt with the situation. What was the evidence on which the charges of negligence against the present and the late Board of Admiralty rested? The right hon. and gallant Baronet opposite (Sir John Hay) had been constantly urging the Governments to increase their iron-clad Fleets, and he deserved well of the country, because, while he kept the subject before them, he was careful in his statements, and did not try to throw the country into a panic. But that was not the case with all critics. The hon. Member opposite (Mr. Bentinck) had quoted Sir Thomas Symonds as a great authority. Sir Thomas Symonds had said that the French had six sea-going armour-clads, armed with 72 and 75-ton guns, while the English had only one with 80-ton guns, and that the French had also nine armour-clads armed with 48-ton guns. If he (Mr. Trevelyan) had read one he had read 20 leading articles on that sentence; but the French had no ships with 72 and 75-ton guns; and as regarded the vessels with 48-ton guns, five were either building or progressing towards completion, and of the four others, the keel of only one was laid at this moment, and another was going to be built on the slips on which another ship, which was always quoted as a French ship afloat, was still being built. Those ships of the French were balanced by English ships with regard to which Sir Thomas Symonds was absolutely silent. The fact was that in 1872 the French came to the conclusion that they wanted more ships. Of their Fleet 31 ships were wooden, with iron plates. The programme laid down in 1872 had been more or less adhered to; but, instead of a ship costing £330,000 to £360,000, it now cost from £520,000 to £560,000. The English had 26 iron-clads, including the *Polyphemus*, in commission, and 23 in reserve, making a total displacement tonnage of 320,000 tons. The French had only 11 iron-clads in commission, and 29 in reserve, with a displacement of 225,000 tons. But of the French ships 21 were wooden with iron plates, whereas only two of ours were of wood. The French Admiralty had actually condemned no fewer than 17 wooden iron-clads, with an aggregate tonnage of 71,780 tons, and even after this great clearance there still remained 12 wooden ships in the French Navy as against two of ours. This was the case as regards the armoured ships that were already built. As regards those in course of construction, the number of the French iron-clad ships designed, building, or completed appeared on paper as 19, and the English ships as 13. The rapidity of the French work fell much below the Estimates; but in spite of that it was ascertained that the progress of the French ships was such that Lord Northbrook increased the outturn of our iron-clad tonnage by half as much again as was thought sufficient during the last two or three years. Last year he stated that no great Fleet was better armed than our own. Having made that statement in Parliament, he repeated it in the country, and it attracted the attention of the noble Lord the Member for Chichester (Lord Henry Lennox), who made some rather strong observations about it. Among other things, the noble Lord said that a formidable weapon now universal in the French Navy did not exist in our Navy, and that the French Fleet was undoubtedly better armed than our own. Since this question had been started again, he wished to put it absolutely beyond dispute. Therefore, he had had a Report made of the number and weight of the armour-piercing guns now actually mounted in the two Navies. The total number of armour-piercing guns in French iron-clads was 284, and their weight was 4,476 tons. In the English iron-clads the number of armour-piercing guns was 480, and their weight was 6,224 tons. In unarmoured French ships there were 26 armour-piercing guns, their weight being 201 tons, while in unarmoured English ships there were 79 armour-piercing guns, and their weight was 880 tons. So much for the weight and numbers. As regards their quality, so far from their vastly superior weapon being now universal in the French Navy, only eight guns of the new type were mounted in finished vessels. The rest were guns of the old type, certainly not superior to our own, which the French were engaged in superseding as fast as they could, just as we were doing with ours. There was at this moment only one French ship afloat which could not be pierced in every part of her frame by the 38-ton gun, with which our more powerful ships were armed, leaving out of account the 80-ton guns of the *Inflexible.* But the real point of the controversy turned not on the old guns, but on the new. On this point he was bound to make two observations—first, that if our heavy guns of the new type were not sufficiently far advanced, it was the late Government which should bear the responsibility; and next that since this question had been started and pressed with such extreme energy, the Government were not prepared to affirm that the undertaking—the long and complicated undertaking—of providing the Navy with new guns was in a sufficiently advanced stage when they took Office. Less than this he could not say, and more he certainly did not wish to say. Now, the providing of heavy guns for the Navy was a question of detail, and the most important detail was to have ships ready to carry them. Sir William Armstrong said—

> "What should our Government do in regard to the great work of re-arming the Fleet? I take for granted that all new ships will be armed with the best guns that can now be made."

So the first matter was to see what these new ships were. The order in which our new iron-clads would come into the effective list was first the *Ajax* and *Agamemnon;* then the *Conqueror;* then the *Edinburgh* and the *Colossus.* Now, if the late Government had seen their way to press forward our new guns earlier, the *Ajax* and the *Agamemnon,* like the latest French ships, might have been armed with guns of the new type. But they did not see their way to it. On the 23rd of December, 1878, the Admiralty came to the following decision:—

> "The First Lord is not prepared to delay the ships (the *Ajax* and *Agamemnon*) any longer. The change to longer guns and breech-loading or loading outside the turret, as proposed in the model, involves large considerations which cannot be disposed of hastily, and the long guns are not yet made, and, therefore, untried. The ships must be completed for the service 38-ton gun chambered as it now is."

Well, that settled the question of the *Ajax* and *Agamemnon.* They were armed with the 38-ton gun; only it was chambered so as considerably to exceed its former range. From the first, it always carried a charge of 160 lb.; but on board the *Ajax* and *Agamemnon* it carried a charge of considerably over 200 lb. So much for the *Ajax* and *Agamemnon,* whose armament was settled by the late Board, and not by the present one. The next ship coming on for armament was the *Conqueror,* and the War Office engaged positively that three of the new 43-ton guns—equal, or, as far as they knew, slightly superior to the new French 46-ton gun—would be ready next December; two to be mounted in the *Conqueror* and one for reserve. Two more were to be ready in March, 1883, and six more in July, 1883; so that the eight guns required for arming the *Edinburgh* and the *Colossus* were promised us as soon as the ships were in a state to receive them. The 10 9-inch 18-ton guns of the new type would be ready in July next to be mounted in the turret of the *Rupert* and in the broadside of the *Hercules*; and that was the date which Woolwich was prepared to name for the delivery of 21 11½-ton guns. As for the 60-ton gun, of which he spoke in the Statement of the Estimates, and which he earnestly hoped was the biggest gun which either French or English authorities would think it necessary to aspire to, the design had already been laid before the Ordnance Committee and communicated to the Admiralty; and it was hoped that a half of the gun would be finished this year, and its construction would be advanced in parallel strides to that of the *Howe*, the *Rodney*, and the other ships which were being built to carry it. He thought it would be impossible for the armament of the ships to have proceeded more rapidly than it did under the present Government. Meanwhile, the experiment which, if successful, would secure equal power with a lighter weapon, was in an advanced stage. Sir William Armstrong had sent to Woolwich a wire gun of 10·2-inch calibre, which weighed only 21 tons, as against the 26 tons of the Woolwich 10·4-inch breech-loader, and that gun was going to Shoeburyness for trial. As regarded the 6-inch and other lighter guns, he did not wish to state over again what he had said at quite sufficient length before Easter; and he would only remark, as a melancholy, but pretty convincing proof, that the task of re-arming the Navy had begun in earnest, that the Estimates for Naval Ordnance, which in the last year of the late Government amounted to £303,000, would next year reach the very formidable figure of £616,000. Those who had been writing and speaking about the decadence of our naval supremacy had insisted on one or two points, and had left out of sight broad considerations which were strikingly re-assuring. In the first place, if they looked, as he was glad to look, to other nations besides France, they found that whereas, in 1872, those nations were building 23 iron-clads, they all of them together were now building only seven. Next, in calculations of fighting power, everything depended, not on what was intended, but on what was accomplished. When it came to a question of comparing military strength, they must look, not to what existed on paper, but to what they had actually ready in wood and iron. Let them take the iron-clads in commission—that was to say, the ships whose condition was constantly tested and tried by the only sure ordeal, their actual power of keeping the sea. They had of iron-clads, armed and manned, which were actually ready to fight the day after to-morrow, at the latest, 26, with a tonnage of 188,000, only two of which had wooden frames, while the French had 11, with a tonnage of 66,000, four of which had wooden frames. If what they looked to were size and strength, let them take ships of upwards of 9,000 tons and with upwards of 9 inches of armour. Of such ships England had eight and France three. Let them take unarmoured vessels. Of frigates and corvettes, counting only those which were equipped for war and not for police or harbour duties, they had in commission on the high seas 19, as against seven of the French. If, instead of taking number, they chose the test of swiftness, they had built or building 11 ships over the speed of 16 knots, and the French had three. If they took the lower speed of 14 knots, they had 44 and the French 29. And then look at their reserves. In time of war, if such a disaster should occur, the whole maritime energy and resources of the country would be directed to warlike purposes, until the country could be pronounced secure. It was not only that for extempore iron and iron-clad shipbuilding our capabilities far exceeded those of all the rest of the world together; but in time of war, the example of the late Government in the year 1878 would undoubtedly be followed, and the iron-clads which at the time were building or repairing for Foreign Powers in British private yards would be a reserve in the hour of danger. And as for cruisers, there were 165 merchant steamers on the Admiralty list, of which the odd 65, with a gross register of 250,000, exceeded 12 knots an hour, with water-tight compartments, and able to carry the new 6-inch guns, just as effectively as if every one of the 65 had cost the country £120,000 to build, and half as much to keep in repair. A naval war was a long business, and had the whole globe for its stage of action; and the power of a country to sustain such a war, and carry it to a successful result, must be founded on its having a great Commercial Marine and a great maritime population. And there was one consideration to which he had seen no allusion, but which appeared strongly to illustrate the declaration of the French Government that their recent shipbuilding was a temporary measure undertaken for the purpose of replacing an obsolete Fleet. The whole of the extraordinary French Estimates for rebuilding their Fleet had hitherto been provided, not out of Revenue, but as an increase to the National Debt. In the French Estimates of 1882 it had been intended that the shipbuilding should as usual be paid for out of a loan; but the Committee had recommended that for this year and for all the future the shipbuilding should be met out of Revenue. That circumstance, in his opinion, was a strong confirmation that, with the completion of the programme of 1872, the object at which the French Admiralty had been aiming would have been accomplished, and a still stronger guarantee that they would carry it no further. They, meanwhile, without incurring 1*d.* of debt, had seen their way to raise their shipbuilding to the standard of what they might call the English programme; and, for the second time in 10 years, the figure of 20,000 tons was to be attained, an amount of effort they and their successors might confidently hope to be able to maintain, and which if maintained, as he earnestly trusted it would be, would provide Great Britain with an ample and an efficient Fleet. The general conclusion, then, of the Admiralty was this—that it was not necessary for the safety of the country to ask for any special grant of money for iron shipbuilding, unless the French Admiralty, having completed its programme of 1872 and replaced its obsolete ships, should then go on building as fast as ever, but that it was necessary to build at the rate laid down by the right hon. Member for Pontefract (Mr. Childers). He concluded as he began, by saying that he regretted that he should have been obliged to adopt the line of argument he had taken, and to compare our Military and Naval Forces with those of other countries; but the Admiralty, after carefully considering the matter, came to the opinion that they had no choice in the matter. He was relieved, however, from the feeling that the making these comparisons was in any way invidious to the great country which was allied to ours by the freedom with which the French Government had published the facts relating to their shipbuilding, and by the generous admission which they themselves had made. The Commission of 1879, presided over by M. Gambetta, indicated that the idea of naval rivalry between the two countries had passed away. "No one," it was stated, in a most interesting passage of that Report, "disputes the first rank with England;" and it was in the same amicable spirit with regard to France, and with the intention of showing the same amicable spirit towards hon. Gentlemen opposite, that he had made the comparisons which he had the honour of laying before the House that night.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, that no one could complain of the spirit in which his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty had treated the subject in replying to the temperate and able speech of his noble Friend the Member for Chichester. There had been a feeling that the number of iron-clads was not sufficient for the needs of a great country; but he entirely sympathized with his hon. Friend opposite in the feeling that the comparison of our ships of war with those of other nations was to be deprecated, and was only to be made on those rare occasions when it became necessary to inform the House of the state in which our armaments stood with respect to other countries, while, at the same time, they had no reason whatever to expect that those Powers would be unfriendly to this country. At the same time, he thought it unwise for the Government to ignore the exertions of foreign countries, and he was glad that the present Board of Admiralty had seen the necessity of increasing the strength of the iron-clad Fleet. His hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty had referred to the additions to the Fleet made by the late Board; and he wished only to correct the statement in which he had spoken of the addition of four important ships as having been made by their Predecessors. The four vessels in question were purchased, not in 1875, but in 1878, by means of the Vote of Credit that the Government fortunately had at its disposal; and they were, undoubtedly, a great addition to our Navy. The Secretary to the Admiralty had laid down the principle, with which the House would probably agree, that for the efficiency of the Fleet for the time being the Government of the day was responsible. There could be no question that the Government for the time being ought to maintain the Fleet in a condition efficiently to perform any service that might be required of it; and if he had a fault to find with his hon. Friend—though it was difficult to find fault with him—it would be on the ground that the present Board had failed to maintain the Fleet in a condition to meet a sudden emergency. His view of the case was that the Navy existed for the contingency of a possible war at very short notice. Our iron-clad fleet existed not for the purpose of facing combinations that might be formed after six, or, perhaps, 12 months' notice, but in order to meet events occurring suddenly like the Franco-German War. Any other war that might overtake Europe would probably be equally sudden; and those who were responsible for the Forces of the country would incur a very heavy load of responsibility if its resources were not available at very short notice. His complaint, then, was that the Admiralty had allowed the existing Forces of the country to become more or less inefficient for want of that vigilant attention to repairs which was at the bottom of all efficiency, and without which our ships would become useless. In the Estimates for the year 1881-2 the House was informed that certain ships were being repaired and would be completed in a certain time, and similar promises were made in the following year with respect to other ships. He would read the names of these ships. The *Audacious*, an iron-clad, was promised for 1881-2, and was to be completed on the 21st of March of the present year. The *Bellerophon*, iron-clad, was promised in August, 1880, to be completed in July, 1881; the *Rover*, 3,460 tons, was promised for 1881-2, and was not yet completed; and the *Opal*, the *Himalaya*, the *Sapphire*, the *Pelican*, the *Rupert*, the *Active*, the *Avon*, the *Volage*, the *Shah*, the *Raleigh*, the *Juno*, and the *Wild Swan*, were all promised to be repaired within the last two years, a distinct undertaking being given by the present Board of Admiralty. They amounted to 54,000 tons all told; and, for the most part, little or nothing had been done to them, and they now remained to be repaired in the course of the present year. Now, as none of these vessels were at the present moment fit for use, the Navy was so far weaker by their absence than it was in April, 1880. His hon. Friend had supplied to him a list of ships that had been removed from the effective list between that date and the present April as being no longer worth repairing, amounting to upwards of 25,000 tons. Adding the 54,000 tons which remained yet to be repaired to the 25,000 tons which had been struck off the effective list, we got a total of 80,000 tons, which in two years had been taken off for the time being, or altogether, from the effective list of the Navy. What was there on the other side of the account? According to the Estimates in the two years, if the contracts were carried out, there would be 19,271 tons of armoured ships, and 16,000 tons of unarmoured ships, making a total of 35,000 tons, against 80,000 tons, or a difference of 45,000 tons. The five ships that were ineffective for want of repair were the *Resistance*, which was not in the programme at present, the *Shannon*, which was in it, the *Audacious*, the *Bellerophon*, and the *Rupert*, the four latter being good and useful ships. Altogether these represented 30,660 tons of iron-clads, as against the 19,000 tons in the building programme. This subject required the careful consideration of the Admiralty. He did not complain of the expenditure of a single farthing upon the building programme; but he did complain very much that money had not been found to keep efficient the ships which the Admiralty felt to be necessary to the efficiency of the Service. It would have been wiser if the Admiralty had taken money for the repair of these vessels; but the provision made had not been sufficient to carry out the Dockyard programme of building, and also to maintain ships in repair. It should be a canon at the Admiralty that the Navy ought to be in a condition to meet sudden war with all its available resources. He had had furnished to him a list of the ships which, when they were launched, would be efficient; but they would not be available for one or two years. He had given credit for the actual programme which would be accomplished in the two years; and he had set against it the deterioration in the same period. More than two years had elapsed since the order was given by the late Government for the manufacture of a 43-ton gun; and last year they were informed that the present Government, following the example of the late Government, had ordered 6-inch, 8-inch, and 10-inch guns, which would be supplied to the Navy before the 31st of March, 1882. When they got into Committee he should ask how many of these guns were in the possession of the Admiralty; and whether there were carriages for them? He deferred observations which he desired to make on this and some other topics.

CAPTAIN PRICE said, it was satisfactory that an opportunity had at last been found for bringing forward the important question raised by the Motion of the noble Lord the Member for Chichester (Lord Henry Lennox), which Motion he cordially supported. It must have produced astonishment that throughout the whole course of the statement of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty no assurance had been given that the Fleet for which they were asked to make provision was sufficient for the purpose for which it existed. Obviously that was a very difficult duty to perform, when an examination of the strength of the Navies of other countries had to be made a part of the statement; still, he thought there were higher considerations than those merely of the manner in which a specified sum of money had to be divided between the different branches of the Service. He maintained that in all cases in which the naval policy for the year was sketched out some statement should be made, either by the First Lord or the Secretary to the Admiralty, that the Fleet was being maintained, or that a sufficient number of new ships was being built to keep the country in an efficient state of defence. That statement, however, was one which was generally absent on the occasion of the discussion of the Naval Estimates, and constituted one of the drawbacks of our system of Party Government. Whatever Government might be in power, whether it was a Liberal Government, or a Government composed of Gentlemen now sitting on that side of the House, it was the case that they were guided more by Party considerations than those which he had indicated with regard to the strength of the Navy. The defect which he spoke of was one that was reflected, and naturally reflected, at the Admiralty, where the mode of carrying on business was, as he believed he might say with accuracy, as follows:—The First Lord of the Admiralty, assisted by his Parliamentary Colleagues, and influenced by various considerations, into which he need not enter on the present occasion — sometimes affected by the nearness of a Dissolution, and sometimes by the state of the national finances and the fear of coming to that House for an increased Vote—decided what sum should be asked to be granted for the Service of the Navy. In such a case, to ask was to obtain, for he was convinced that the House would never refuse to a responsible Minister of the Crown any sum in reason which he might ask, upon his assurance that it was required for the maintenance of the Navy in an efficient state. The First Lord of the Admiralty, having decided that a sum of, say, £10,000,000, or less, might be asked for with propriety, and without inconvenience, went to the Naval Advisers of the Board of Admiralty, and said—"Be good enough to inform me how this money is to be spent." Now, he contended that this course was the converse of that which ought to be followed. The Naval Lords were experts in the matters for which the money was required; and instead of the First Lord going to them to ask how a certain fixed sum of money might be appropriated, he should make it his duty to inquire of them what sum was required to maintain the Fleet in a state of efficiency? Were that course followed, he repeated his conviction that the House of Commons would not for one moment withhold any sum which the First Lord of the Admiralty might state to be actually necessary for the Service. He was glad that this discussion had taken place, because it had, at least, elicited from the Secretary to the Admiralty something more than an expression of the usual after-dinner sentiments that one often heard, but which no person who had entered into comparisons of the naval strength of this and other countries could for a moment entertain. General, vague, and sometimes wild statements had been made on the assumption that the strength of our Fleet was greater than that of any other Fleet;

and he had once heard the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary state that the Fleet of this country was superior to the combined Fleets of the world. Now, it was said that the subject was a delicate one, and that it was invidious and unwise to make comparisons between the Navy of this country and the Fleets of friendly Powers; but, after all, we were only inquiring into the strength of the Navy—and he understood by that term the relative force of our Navy compared with the Navies of other Powers. What else was there of Foreign Powers besides their Fleets that we could possibly make this comparison with? The only reason why we kept up a Navy at all was because Foreign Powers had Navies which might, under certain circumstances, be dangerous to this country. We had also to consider whether our Fleet was sufficient for the growing duties imposed upon it; and the hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Thomas Brassey) had, on a former occasion, made some remarks upon this subject—referring to the extraordinary growth of the trade and shipping, which our Navy existed to defend—to the effect that—

> "In looking back over a series of years, it would be found that, while an extraordinary growth had taken place in our trade and shipping, the Naval Estimates had remained practically stationary; that the Effective Votes for 1881-2 were £8,662,000, and the exports and imports were £697,000,000."

He went on to say that—

> "Under the Duke of Somerset, who was the First Lord of the Admiralty in the Liberal Administration from 1859 to 1865, the Naval Estimates were far in excess of the present amounts. In 1863, and again in 1864, £9,300,000 was voted for the Navy. At that time the value of our imports and exports was £200,000,000 less than at present, and our steam shipping was less than a third of the present tonnage. The facts which he had laid before them, he said, appeared so conclusive as to the strict economy which had been exercised in our Naval Expenditure, that the question would rather be—whether we were doing enough to provide for the security of our vast Empire and our extended commerce? Upon this point it was difficult to be precise without entering into invidious comparisons with other Powers; and he therefore asked them to be satisfied with the general assurance that we were at that moment in a satisfactory condition."

Now, the noble Lord, and those who supported the proposition which he had brought forward, had been styled "alarmists"—that was to say, they were persons who foresaw dangers to which they and others were exposed. But, he asked, were not the alarmists in this case authorities upon the question? Of course, he did not refer to himself; but surely the experience of the noble Lord at the Board of Admiralty, and the researches he had made, entitled him to this designation. Again, the view of the noble Lord was supported by Sir Thomas Symonds, Admiral of the Fleet; by the right hon. and gallant Member for Wigton (Sir John Hay); and by Sir Spencer Robinson, who was Controller of the Navy under a Liberal Administration, who had published a pamphlet on the subject, and who, directly he left the Board of Admiralty, declared in unqualified terms that the Navy of this country was wholly inefficient for the work it had to do, and that, in many essential respects, it was inferior to the Navy of France. Those who took an optimist view of the qualifications of the Navy rested their case upon a series of probabilities. The first was that we should have plenty of notice of a coming war. Surely that was not a probability upon which we could rely. The second was that this country would be certain to have Allies, and that our opponent would probably have none. That, again, was surely not a probability upon which to rely. The third probability on which hon. Gentlemen opposite rested was that of our ability to concentrate our Fleet in European waters. A fourth was that there was some arrangement on which the food supply could be assured; and a fifth and most important one was that of the iron-clads in course of construction in other than Government Yards. But as to our ability to purchase iron-clads, he asked whether there was a single vessel of the kind ready for use on which we could lay our hands? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), when First Lord of the Admiralty, was, undoubtedly able, in 1876, to purchase five first-class iron-clads, complete, or nearly so. But he contended that, at the present moment, there was not a single iron-clad to be bought in a similar manner. [Mr. TREVELYAN: There are seven at different stages.] He (Captain Price) had made inquiries on the subject last year, and was informed that there were only two vessels at all advanced. The hon. Gentlemen had spoken of maintaining our Navy upon an equality with of that of one foreign country, and had assumed that so long as it was superior to that one leading Power it was sufficient. But that was undoubtedly a new departure in the policy of this country, which used to be, in regard to Naval matters, that our Fleet should be equal to the Fleets of any two Foreign Powers. The whole of the arguments heard that night went to show that the provision we were making was insufficient. It was altogether beyond the question to say that our Fleet was equal to that of another country. If we took the Fleet as it now stood it was, no doubt, a good deal superior to that of France; but if we inquired into the effect of the policy which was being pursued in our own Navy and that which was being pursued in regard to the French Navy, it would be seen that a considerable superiority would result to the latter in the course of two or three years. He asked who was responsible for that state of things? For the purpose of comparison, he would divide our Fleet of iron-clads into three classes. In the first class he should include ships capable of carrying guns of 43 tons weight and upwards, built, building, and provided for in the current Estimates. He might, at this point, express the surprise he felt at hearing the hon. Gentleman cast doubt upon the statement that French ships now building would carry 72-ton guns, because it was a fact that guns of that weight were now being made in France; and for what were they being made if not for the purpose of being mounted? Then, what right had the hon. Gentleman to say that French ships of the first class were not going to carry guns of this calibre? The fact was that of vessels of the first class, built, building, and provided for, we had 10 ships; whereas France had 18 and Italy 7, the average weight of their heaviest guns being 55 tons in the English, as against 61 tons and 100, respectively, in the ships of France and Italy. Moreover, while the French had 70-ton guns actually building, our 60-ton guns were only on paper, the hon. Gentleman having stated that perhaps two or three 43-ton guns would be ready by the end of the year, while, he believed, the whole of the seven Italian vessels would be armed with 100-ton guns. The average thickness of armour on the English ships was 18 inches, as compared with 19 inches on the French ships. So far as France was concerned, the average speed was the same as our own, while, in the case of Italy, it was somewhat higher—that was to say, the average of our first-class ships was 14·25 knots; of the French, 14·25 knots, and of the Italian ships 15 knots. Thus, France and Italy combined had 25 first-class iron-clads, as against our 10, the respective averages of guns, armour, and speed being those which he had pointed out. Of vessels of the second class—namely, those which carried guns of from 18 to 38 tons, England had 26, France 18, and Italy 5. In the weight of guns we had slightly the advantage, as compared with France, the average being 24¼ tons, against 22 tons. The same remark applied to the armour, the average thickness of the plates carried by the English ships being 12¼ inches, and that of the French 11 inches. But in the more vital matter of speed we were behind, the average speed of the French vessels being 13·6, and of ours 13·25 knots. Of vessels of the third class—namely, those carrying guns of less than 18 tons, and with armour of less than 9 inches in thickness, England had 15, France 13, and Italy seven. At first he thought it would be well to include in the third class every vessel, built or building, which carried, or was intended to carry, armour-plating of any kind; but on re-consideration that appeared to be hardly correct; and he had, therefore, carefully calculated the number of ships which could be made use of, and those which would not be of use to the country in time of war. Of these ships, as he had before pointed out, we had 15 and the French 13. Now, until the commencement of the present year, the French counted on their *Navy List*, besides these 13 vessels, 14 others, which made a total of 27. They also had 12 floating batteries built since the Crimean War, and which until lately they had looked upon as vessels which might take their place in action. Certainly, they did not consider them useless vessels, for they kept them up more efficiently than the two floating batteries which we had at the present time. However, he should not include these amongst their vessels of the third class. But he must remind the House that a number of ships had been struck off the list of the French Fleet which last year actually took part in the bombardment of Sfax. Whether they could be brought forward again he was, of course, unable to say; but it was only fair that, as they had been removed from the French *Navy List*, they should not be included under the head of vessels of the third class. He said, then, that Italy and France combined had 20 iron-clads of the third class as against our 15; and, therefore, the sum total of iron-clads of the three classes was for England 51, France 49, and for Italy 19. In other words, England would have 51 ships as against the 68 of France and Italy combined. He asked whether or not the comparison he had made was a true one, and for this reason—because, when they made a comparison of the kind, they were not replied to in the terms of that comparison, but some other comparison was set up which was not applicable; and it would certainly be far more interesting to the public to get a categorical denial, if it were possible, of that which he now made in support of the Motion which the noble Lord had brought forward. If it were said that this comparison was not a true one, he asked to what extent it was not true? The Secretary to the Admiralty had made to the House a very lucid and explanatory statement; but, notwithstanding that his speech had been of the most interesting character, he had by no means denied the statement of the noble Lord, or the other statements which had been made on that side of the House. He should like, therefore, to get an answer from the hon. Gentleman, in general terms, as to whether, in the first place, he would deny that the French Naval Estimates were increasing, while ours were decreasing? The hon. Gentleman had referred that evening to the sum mentioned by the noble Lord as being voted this year in France—namely, £9,000,000—which the hon. Gentleman compared with our Estimate of £10,500,000; but, in doing so, he entirely forgot to state that in the French Vote was not included the sum which we include in our Estimate for the Non-Effective Votes. Was the hon. Gentleman also able to deny that the French were employing a very much larger number of men in their Dockyards, and building a larger amount of tonnage than we were? The figures of the hon. Gentleman agreed with his, in showing that the French were building 15,000 tons of iron-clads as against our 11,500 tons; and when the hon. Gentleman said that the French would not carry out their programme, he should be glad to know on what foundation that statement rested. Would the hon. Gentleman deny that their programme for last year was carried out? The French Estimates were published, and they had voted money for building the same amount of 15,000 tons of iron-clads next year. It mattered nothing to the present inquiry whether or not they had carried out their programme in 1878 or 1879. What we had to do was to compare with our Estimates and tonnage the money they had voted this year and the tonnage intended to be built by them in the coming two years. Again, could the hon. Gentleman deny that the French were adding 600 or 700 men to their Navy, while we were reducing our men by a like number? The hon. Gentleman stated at an earlier period in the Session that the number of men and boys asked for was the same for this as for last year; but he added that we were reducing the number of our Marines, whom he justly described as forming part of the ship's company. Therefore, it was correct to say that while we were reducing our Navy the French were increasing theirs. Again, the French, both this year and last year, had voted more money than we for guns, and were progressing with more rapid strides than we in the armament of their Fleet. They were building new types of guns more quickly, and, therefore, their ships would be sooner armed than ours; and, at the same time, they were spending more money on torpedoes. He said it would be satisfactory to the country that some Representative of the Admiralty should, if possible, emphatically deny those statements; and if he could not deny them *in toto*, then the House should be informed to what extent they were incorrect, or that they were not incorrect at all. The Admiralty, up to the present, had sheltered themselves under the old excuse, that it was invidious to make comparisons and that they must trust the Government. For his own part, he did not believe that the Government of any Party was to be trusted in such a matter as this; and the suggestion which he had to make, although it was not likely to be accepted, and would be considered by a large number of Members as impracticable, was that a Royal Commission should issue to inquire into the question of what was a really sufficient Fleet for this country to possess. The Commissioners should examine experts of all kinds — naval officers, engineers, Admiralty officials, and all those who were capable of giving an opinion on the subject—and then make their Report. But, although this would be a step in the right direction, it would be by no means enough, for it was probable that if Nelson, Collingwood, and all our old naval heroes were to rise from their graves and demonstrate from their own and the accumulated experience of later days that the country ought to be supplied with a far larger Fleet than it had, no Government would ask for the money that was necessary. Nevertheless, the country ought to be supplied with a Fleet sufficient in every respect; and he was quite certain that if the money were voted for this purpose, not one word of dissatisfaction would be heard throughout the Kingdom at the step which had been taken.

Mr. R. W. DUFF said, he had listened with attention and interest to the speech of the noble Lord the Member for Chichester (Lord Henry Lennox), who, in his opinion, had done good service in calling attention to the Navies of Foreign Powers, notwithstanding that in his statement he thought he had somewhat over-estimated the strength of the French Fleet while under-estimating our own. Moreover, he thought the reply of his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty went a considerable length in the direction of answering the noble Lord's complaint. At the same time, when they looked on the vast increase of the Italian and German Fleets, quite apart from that of France, he could not feel satisfied that our own Navy was such as it ought to be. He had heard the same statements and arguments that had been advanced that evening used on many occasions during the years he had had the honour to sit in that House; while it was contended, on the one hand, that the Fleet was insufficient for the national requirements, it was usually replied, on the other, that while the Government admitted that the Navy was not quite what it ought to be, it was in the same position when they came into Office. That kind of attack and defence had gone on for years. But what they had to consider was not whether the Navy was better now than it was when the Opposition were in Office, but whether it was what it ought to be for the service of the country. He was bound to say that the noble Lord had brought forward facts and statements which, in his opinion, had not been entirely answered by his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty, although, in dealing with details, he had shown some inaccuracies on the part of the noble Lord. His object, however, in rising was to call attention to the manning of the Fleet. The noble Lord had said very truly that, deducting supernumeraries, the number of seamen amounted to about 18,000, and as he (Mr. R. W. Duff) had not seen any contradiction of the statement which he made last year as to the small number of those who had seen six years' service, he would like to know whether the Admiralty would furnish the House with a statement showing the number of years' sea service which these 18,000 men had? The hon. Gentleman had told them that there were 153 steam vessels in the Merchant Navy, all of them fit to carry guns of great calibre; but he was very much concerned to know where the men were to come from for the purpose of manning these guns, particularly as the hon. Gentleman had, to a certain extent, reduced the Royal Marines. We were now introducing breech-loading guns into the Navy, although our men were always drilled with muzzle-loading guns. [Mr. W. H. Smith: There are no breech-loading guns in the Navy.] He (Mr. R. W. Duff) had certainly been given to understand that the Navy was actually supplied with some breech-loading guns. Whether that was correct or not, he thought it was high time that breech-loaders were introduced into the Navy; and he felt sure his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty would admit that the sooner this was done the better, for they had been proved to be better than muzzle-loaders. Without detaining the House by entering into details, he was bound to say that, on the whole, his noble Friend had made out a case for increasing the Navy. Although he had been answered to a certain extent, he had not been entirely answered; and, therefore, he trusted that the Admiralty would not, upon any false ideas of economy, shrink from bringing forward such Estimates as would enable them fully to maintain our Naval Forces. He was satisfied that no one was more convinced than the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty of the absolute necessity of keeping up the seamanship of our sailors; and if the statement which he (Mr. R. W. Duff) had made last year with reference to the amount of their sea service were correct, he trusted there would be no hesitation in bringing forward proposals on that important subject that would be satisfactory to the country. He would not, at that late hour, deal with the statements made by his noble Friend (Lord Henry Lennox); he would only say that although he agreed on many points with the noble Lord, especially when he spoke of what the Navy ought to be, he saw very great difficulty in combining in one vessel all the requirements of a naval ship. His noble Friend talked of vessels which were to be very swift; they were not to draw much water, they were to be lightly built, and yet they were to carry very powerful guns. He would like to see his noble Friend design such a vessel. If he were to do so, he would do great service to the Navy and the country.

SIR MASSEY LOPES said, they were indebted to the noble Lord the Member for Chichester (Lord Henry Lennox) for having initiated this discussion; and it was a matter of congratulation that the Navy was no longer an arena of Party politics, and that all of them, whatever their political views, were unanimous in endeavouring to maintain the efficiency, the supremacy of our Navy. There was, undoubtedly, some uneasiness and some alarm—and he thought the debate of that evening was not calculated to allay it—with respect to the condition of our Navy at the present time, and with respect to its strength, relatively, to that of the Navies of foreign countries. It was admitted that our Navy at present was more efficient than the Navy of any other country; and he would give credit to the present Board of Admiralty for having endeavoured to maintain the efficiency of our Navy so far as the limited means at their disposal would allow. The question for them was not whether our Navy was more efficient than it ever was, but whether our Navy bore a more favourable comparison with the Navies of other countries than it did some 10 or 20 years ago. That was the crucial question for them to consider. There was no doubt that the Navies of other countries, more especially that of France and Italy, had been vastly developed of late years. He believed our Navy was absolutely superior to that of France; at present there was no question about that. But then, in order to make a fair comparison, they had to compare relatively the duties of the respective Navies. The duties and responsibilities of our Navy were vastly greater than those of France. In the first place, we had a great length of coast to protect; we had an enormous trade and commerce—he believed double the trade of that of all the rest of the world; we had our numerous Colonies, and, as had already been stated during the debate, we were really dependent for our daily bread upon the regular arrival of ships in this country from abroad. Now, when they considered such enormous responsibilities he thought our Navy did not compare favourably with that of France. There was no doubt of this—that both France and Italy were at present contending for that naval supremacy which for so many years we had maintained. We had far greater interests at stake. It was necessary to our national existence. It made our Colonies, it created our commerce. We could never risk the loss of that naval supremacy. If we lost an engagement on land we could recover our prestige; but if we once met with a naval disaster we should sustain a loss which would be irreparable. If that were so it would never do to risk the loss of our naval supremacy; if we did lose that supremacy we should lose our position amongst foreign countries; we should risk the relinquishment of our Colonies and the annihilation of our commerce. He had in his hand a statement of the Navy Estimates for the last few years. They were asked this year for a Vote of £10,484,000. The apparent decrease in last year's Estimates was £462,000; but the actual decrease was £221,000. The Admiralty took credit for the extra receipts, amounting to £240,000. That was a great novelty. The extra receipts were for old stores, ships, &c.; they were formerly paid into the Exchequer, and now they were to be treated as Appropriations in Aid of Parliamentary grants. He was not sure that that was a good arrangement; but it certainly did enable the present Admiralty to submit to the Committee reduced Estimates. He had no doubt that if they were in power two or three years they would leave very few old ships and stores for the benefit of their successors. If they were going to take the benefit of the extra receipts they ought to have expended them as extraordinary expenditure. Few people were aware of what a comparatively small sum was expended out of the whole Navy Vote upon our Effective Services. Out of the £10,484,000 they had to deduct £2,070,000 for the Non-Effective purposes. They therefore only voted £8,414,000 for the Navy proper. Then they had to deduct the cost of transport, which was £120,000, so that only allowed an Expenditure on the Effective Services of £8,294,000. His hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Trevelyan) took credit to himself for making a great many improvements, and yet for not materially increasing the Vote. Of course, that was very creditable to a certain extent. It was the hon. Gentleman's desire to make both ends meet and balance his accounts; but he (Sir Massey Lopes) did not think they should deal with the Navy in that commercial sort of way. They must first of all secure efficiency, and if they could combine that with economy so much the better. But it would not do to risk our naval supremacy if it was only a question of his hon. Friend asking them for a larger Vote. We were expending now upon our Navy considerably less than we expended 20 years ago. He had in his hand an account of the Expenditure of the Navy for the last 20 years; and, notwithstanding the costly improvements which had been made during that time, he found we were spending less money than we did at that period. Let them compare the Expenditure in the year 1860-1 with the years 1870-1 and 1880-1; and he could not go beyond that, because, as his hon. Friend knew, the Audit of the Naval Accounts had not yet been furnished for a later year. He would only deal with the Effective and Non-Effective Votes, because, in making the comparison, he had excluded all extraordinary expenditure. He found that in 1860-1 we expended a total of £12,029,000; in the year 1870-1 we only expended a total of £9,670,000; in the year 1880-1 we expended a total of £10,115,000. Now, he found that the Effective Vote in 1860-1 was £10,736,000, and in 1870-1 it was £7,957,000; but he need not remind the House that it was during that year that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Pontefract (Mr. Childers) was in Office, and that was the lowest Naval Expenditure we ever had. At that time we had only 12,000 men in the Dockyards, instead of 16,000 as at present. He found that the difference between the Effective Vote of 1860-1 and that of 1880-1 was as much as £1,680,000, and that we had got an increase in our Non-Effective Vote in the 20 years of £766,000, which really amounted to the cost of one of our largest ironclads—the *Inflexible*, for instance. It was scarcely credible that in 1880-1 we were only spending £100 more in our Effective Vote than we did in 1870-1—the year of our lowest Naval Expenditure. One thing was quite certain—that if we were to put our Navy in the same relative position in which it was some 10 or 20 years ago we should be obliged to spend more money. There was no doubt, as had been stated, that the cost of maintaining the Navy had a great tendency to increase; but then they must bear in mind that our wealth and our population was increasing in a corresponding degree. He thought that if there was any probability of France, or any other country, competing with us for naval supremacy, he was quite certain that if his hon. Friend (Mr. Trevelyan) were to make application to the House of Commons and the country for a large Vote it would be cheerfully given. He would like to say a word with reference to our guns. He was always under the impression that the weak point of our Navy was our guns. He was glad to hear his hon. Friend convey a somewhat different impression. He was certainly under the impression that France, in the matter of guns, was in a better position than England; and they had the authority of Sir William Armstrong—one of the greatest authorities on such a subject—that, weight for weight, the naval ordnance of the French was superior to that of this country. He was glad to hear a remark in reference to the system of the Navy going to the Army for its guns. The system of making the Admiralty dependent on the War Office for guns was most anomalous and unbusinesslike. Other countries like Russia, the United States, and France, had their own naval ordnance manufactories; while Germany, Austria, and Italy went to private firms. He did not see why the English Navy could not do the same; the Navy could not order a gun without the intervention of the War Office—it had no control, and, therefore, no responsibility. It ought to be in a position to give occasional orders to private firms, just as it did in the case of the building of ships. If we did not make some real effort to increase our Navy we should find that of France, if not superior, at any rate equal to it. Any Government would incur enormous responsibility if it ever allowed France, or any other country, to be in such a position as to be able to compete with us for naval supremacy.

Lord HENRY LENNOX said, he was so perfectly satisfied with the discussion that had taken place that he begged leave to withdraw his Motion, and to thank the House for the attention it had given to the subject.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Motion, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," by leave, *withdrawn.*

Committee *deferred* till *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

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WATER PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Ashley, Bill for confirming certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under "The Gas and Waterworks Facilities Act, 1870," relating to Calne Water, Cromer Water, Denbigh Water, and Kenilworth Water, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Ashley and Mr. Chamberlain.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 135.]

GAS PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Ashley, Bill for confirming certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under "The Gas and Waterworks Facilities Act, 1870," relating to Brecon Gas, High Wycombe Gas, Kettering Gas, Portsea Gas, Redditch Gas, Salisbury Gas, and Sheffield Gas, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Ashley and Mr. Chamberlain.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 136.]

TURNPIKE ACTS CONTINUANCE ACT, 1881, COMMITTEE.

Ordered, That it be a further Instruction to the Committee to take into consideration the several Acts relating to the Shrewsbury and Holyhead Turnpike Road, and to report to the House whether such Acts should be scheduled in the annual Turnpike Continuance Bill of the present year with a view to the repeal of the said Acts after a stated date.—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

CANALS.

Select Committee *appointed,* "to inquire into the condition and the position of the Canals and internal navigation of the Country, to report thereupon, and to make such recommendations as may appear necessary."—(*Mr. Salt.*)

House adjourned at One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 21*st April,* 1882.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Stolen Goods (64); Army (Annual) * (65).

Second Reading—General Police and Improvement (Scotland) * (48); Drainage (Ireland) Provisional Order * (51).

Third Reading—Duke of Albany (Establishment) * (58), and *passed.*

Royal Assent—Duke of Albany (Establishment) [45 *Vict.* c. 5].

STOLEN GOODS BILL.

BILL PRESENTED. FIRST READING.

The LORD CHANCELLOR, in moving the first reading of a Bill to amend the law respecting the recovery of Stolen Articles, said, it was the same Bill as that which was proceeded with last Session up to a certain stage; and he proposed, when it reached the same stage, to move the re-appointment of a Select Committee to which it should be referred.

Bill to amend the Law respecting the recovery of Stolen Articles—*Presented* (The Lord Chancellor); read 1^a; to be *printed.* (No. 64.)

CRIMINAL LAW—THE CONDEMNED CONVICT LAMSON.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

The Earl of MILLTOWN, who had the following Notice on the Paper:—To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether there is any existing precedent of a Foreign Government having interfered to arrest a judgment pronounced on a British subject by an English court of justice for a crime committed in England of which he had been found guilty by a regularly constituted jury; and, if not, whether the Secretary of State will inform the House what are the reasons which have induced Her Majesty's Government to accede to such an interference on the part of the President of the United States in the case of the convict Lamson, said, that before he put the Question he would like to make one or two observations upon the subject. He did so with some diffidence, as it was the first time he had addressed their Lordships. The case of the convict Lamson, and the facts relating to it, were of such recent occurrence that it would be fresh in the minds of their Lordships. After a long and patient trial the prisoner was convicted on the clearest evidence of a foul and deliberate murder of a poor little boy, his own relative.

Earl GRANVILLE, entering the House at this stage, apologized for interrupting the noble Lord, but said he had not heard his Notice given on the previous night, and suggested that the Question should be postponed until Monday, when he hoped to be in a position to give fuller information on the subject than he was prepared to do at present.

[Question postponed.]

House adjourned at half past Four o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 21*st April*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—Supply—*considered in Committee*—Civil Service Estimates, Class I.—Public Works and Buildings.

Private Bill (*by Order*) — *Second Reading*— Walton Vicarage.

Public Bills—*Ordered—First Reading*—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order * [138].

Second Reading—Artillery Ranges * [125].

Committee—Municipal Corporations (*re-comm.*) [113], *deferred.*

The Earl of Milltown

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

WALTON VICARAGE BILL (*by Order.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Charles Forster.*)

Mr. CAINE, in moving that the Bill be read a second time on that day six months, said, he would explain as briefly as possible the reasons which induced him to move the Amendment. The Bill dealt with the Vicarage of the parish of Walton-on-the-Hill, in the neighbourhood of Liverpool. The population of the Vicarage and Rectory of Walton was 18,872. In 1871 it was only 6,459, so that the population of the district had trebled during the last 10 years. According to Crockford's *Ecclesiastical Directory*, the Vicarage was worth £2,100 a-year, and the Rectory £1,000, making a total income together of £3,100 a-year available for the payment of the clergy of the district of the parish of Walton. But he wished to point out to the House that although the population of the parish had so greatly increased from 6,000 to 18,000, there had been no increase whatever in the Church accommodation of the parish during the last 10 years. The present Bill proposed that the Trustees of the Liverpool Bishopric Endowment Fund should be authorized to apply a portion of the fund to the purchase of the advowson of the Vicarage, and also to the benefit of the spiritual interests of the parish. The sum which it was proposed to take from the Liverpool Bishopric Endowment Fund for this purpose was £30,000. The Bishoprics Act of 1878 authorized the foundation of a Bishopric of Liverpool, and directed the Ecclesiastical Commissioners of England to receive all contributions made by the public for the purposes of the endowment of the Bishopric, and to carry the amount of such contributions to a fund to be called the Endowment Fund of the Bishopric. The same Act enacted that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners should provide out of the Liverpool Bishopric Fund a net annual income for the Bishop not exceeding £4,200 a-year; and the surplus, if any, was to be applied to the benefit of the spiritual wants of the inhabitants of the parish of Walton. He quite admitted the need of money for the latter purpose, because the present church accommodation of Walton only provided for about 10 per cent of the population; and the Bishop of Liverpool himself, in a charge which he recently delivered in the diocese, stated that it was necessary that 12 new churches should be built in the diocese, and four of them were to be situated within the parish of Walton. The question which would naturally arise, under these circumstances, was, how much money would be available for the spiritual needs of the parishioners of Walton under this Bill? According to the authority of Canon Hume, the present income of the Bishopric amounted to the sum of £3,200 a-year. At some distant period, dependent upon the life of the present Bishop of Chester, a sum of £300 a-year would be added to the income of the See, making altogether £3,500 a-year; but from that was to be deducted the interest upon the purchase money of the advowson—£30,000 at 4 per cent, or £1,200 a-year. Deducting that sum from the Bishopric of Liverpool, outside the Vicarage of Walton only £2,300 a-year would be available for the income of the Bishop; and, therefore, to provide a net annual income of £4,200—the amount proposed by the Bishoprics Act as the maximum amount of the Bishop's stipend—it was clear that £1,900 would have to be taken from the income of the Vicarage of Walton. The income of that Vicarage was stated in *The Church Directory* to be £2,800 a-year; but he was told by one of the promoters of the Bill that its present value was only £1,500 a-year, and he was unable to say how the figure of £2,800 was arrived at. Perhaps the matter would be explained presently. He was told by the same authority that five years hence—in 1887—the value of the Vicarage would £2,900 a-year, owing to——

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners;—

The House went;—and being returned;—

Mr. Speaker *reported* the *Royal Assent to* two Bills.

WALTON VICARAGE BILL.

Question again proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. CAINE resuming, said, he had been explaining to the House before the interruption took place that, under the present Bill, it was proposed that the Trustees of the Liverpool Bishopric Fund should purchase the advowson of the Vicarage of the parish of Walton for the sum of £30,000; and he was pointing out the sources from which it was proposed to raise from the Vicarage the income of the Bishop of Liverpool to the sum of £4,200 a-year, and to devote any surplus to the spiritual wants of the parish of Walton. He had also endeavoured to show that if the spiritual wants of the parish were to depend upon this surplus, the spiritual wants of the parish of Walton would come off very badly indeed. The present income of the Bishopric was £3,200, and there would hereafter be a permanent addition of £300 a-year. The money raised as an Endowment Fund was at present invested in Liverpool Dock Bonds for 50 years, at 4 per cent; but from that amount must be deducted the sum of £1,200 a-year, being the interest upon the proposed purchase money of the Vicarage of Walton at 4 per cent. This would leave the income of the Bishopric outside the parish of Walton at £2,300 a-year, and to make up that sum to a total of £4,200 a-year it was clear that £1,900 a-year must be taken from the income of the Vicarage of Walton. That income, on the authority of one of the chief promoters of the Bill, was, at the present moment, only £1,500 a-year; but, in 1887, it would reach £2,900, owing to certain building leases beginning to pay. But the House would see that, for the next five years, the income would actually fall short of the income considered necessary for the Bishopric by the sum of £400 a-year; and seeing that, even after that date, two-thirds of the income were to be given to the Bishop and only one-third to the spiritual wants of the parish of Walton, it certainly did seem that this was simply a scheme to save the pockets of the rich parishioners of Walton and Liverpool by robbing the poor of what ought to be devoted to their spiritual requirements. He also objected to the Bill because it proposed to intrust the Ecclesiastical

Commissioners with functions which Parliament never intended them to perform—namely, the sanctioning of trafficking in Church livings, in the first instance, and the commission of an act of simony in the second. He could not help reflecting how, in the palmy days of Canon Ryle, the suggestion of such a transaction would have been followed by scathing articles in *The Rock* newspaper. Yet the whole matter appeared to have received the approval of Bishop Ryle, of Liverpool. The object of the present Bill was to deprive the parishioners of some £2,000 a-year, without an attempt being made, as far as he knew, to consult their wishes and feelings on this important subject. If for no other reason than this, he thought the second reading of the Bill ought to be postponed until next Session. It might be quite possible that the co-existence of a Vicar and a Rector in this parish was desirable. He did not profess to understand questions of ecclesiastical policy, and, therefore, he would express no opinion upon that matter; but why, when the Bishop of Liverpool was already in the enjoyment of an income of £3,200 a-year, with a retrospective income of £3,500 a-year, besides a residence worth £500 a-year, the income hitherto devoted to the maintenance of the clergy and to meeting those wants, the neglect of which had hitherto been so deeply deplored by the very Bishop who now proposed to annex these funds for his own use, he was at a loss to understand. He hoped the House would refuse to give a second reading to the Bill, if only for the purpose of enabling zealous Churchmen to bring in a better Bill, dealing with the parish of Walton as the parish of Rochdale was dealt with some time ago, and to devote the whole of the funds of the Vicarage to the provision of those churches which the Bishop of Liverpool declared to be so greatly needed in the parish of Walton. Such a proposition would certainly receive his hearty support. He had no doubt that the owner of the advowson would be as willing to sell for this better purpose as for the ecclesiastical job which the present Bill proposed to perpetrate. If not, and it was still found desirable to purchase the advowson of the Vicarage, let the income derived from the purchase go towards the reduction of the rates of the City of Liverpool, which city, he believed, once formed part of the parish of Walton-on-the-Hill, and from which a large sum of money was now annually taken for the purpose of maintaining Corporation churches up and down Liverpool in districts from which the population had long since been withdrawn. In his opinion, this Bill ought never to have been brought in as a Private Bill at all; and he regretted to say that it appeared to be only too easy to smuggle Private Bills through the House, unknown to anybody except the officers of the House and one or two individual Members. He should have thought that any measure so deeply affecting the National Church would have been of interest, not only to every Member of the House, but to the public generally. Bills which proposed to job away a large sum of public money ought to be dealt with by the whole House, and not by the hole-and-corner method of a Private Bill. He thought the time had arrived when something should be done to secure that copies of all Private Bills should be delivered to Members with the ordinary Votes of the day, so that all of them might know what proposals they contained. He begged now to move, as an Amendment to the second reading of the Bill, that it be read a second time on that day six months.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words, "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Caine.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, he quite agreed with his hon. Friend the Member for Scarborough (Mr. Caine) that it was a somewhat strange proceeding that a proposal of this character should be brought before the House in the guise of a Private Bill. It was a Bill which dealt not only with the property of a National Institution, but with a subject which, in the judgment of all of them, was of infinitely higher importance—namely, the suppression of a sacred office in the National Church. It appeared that in the case of the parish of Walton there was a Rectory and a Vicarage, and the minds of some people there might be a little inconvenience in a possible clashing of authority, although there was no evidence that hitherto that had been the case, or that any difficulties had arisen between the Rector and the Vicar. But supposing that it was the case, or supposing that there was some infinitely weightier reason than a possible collision between the Rector and the Vicar, then he submitted to the House that in this, as in a number of other cases of the same character where the ecclesiastical functions had grown too large, there ought to be a subdivision of the district for spiritual purposes, and that separate jurisdiction should be given to these different ecclesiastical personages so as to prevent the possibility of a collision or clashing of duties hereafter. He thought the House would be acting wisely in rejecting the second reading of the Bill on this ground alone, seeing that it was dealing with the National Church and with a large national property. [Mr. Warton: No! and other hon. Members: Hear, hear!] He was delighted at the interruption, or that any doubt should be thrown upon the question whether the Institution they were discussing was a National Church, because he would infinitely prefer that there should be declared ignorance rather than concealed ignorance upon the question. No doubt, it was an interesting question whether the Established Church was a National Institution or not. He could only imagine that the hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Warton) foresaw that there might be great inconvenience in making the admission, or he would not have ventured to interrupt him (Mr. Illingworth) by challenging his assertion that the Established Church of the country was as much a National Institution as the Army and Navy, because, if there were substantial grounds for saying that that was not the case, he (Mr. Illingworth) thought that Parliament and the country itself would very soon ask another and a very pertinent question—namely, why the affairs of one sect in the country were to be obtruded so persistently upon Parliament, instead of being settled out-of-doors like those of any other religious denomination. He held that the main distinction between a National Church and other religious Bodies was that the affairs of the latter were settled outside the walls of Parliament, while the affairs of a National Church were with propriety brought before Parliament, and settled nowhere else. He therefore ventured to think that, whatever might be the legal form suggested by this procedure, there were very strong objections to dealing with the property and the affairs of a National Church in the form of a Private Bill. Before going further, he wished to ask this simple question—If it were justifiable, as an arrangement fitting to be arrived at by means of a Private Bill, to suppress a Vicarage for the care of souls, why might they not have a process for disestablishing and disendowing one-half of the parishes of the country by means of thousands of Private Bills? If it were proper and fitting that such a measure should be introduced in the one case, he certainly knew of no reason why the same process should not be carried out in all. If the Rector was willing to sell the living in one case, why should not other persons similarly situated dispose of their livings? The circumstances in the present case were somewhat curious. The Rector was the patron of the Vicarage of Walton, and he was the individual who was going to pocket this £28,000 or £30,000—certainly, a very anomalous transaction in connection with a Private Bill. He had no doubt there were many other patrons who would be very willing to sell the property they possessed upon similar terms—and without much regard to the danger of the suppression of the care of souls in the district where the transaction took place, seeing that no provision was made for supplying another living in the place of the one disposed of. What he desired now was to point out to the House, and through the House to the country, the danger there was, in a transaction of this very doubtful character, of suppressing altogether a public office for the cure of souls by means of a Private Bill, and through an arrangement between the patron and those who desired to obtain a benefit from the transaction. He hoped, before the debate was brought to a close, to find some hon. Member take part in it who was acknowledged by the House to be, in some sense, a special guardian of the interests and reputation of the National Church; and he was anxious to know whether any such hon. Member was prepared to come forward and justify this system of the sale of Church patronage, and of associating with it a dignitary of the highest character in the National Church? If it was justifiable in one case that the patronage should be sold, then he wanted to know what justification there could be for the Bill of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Stanhope), by which the hon. Gentleman proposed to interfere with this system of the sale of patronage? He was aware that there had been Committees and Commissions, which had reported upon the evils to the National Church, and upon the mischief to religion generally, which arose from this mode of trafficking in sacred offices. They need not wonder at what took place among men who had no other object in view than finding investments for their money, when they found Rectors and Bishops of the Church of England indulging in this traffic themselves—or, at any rate, countenancing it. They had seen in that House during the present Session considerable anxiety shown lest the House should do some injury to religion by the admission of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh). He appealed to those hon. Gentlemen, who were, no doubt, very sincere, or, at any rate, very zealous, in their guardianship of religion, that they should go into the Lobby with his hon. Friend the Member for Scarborough (Mr. Caine) against the second reading of this Bill; for he ventured to say that if the matter now before the House were to become as well known throughout the country as the celebrated case of the hon. Member for Northampton, infinitely greater injury would be done to religion and to the Established Church of the country than anything that would be done by the introduction of half-a-dozen Mr. Bradlaughs into the House. There were some incidents about this matter that he thought the House would probably like to have the details of. How was it that now-a-days ecclesiastical property could be brought so openly into the financial market that even so large a sum as £30,000 was ready to be given for it? He thought it was to be explained by the fact that the present Vicar was 85 years of age, and that, therefore, the Bishop of Liverpool would not be called upon to wait very long before he came into possession of any pecuniary advantage which the transaction might confer upon him. He was not there to say whether or not in regard to a Bishop it was necessary that he should live in a Palace; but he was willing to admit that if he did live in a Palace he must have a Princely income. No doubt there was, in the minds of Churchmen, a feeling that a Bishop should take his station among the wealthiest and the highest in the land. But when this Bishopric of Liverpool was established the public were given to understand that zealous and wealthy Episcopalians were going to provide the funds, and that there was not likely to be brought before the House of Commons a transaction of such a shameful character as the one they were now engaged in discussing, in order that the pockets of the wealthy West Lancashire gentry might not be further drawn on. As he understood the matter, the maximum sum fixed for the income of the Bishop of Liverpool was £4,200 a-year. Why, then, were they flagging in their energies in providing the stipulated amount? Had they a pastor who was not deserving of their confidence? That could scarcely be the case, for they all knew that Canon Ryle was a sincere, a zealous, and a very able Churchman; and, further, that, on becoming Bishop of Liverpool, he placed himself literally among the people there, in the confidence that they would do complete justice to him. The question now was, were they going to fail the Bishop of Liverpool? Were they going to ask the House to be parties to so gross a transaction as the buying of a living and the suppression of a cure of souls? It had already been shown by his hon. Friend the Member for Scarborough (Mr. Caine) that there was already a largely-increasing population in the parish of Walton, for which no other ecclesiastical provision was made. Under these circumstances, he (Mr. Illingworth) appealed with confidence to the House to reject the Bill. He was satisfied that if the House refused to read the Bill a second time, the vast majority of the people of this country—not only those connected with the Established Church, but those without her pale—would commend the course which the House would take.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I am quite sure that the hon. Member who has just sat down has really not studied this question, and that he cannot be at all aware of the wants of the particular locality of which he has been speaking. We are extremely grateful to him, as a Nonconformist Member of this House, for the interest he apparently takes in the welfare of the Established Church. [" Hear, hear!" *and a laugh.*] I say that quite sincerely, although probably there are some hon. Gentlemen who do not echo the sentiment. There are, however, a great number of persons who do take a very sincere interest in the welfare of this parish, who have gone very closely into the question, and who know the "ins" and "outs" of the whole matter; and they, having the best means of judging, have come to a distinctly opposite conclusion to that at which the hon. Member has arrived. I must say I think their opinion is entitled to very considerable weight. The hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) seems to have forgotten a very important circumstance in the case. It is quite true that there is a Rector of Walton, and a Vicar of Walton, and the Vicarage of Walton and the Advowson of Walton belong to the Vicar, and nobody can interfere with his right to them. If the Vicar and his family choose to keep the Vicarage in perpetuity they can do so, and he cannot be called upon to perform any further duties than he has hitherto performed; nor can he be called upon to sell the advowson, nor to divide the two livings for the benefit of the parish of Walton, as the hon. Member seems to think would be the case in the event of a vacancy arising. Therefore, it is altogether out of the power of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners or of Parliament to make any alteration in the state of things which now exists. In the parish of Walton there is a Rector with a very considerable income, and if this Bill passes that income will be increased, because certain fees will be handed over to him. The Vicarage is to be sold, and part of the proceeds are to be devoted to the benefit of the Rector. Therefore, the position of the Rector will be improved by the sale, and, with the improvement of the position of the Rector, so also will his power to provide for the spiritual wants of the parish be increased. I now come to the question, what is to be done with the Vicarage? It happens that those persons who have looked into the matter have been able to make an arrangement with the Vicar under which he is willing to sell the advowson of the Vicarage for a certain amount of money—I believe £28,000.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Is it not the Rector who is the patron, and not the Vicar?

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: Yes; the Rector is the patron, and he is willing to sell the avowson of the Vicarage for the sum, I believe, of £28,000. Then, what is to be done with the proceeds of the sale of this living? Where is the money to come from? The hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) seems to think that by this proceeding we shall save the pockets of the rich men of Lancashire. We shall do nothing of the kind. The men of Lancashire have established the Bishopric of Liverpool under the sanction of an Act of Parliament. They have subscribed a certain income. But the Act says that the Bishop may have a larger income, up to £4,200 a-year. What is now proposed by this Bill is to give part of the money subscribed for this purpose to the purchase of the advowson of the Vicarage of Walton, and so to apply the income of the advowson as to be able, out of the proceeds of the purchase, to raise the income of the Bishopric of Liverpool to the full extent of the £4,200 a-year provided by the Act, and which is in no way too large a sum, considering the enormous calls the Bishop will have upon him in such a diocese. Moreover, in a short time the provisions of the Bill will enable more than £1,000 a-year to be available for the benefit of the parish of Walton, in such a manner as the Ecclesiastical Commissioners may think fit. Not only will the See of Liverpool be greatly improved and increased in value, but the parish of Walton itself will derive an advantage which, under the existing arrangements, it is impossible for it to obtain so long as this Vicarage is not sold. I have no wish to take up the time of the House by making any lengthened statement of my own, and I have stated the facts of the case as shortly as I can. It must be remembered that in the present state of things you cannot compel the sale of the Vicarage at all. You must either leave things to remain as they are, or else carry out this arrangement. I believe I have shown that the proposed arrangement will be beneficial, not only to the See of Liverpool, but eventually to the interests of the inhabitants of the parish of Walton themselves. The hon. Member for Scarborough (Mr. Caine) confesses that he knows nothing about the circumstances of the case. It so happens that the Bill has been advertised in all the local papers and elsewhere, and it is a remarkable fact that not a single Petition has been presented by an inhabitant of Walton against the passing of the measure. Surely, the local people are those best able to form an opinion as to the merits of a Bill of this character. It is not, as the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) described, a Bill for the suppression of a living. There will always be a living in the parish of Walton. The Rectory will remain; and the passing of this Bill will, as I have already said, not only benefit the See of Liverpool, but it will make more adequate provision for the wants of the parish of Walton.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH asked how, if the Vicarage was got rid of, it could be said that a living for the cure of souls had not been suppressed?

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: The Rector has the same cure of souls as the Vicar; both livings are enjoyed by the same person, and the Rector will still remain.

Mr. LYON PLAYFAIR: Some of my hon. Friends have raised an objection to this Bill, which I think ought to be clearly explained to the House. They say they consider that a Bill of this character ought to have been a Public and not a Private Bill. Now, I think that this is a mistake on their parts, and that it would not have been possible to bring it in as a Public Bill. It deals with an advowson which has a beneficial value. The advowson belongs to the Rector, and it is vested in him. This Bill, therefore, is practically an Estate Bill, and as an Estate Bill it must be brought before both Houses of Parliament in the form of a Private Bill. Some confusion did exist in my own mind in regard to the effect of the Bill, until I made an inquiry both from the promoters and from the opponents as to the circumstances of the case. I find that there is no suppression of the cure of souls at all. There is only a single church in which there is a co-ordinate Vicar and a Rector, and each of them has the same charge of the cure of souls in the district church to which they are attached. The church is not to be suppressed by this Bill; but it will be continued with a much larger sum available for its support, so that the Rector can employ more curates to discharge the duties connected with the church. Without this Estate Bill there would be no surplus funds for the promotion of ecclesiastical purposes in the parish; but under the provisions of this measure there will be about £1,000 a-year available for the extension of church accommodation and the appointment of additional curates within the district. It is, as I have said, simply an Estate Bill, which takes a sum of £28,000 out of the subscriptions now invested at 3¾ per cent, and invests the same £28,000 in an estate which will pay 5½ per cent. I have looked into the matter very carefully. I believe that the measure has been properly introduced as a Private Bill, and, as it is quite regular in form, I think the second reading ought to receive the support of the House.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH asked if the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Ways and Means (Mr. Lyon Playfair) would explain whether the Bill did not sanction the suppression of a living and the sale of the income to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, for the purposes of the Bishopric of Liverpool Endowment Fund?

Mr. LYON PLAYFAIR: I have already explained that the Bill does not in reality suppress any church.

Mr. CROPPER wished to say one word in regard to the statement which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross). There appeared to him (Mr. Cropper) to be a mistake in regard to the whole of the matter. The hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) seemed to think that there was an endeavour on the part of the promoters of the Bill to do something unfair, and something that was antagonistic to the ordinary course of procedure in regard to Church livings. But the statement of the right hon. Gentleman put the matter quite plain. If this sum of £28,000 was not expended in the way proposed, the living might be simply sold in the open market, and neither the See of Liverpool nor the parish of Walton would derive any advantage from it whatever. The whole case simply resolved itself into a matter whereby a large and valuable living would be divided without the slightest harm to anybody, and to the general advantage. He disliked the sale of Church patronage as much as anybody; but he certainly felt inclined to regard this as an exceptional case. At any rate, it would prevent the recurrence of the scandal which, in many men's eyes, was attached to the sale of livings, as this advowson could now never again come into the market. Instead of the proposed arrangement being, as the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) said, a disgrace to the City of Liverpool, he thought it would be of great advantage to Liverpool, and to the parish of Walton also. He should, therefore, give his vote in favour of the second reading of the Bill.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 160; Noes 76: Majority 84.—(Div. List, No. 67.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed*.

QUESTIONS.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. J. O'KEANE AND OTHERS.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a paragraph in the "Connaught Telegraph" of the 8th instant, stating that a warrant issued fourteen months ago, for the arrest of Mr. John O'Keane, of Claremorris, has been cancelled, Mr. O'Keane having meanwhile resided in England; if it is correct that a warrant was issued against Mr. O'Keane as stated; and, if so, upon what grounds; whether it has been cancelled; if so, why, and by what means, and through what channel, this fact was conveyed to Mr. O'Keane; whether it is the fact that a warrant was issued about the same time for the arrest of Mr. P. W. Nally, of Balla; if so, upon what grounds; whether Mr. Nally also went to reside out of Ireland; whether this warrant has been recently cancelled, and upon what grounds; and, whether Mr. Nally has now returned to Ireland; if so, through what channel the fact that he might return with safefy was communicated to him?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, in each of the cases referred to warrants had been issued and were still in force. In each case an intimation was conveyed to the individual that his return to Ireland would not be interfered with provided he conducted himself. In the case of Mr. Keane it was represented that he was in bad health and had been recommended to try his native air; while in Mr. Nally's case it was represented that his father had broken his leg.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—VISITS TO PRISONERS UNDER THE ACT.

MR. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has inquired into the subject of visits to suspects; and, whether he has been able to make arrangements for increasing the facilities for such visits, especially in Kilmainham, by providing sufficient warders to enable a larger number of visits to take place simultaneously, so that the prisoners may have the full benefit of the rule which permits them to receive one visit each every day?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had inquired into this matter, and he found that there was no ground for complaint. With regard to the other prisons in which "suspects" were detained, he found that arrangements had been made to admit of a sufficient number of visits.

MR. REDMOND inquired whether the right hon. Gentleman's attention had been called to a letter which appeared in *The Freeman's Journal*, signed by a number of friends of "suspects," complaining of the inconvenience they had to suffer when trying to see their friends?

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he saw nothing of that letter.

POST OFFICE—TRANSMISSION OF LAND LEAGUE PORTRAITS.

MR. REDMOND asked the Postmaster General, Whether parcels containing copies of a picture entitled "The Irish Nation, 1882," with portraits of twenty-three of the leaders of the Land League movement have been interfered with by the Government in their passage through the post, and delivered in a mutilated condition; and, if so, whether he has sanctioned such interference; whether there is any difficulty in securing the safe passage through the post of roller-shaped envelopes 17½ inches in length; and, whether he will inquire into the injury done to these pictures?

Mr. FAWCETT: In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that, after making inquiries, I find that at the Post Office nothing is known of the matter to which he refers. I may add that packets of the shape described by the hon. Member, unless provided with a strong roller, would be very apt to be doubled up, and thus sustain injury in transit.

POST OFFICE—DETENTION OF LAND LEAGUE LETTERS.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is a fact that letters addressed to the general secretary of the Irish National Land League of Great Britain in London have been opened and detained in their passage through the post; and, whether the warrant of the Home Secretary is being used to examine letters addressed to the officers of that association?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I can only give the same reply as I have given before, that it would not be consonant with my duty to give any information upon this subject. At the same time, in giving that answer, I must also say, as I have said before, that it implies no admission in regard to any warrant issued for these purposes.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—EXPENSES OF CROWN WITNESSES.

Mr. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether it is the fact that a promise made to pay Ex-Sub-Constable Walshe's expenses has not yet been carried out; whether it is the fact that, although Dr. Michael O'Brien, now a suspect in Limerick Gaol, was obliged to attend Cork Winter Assizes for seventeen days on a Crown subpœna, Mr. Murphy, Crown Solicitor, refused to pay him anything; and, whether there is any reason for the continued detention of Dr. O'Brien?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): As to ex-Sub-Constable Walshe, there was a question whether he was to be paid out of the Law Charges Vote or under the Constabulary Regulations; this has been settled, and the account of his allowances was made out and received in the Constabulary Office last Tuesday from the County Inspector, and, having been examined, was transmitted for payment by the next post. As to Dr. O'Brien, he attended at the Cork Winter Assizes, not as Crown witness nor as a medical witness, but as a witness for persons who were charged with obstructing a sheriff and other criminal offences, and for the purpose of proving that they had not committed the offences of which they were accused. During the progress of the Assizes he was repeatedly in company with his friends, who were on bail, and thus he had an ample opportunity of knowing the course they intended to take. They pleaded "guilty." Dr. O'Brien, therefore, was not a necessary witness to prove that they had not committed the offences, to the committal of which they pleaded guilty, and the Crown Solicitor consequently could not certify that Dr. O'Brien was a necessary witness, and for that reason had no authority to allow him any expenses. With reference to the last Question, as Dr. O'Brien is still in detention, I take it for granted there is good reason for it; but that is a Question to be addressed to my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MAJOR WALLER ASHE.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true, as reported in the "Morning Post," that

> "the name of Major Waller-Ashe, late King's Dragoon Guards, and late Deputy Governor of Her Majesty's General Prison for Scotland at Perth, has been placed upon the list for the appointment of resident magistrate in Ireland;"

and, if so, whether he made previous inquiry into the past life of Major Waller-Ashe?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that there was no truth in the statement as to the appointment of Major Waller-Ashe to be a Resident Magistrate in Ireland. What had happened was this—He was informed that Major Waller-Ashe had sent in an application in the usual way, and the usual answer was made that it would be sent to the Lord Lieutenant for consideration. There had been no intention of actually appointing Major Waller-Ashe; and, therefore, no necessity of making any inquiries respecting him.

PRIVATE (HYBRID) BILLS—FORTH BRIDGE RAILWAY BILL.

MR. BOLTON asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether it is intended to order that all Petitioners against the Forth Bridge Railway Bill, whose Petitions have been deposited, or may be deposited, within three days of the meeting of the Committee, may be heard by Counsel, Agents, and witness; and, if not, why this course, which is generally adopted in respect of Bills referred to a hybrid Committee, is not to be followed in the present case?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I intend on Monday to move for extending the period in which Petitions against the Forth Bridge Railway Bill may be lodged and the Petitioners heard, but limiting it to Petitions relating to navigation and the safety of the bridge as to construction, both of which questions the Board of Trade are anxious to have carefully inquired into, and that every opportunity may be given to people to bring their cases before the Committee. But it would be a strong measure to extend the time as the hon. Member suggests; because that would be interfering with the discretion of the Referees and the Committee as to the *locus standi* of Petitioners who might appear merely on grounds of competition. In 1873, when this bridge was sanctioned by Parliament, the present Bill being merely a continuation, the Referees limited the *locus standi* of the Caledonian Railway, excluding the ground of competition. I think my hon. Friend is in error in his view that the course he recommends is always adopted in reference to Bills referred to a Hybrid Committee. It is generally adopted in regard to Hybrid Bills; but this is not a Hybrid Bill, but a Private Bill which happens to be referred to a Hybrid Committee.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ANDREW AND PATRICK GALLAHER.

MR. LALOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it be true that, on the 16th of October last, Andrew Gallaher, and his brother, Patrick Gallaher, of Ballybrittas, in the Queen's County, were arrested on a charge of having, on the previous night, fired at and wounded a number of men in the employment of the Emergency Committee, and who, at the time, were engaged in removing a threshing machine from one farmer's place to another, along the public road; if it be true that the charge against the said Andrew and Patrick Gallaher was more than once investigated in private, by the local magistrates, in the County Gaol in Maryborough; if it be true that, on the last occasion when such investigation took place, the magistrates decided to discharge the two Messrs. Gallaher, as there was no evidence to connect them with the crime; if it be true that when the two Messrs. Gallaher had proceeded so far as the gate leading from the gaol they were arrested on a warrant under the Coercion Act, charging them with a totally different offence, namely, inciting others to an act of intimidation; and, if it be true that the said Andrew and Patrick Gallaher were then and there conveyed to Naas Gaol, where they are still detained under the Lord Lieutenant's warrant?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Yes, Sir; the facts are, I believe, as stated in the Question.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARRESTS UNDER THE ACT.

MR. LEAMY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will state the number of arrests which have been made under the Coercion Act of last year up to the 18th day of the present month?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: The total number of arrests up to the 18th instant is 918.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS.

MR. MOLLOY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he is aware that the Land Sub-Commissioners held their first sitting in Tullamore on the 23rd of January last to hear applications for fixing fair rents for that district; that since then they had not visited Tullamore, nor given any notification of their intention to do so, although very harsh cases of eviction for no more than half a-year's arrear of rent have taken place on neighbouring properties, as at Geashill, and that after notice had been given to apply for a judicial rent; and, what steps he proposes to take in this matter to prevent the Act being rendered useless in this district?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he was informed that there would be a sitting in Tullamore upon the 26th of June, and that this fact was set forth in the Circular, a copy of which could be obtained by anyone on applying to the Secretary of the Commissioners. In every case in which a notice for the fixing of a fair rent had been lodged and decided upon, if the tenant was dissatisfied with the decision, the case would be immediately sent for trial upon his application to that extent. An application for the extension of the period for redemption could also be considered.

ISLAND OF CYPRUS—GRANT OF A CONSTITUTION—THE DESPATCH.

Mr. BOURKE asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Despatch published in Cyprus, purporting to grant a Constitution to that Island, will be laid before Parliament, as well as the Correspondence relating thereto; if so, when?

Mr. COURTNEY: The despatch in question will be immediately laid before Parliament, and we hope soon to present further Papers containing correspondence, not only on the Constitutional question, but also relating to the reorganization of the judicial system of the Island, which is in an advanced state of preparation.

Mr. RYLANDS asked if the Papers would include one giving information with respect to the administration of the Island?

Mr. COURTNEY replied, that that Paper would be among those he had referred to.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA—FREE EMIGRATION.

Sir JAMES LAWRENCE asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, If his attention has been called to the desire expressed by numbers of unemployed working men for emigration to the Colonies; whether there is an agreement still existing with Western Australia, by which this Country has undertaken to provide free passages for more than a thousand emigrants to that Colony; and, if he will consider whether the present time is opportune for carrying out such agreement?

Mr. COURTNEY: A similar Question was raised by my hon. Friend three years since and again last year, and my answer must be substantially the same as those which have been given him on former occasions. The Question whether this country is under any obligation by agreement to provide free passages for emigrants to Western Australia was fully considered in 1869 and decided in the negative.

Sir JAMES LAWRENCE gave Notice that he should move for a Return giving the Correspondence.

INDIA—ROORKEE COLLEGE.

Mr. PUGH asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether he can inform the House of the number of students who have entered the Civil Engineering College at Roorkee for the last three years, and the number of appointments made to the Indian Public Works Department from the College during the same period?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON, in reply, said, he was sorry he could not give the information without telegraphing to India. A certain number of appointments were reserved, and he could not state how they had been filled up.

OFFICIAL APPOINTMENTS—MR. R. S. MITFORD.

Captain PRICE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is true that he has appointed his private secretary, Mr. R. S. Mitford, a Commissioner of Prisons; what is Mr. Mitford's age and length of public service; and, what experience has he had in the duties which he will be called upon to perform?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: It is true that I have appointed my private secretary, Mr. R. S. Mitford, a Commissioner of Prisons. I cannot say what is his age; but I am afraid it is one which I might envy. As to the length of his public service, he was 14 years in the Criminal Department of the Home Office. My first acquaintance with Mr. Mitford was when I took Office. I found him there the able and tried private secretary of my Predecessor (Sir

R. Assheton Cross); and I think the greatest proof I could offer of my confidence in him was that I appointed him my chief private secretary. He had been private secretary to four successive Home Secretaries, which everyone who has been in Office knows is about the best training a man can have in official business. Mr. Mitford was thoroughly conversant with the Criminal Department of the Home Office; and the whole business of the Department, since the present system has been established by my Predecessor, has come under his notice and knowledge. I appointed Mr. Mitford because I thought he was entitled to promotion, and in doing so I made the greatest personal sacrifice. I believe the right hon. Gentleman opposite and everyone who knows the Home Office, and who may have transacted business with Mr. Mitford, will bear testimony to his great capacity, and the admirable manner in which he discharged his duties.

CAPTAIN PRICE: In consequence of the answer of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, I beg to give Notice that I shall ask on Monday whether there are not in Her Majesty's Service other officers—namely, the Inspectors of Prisons—who are equally conversant with the Prison Service, and equally deserving of promotion?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I think I had better say at once that I have felt, without casting any reflection on anyone, that it is not desirable that the prison organization of this country should be made exclusively a military organization. I have the greatest respect for, and confidence in, the military men at present in the Prison Service; but I consider it of very great importance that the prison organization of the country should have a civilian as well as a military element.

MR. HEALY: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman recommend the Irish Office to appoint the Resident Magistrates in Ireland on the same principles?

[No answer was given.]

ARMY—THE ROYAL WARRANT, 1881.

CAPTAIN AYLMER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether an officer who held the substantive rank of Major before 1st November 1871, but who had not been a Regimental Major, is excluded from the benefit of Article 978—XII. of the Royal Warrant of the 25th June 1881; and, if so, whether such Article is not, in that respect, entirely different from paragraph 80 of the Memorandum laid before Parliament in June 1881?

MR CHILDERS: No, Sir; I have looked into the point raised by the hon. and gallant Gentleman, and I cannot see any difference in this respect between the Memorandum and the Warrant. Any Colonel retiring under the Warrant who was a substantive field officer before the 1st of November, 1871, can have his case dealt with by the Purchase Commissioners under the clause which the hon. and gallant Member quotes.

ARMY—PAYMENT OF PENSIONS.

MR. STEWART MACLIVER asked the Secretary of State for War, If he is aware that the pensioners at Plymouth and Devonport, whose money should have been paid three weeks ago, are still unpaid, thereby causing much inconvenience and suffering; and, whether he will at once take steps to meet the complaints of the pensioners and provide in future for paying them regularly?

MR. CHILDERS: In reply to my hon. Friend, I can only say that the delay which has occurred in paying the pensioners at Plymouth has led to an officer being specially sent down to inquire into its cause, and to expedite the payments. The paying officers had full authority to obtain whatever clerical assistance they might require in starting the new system, and I cannot account for the small number of payments at this station.

LAW AND POLICE—THE RIOTS AT CAMBORNE.

MR. LEAMY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is true, as reported in the "Cornish Telegraph" of Thursday 20th instant, that, on Tuesday last, a riot occurred at Camborne, Cornwall, which began in an attempt to stone two Irishmen who were in the custody of the police; that the houses of the Irish in the town were wrecked, and the property in them destroyed and several of their occupants brutally ill-used, that, in one case, a poor old woman who had been bedridden for a couple of years was pulled from her bed and left writhing in agony on the floor; that an attack was made on the Catholic Chapel, and that,—

> "First the windows were smashed in, then, after repeated efforts, the doors were forced. Inside, the rioters lost all control of themselves, and did most wanton damage. They broke up the crucifixes and pictures; the image of the Virgin Mary was torn from its place, thrown amongst the mob, and trampled to pieces. The confessional-box was speedily converted into fire-wood. The altar and its fittings were torn down, and the gaseliers were broken off, and the organ destroyed — the scene within the Church beggaring description;"

whether any of the rioters have been arrested; and, whether any steps have been taken to protect the life and property of the Irish residents in Camborne and to restore law and order in that town?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, his official knowledge—and he could not go beyond that—was furnished by a letter from the Chief Constable, in which it was stated that every precaution had been taken to prevent future disturbance and the repetition of these disgraceful scenes of riot. He had addressed to the Justices' clerk, from whom, also, he had a communication, a letter of inquiry as to whether any measures had been taken to arrest the rioters, and to punish them for the outrages they had committed. He had, of course, received no answer to that letter.

Mr. LEAMY: Is the report from *The Cornish Telegraph* substantially correct or not?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he could not state. He had no knowledge whatever, except the letter he received yesterday, which gave no details.

Mr. BELLINGHAM asked if the right hon. and learned Gentleman had any knowledge of the renewal of the rioting as reported in this evening's papers?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he had no knowledge.

Mr. LEAMY said, he would repeat his Questions on Monday. If such riots occurred in Ireland they should have had all the details immediately.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—THE ASSISTANT SUB-COMMISSIONERS (KERRY AND WEST CORK).

Mr. HEALY said, he had intended to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is aware that the greatest local dissatisfaction exists at the decisions given by Messrs. McDevitt, Walpole, and Murphy, on the Kerry and West Cork Sub-Commission; whether it is the fact that the rents which they have fixed as fair rents are in some cases double Griffith's valuation; and, whether he proposes to take any steps to remove this dissatisfaction? Perhaps the Chief Secretary could answer the Question.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, the Land Commissioners informed him that they had no knowledge of any special dissatisfaction. Seventy-one appeals had been lodged against the decisions of these gentlemen—39 by landlords and the balance by tenants. The Land Commissioners would sit at Killarney shortly for the purpose of hearing those appeals. It was true that the rents fixed in some cases were over Griffith's valuation, and three of those cases had been listed for appeal—two by landlords, and one by the tenant.

Mr. HEALY said, that, in consequence of the answer he had received, he should call attention to the composition and decisions of the Sub-Commissioners for Kerry and West Cork, and move a Resolution.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ARRANGEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked what Business it was proposed to take at the Morning Sitting on Tuesday?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: We propose on Monday, after the Budget, to proceed with the second reading of the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt Practices) Bill. The same Bill will be proceeded with at the Morning Sitting on Tuesday.

Mr. GORST asked whether the House would give a decision to-night on the question as to whether there should be a Morning Sitting?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, he should to-night formally move that the Municipal Corporations Bill should be fixed for Tuesday, for the purpose of enabling the House to come to a decision as to the question of a Morning Sitting. The Corrupt Practices Bill would, however, be proceeded with on Tuesday.

Mr. HUSSEY VIVIAN: Will there be Morning Sittings every Tuesday?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Yes, Sir.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — MISS KIRK.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that Miss Kirk, sister of the ex-Member for the county of Louth, who had gone to Tulla to assist in the erection of huts for the evicted tenants, was yesterday arrested by Mr. Clifford Lloyd and sent for three months to gaol?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had no information on the subject; the hon. Member should give Notice of his Question?

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—APPOINTMENT OF A SUB-COMMISSIONER.

Mr. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If Mr. J. R. Hedigan, who has lately been appointed an Assistant Commissioner under the Land Act, is the same gentleman whose tenants in Tipperary are taking proceedings against him?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson), in reply, said, it was not a matter coming within his Department.

Mr. HEALY said, he would ask the Question on Monday.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — PERSONS CLAIMING TO BE AMERICAN CITIZENS DETAINED UNDER THE ACT.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, When the Papers containing the Correspondence with the United States Government would be published? He asked the Question, seeing that the Correspondence had already been published in America.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The Correspondence published in America is not the recent Correspondence, but Correspondence which took place some time ago. It cannot possibly be the Correspondence which is going on now. I cannot yet name a day when the Correspondence can be produced; but I may be able to do so if the Question be repeated.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY: Will all the Correspondence be included—last year's as well as the recent Correspondence?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: If Notice be given of the Question, I will look into the Correspondence of last year.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—TUESDAYS—THE SETTLED LAND BILL.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS wished to say, with reference to the commencement of Tuesday Sittings, that the Settled Land Bill, which came down from the other House before Easter, had been placed in his charge, and no effort should be wanting on his part to take the decision of the House upon it. He hoped that, if the Government proposed to take all the remaining Tuesdays of the Session, they would make some arrangement by which it could be discussed.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — TUESDAYS — THE JESUS COLLEGE STATUTES.

Mr. HUSSEY VIVIAN said, that he had on the Paper for Tuesday, the 2nd of May, a Motion with reference to statutes for Jesus College. They were laid on the Table of the House for three months, in order that the House might consider them. If he were precluded by a Morning Sitting being taken on the 2nd of May from bringing on the Motion he should have no opportunity of calling attention to the subject, and the House would have no opportunity of considering it, unless the Government gave up some time for the purpose. It would, therefore, be his duty to protest against the Morning Sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—:o:—

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

COOPER'S HILL COLLEGE.

RESOLUTION.

MR. GIBSON, in rising to call attention to Cooper's Hill College; and to move—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working and expense of Cooper's Hill College, and to report if it is desirable, for the public service, to retain the present system, or whether any and, if so, what changes and modifications should be made,"

said, it was not his desire to make any charges against the managers of the Institution; but it had been in full working order for 11 years, and that time ought to have furnished enough experience to justify the inquiry whether the system with which the College was identified was worth its cost; whether it was necessary for the Public Service; and whether there was any well-founded objection to some return to a system of public competition? It was in November, 1869, that the Duke of Argyll, who was then Secretary of State for India, determined to establish the College, and that determination was arrived at without any communication whatever with the then Government of India, or with the Institution of Civil Engineers. The system at that time in existence was inaugurated by Lord Stanley, the present Earl of Derby, who introduced free competition for the purpose of procuring Civil Engineers for the Indian Service. Before the foundation of the College the Civil Engineers were only given subordinate positions, and their pay was comparatively low. How they were treated might be inferred from a statement of Sir Andrew Clarke, who was a Member of the Governor General's Council, and who, in a Minute, dated 1877, said it was impossible to suggest that Civil Engineers had failed to satisfy the requirements of the Civil Service, because they had never been fairly tried, as they were only appointed at small pay to the position of third-grade Civil Engineers; whereas the Cooper's Hill gentlemen at once received more than double the pay of the Stanley Engineers, and were placed in a much higher grade. When the Government of India did hear of the determination of the Duke of Argyll to establish the College, they certainly did not express anything which could be construed into approval. They said they considered the success of such a College must be a matter of very great uncertainty; that it must be regarded entirely as an experiment; and that they had great doubt whether any real necessity existed for it. They felt it incumbent on them to express their strong sense of the inexpediency of adopting measures that should lead to the creation of a class of engineers for the service of India; and they believed that such an Institution would be open to condemnation if it were not conducted on a self-supporting basis. The Institution of Civil Engineers—an Institution deservedly esteemed—expressed the opinion that in the proposed College the minds of the pupils would be moulded in the same form, and that their training would develop none of the emulation, independence, and originality of resource which had produced the best engineers. It was a grave decision for the Duke of Argyll to take—to destroy the system introduced by his Predecessor, and to substitute that of Coopers' Hill College. Notwithstanding this, however, the College was established, and from 1871 it had enjoyed a practical monopoly in engineering appointments in India over all the other Engineering Institutions. It was said that in India the Civil Engineers were given the hard work to do, and that the Royal Engineers took the honours and the higher pay. But he was not going into that ground of jealousy between the two branches of the Profession. It was, he maintained, exceedingly unfair on the other Institutions, and on the Universities which had established Engineering Schools, to exclude from the possibility of serving on Indian Public Works many young men—not because they were not qualified, not because they had not a valuable engineering diploma, but because they had not happened to pass through the portals of Cooper's Hill College. From a Return which had been kindly granted, at his instance, by the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India, he gathered that in 1878 the expenditure was £20,427, and the receipts £18,254; thus showing a loss to the Exchequer of something over £2,000. If, however, they looked at the results of the following years, they would find that the loss increased, and that in 1880-1, against an expenditure of £19,812, they only had receipts to the amount of £15,226, or nearly double the loss of the previous year. Thus, so far from the Institution being self-supporting, as was the intention of its original promoters, it was carried on at an absolute loss to the nation; and he was not aware that this increased cost in any way meant increased efficiency, for in 1879 there were only 37 admissions, in 1880 only 25, and in 1881, under a new scheme, 39. But these figures were the more startling when it was remembered that Cooper's Hill had practically the monopoly of all the Indian appointments, with the exception of those which were given to the Royal Engineers. In 1879, 41 public appointments were conferred upon the students, though the entrances of students only amounted to 37. This showed that every young man who entered the College was perfectly sure of getting an appointment of more or less value. This was borne out by the figures in the following years. In 1880 there were 25 entrances, and 38 appointments were given. In 1881 there were 39 entrances, and 35 public appointments were granted. A letter had been sent to him, written by Colonel Chesney, formerly the Governor of the Institution. In that letter, which was dated December 12, 1881, the writer said that Cooper's Hill did not profess to turn out practical engineers, but merely to educate its students to be engineers. That being so, was it wise to exclude from the benefits conferred upon the students of the College the students of other Engineering Schools, where proper technical knowledge was acquired? It was a serious thing to support a College which did not profess to give that which might be obtained from a system of competition—namely, a quality of practicality, possessing which engineers could go to work at once without having to pass through a period of probation. It should be observed that, under the present system, applicants for admission to the College were not subjected to competitive examination. Their admission depended solely upon priority of application, so that the monopoly and advantages of the College were conferred upon boys according to that priority. It was true that there were examinations at the end of the students' career; but the way in which the examination was conducted was very remarkable. It did not profess to be more than a pass-examination; and the only element of competition was this—that the pass students were ranged in order of merit, so that those who were at the head of the list were given the first vacant appointments. As he had shown, however, there was really an appointment for each young man who passed. He could not see why the advantages of the Indian Public Service should not be given to other students than those educated at the College; and how could it be for the advantage of the Government in India to deprive it of the services of the best engineer students that the Empire could supply? The only examination conducted at the College, which had any of the competitive element in it, being that held at the close of the students' career, why should not the students of other recognized Engineering Schools be permitted to present themselves at that examination, and run their chance against the young men from Cooper's Hill? Why the 50 young men received at Cooper's Hill by priority of application should have the preference as regarded Indian appointments over all other comers, however well-qualified, he did not understand. It did not seem to him to be a position which could be logically defended. He, therefore, begged to move his Resolution.

Mr. CARBUTT, in seconding the Motion, said, he thought the matter was one of very great importance, and was one which would largely affect numbers of Civil Engineers, both in this country and in India. It seemed that the Duke of Argyll had made up his mind that he was not able to obtain engineers in this country fit to go out to India and do the work. He had made up his mind without consultation with the authorities in India, and had then determined that the best thing to do was to establish this College. Considerable objections were raised against the scheme at the time of its institution by the then Governor General of India (Lord Mayo), who wrote on the 28th March, 1870 (No. 43, Public Works), to his Grace the Duke of Argyll a strong letter giving his views as to the establishment of this College. In discussing the grade in which Civil Engineers trained in the proposed College should enter the Public Works Department on arrival in India, the following statement occurred:—

"The pay proposed for this grade in the scheme lately transmitted is £420 per annum, This sum, we believe, is not too much to offer young men trained as Civil Engineers, and we are disposed to consider that it is owing to the insufficiency of the present salary offered to the young Civil Engineers on first entering on their duties in India—namely, £240 per annum—that the failure to fill the appointments in the Public Works Department offered for competition has been mainly due. We are much inclined to think that if this increase of salary were now offered, it would have a marked effect on the supply of candidates under the existing system. We leave it to your Grace to determine whether such an experiment might properly be made before the opening of the proposed College."

Clearly showing that the noble Lord thought the question of obtaining qualified engineers was merely one of pounds, shillings, and pence. There could be no doubt that, in consequence of the low charge for entrance, and the excellence of the course of instruction furnished by the College, the students who passed through it gained enormous advantages over other engineers; and he contended that if the Government had been prepared at the time the College was founded to pay a proper price, they would have got any number of men to go out and do their work. With regard to the question of expense, during the past 11 years the Engineering College had cost £317,000, against which there was only to show in the shape of receipts £148,000. Yet the public works in India executed by the Cooper's Hill students compared unfavourably with similar works in this country—railways, canals, harbours, &c.—the constructors of which had no exceptional advantages, but were obtained by a process of natural selection. It was calculated that the Cooper's Hill students were turned out at a cost to the country of about £321 per head. This was an enormous sum of money for the country to be paying for each pupil who went out to India, without the slightest knowledge of civil engineering, and without any practical experience except what he might have obtained from books. The system was radically bad, and, like the example of the *Ponts et Chaussées* in France, showed the folly of creating a close corporation in this country with the object of foisting a mushroom growth of engineers upon the Indian Service. The least the Government could do, under the circumstances, was to assent to the proposed inquiry.

Mr. Carbutt

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working and expense of Cooper's Hill College, and to report if it is desirable, for the public service, to retain the present system, or whether any and, if so, what changes and modifications should be made,"—(*Mr. Gibson,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR earnestly hoped the noble Marquess would favourably consider the proposal of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. In support of that recommendation he spoke strongly as to its failure, seeing that the College had not been carried on on the principles on which it was first established. He had very much regretted that the Government of India should have hampered itself with such an expensive establishment, because a small part of the money laid out would have enabled the Schools of Engineering in the Kingdom to have supplied fit persons for service in India. But the important point on which he urged the noble Marquess to consider the proposal was this—that in spite of the recommendations of the Governor General the College had been instituted. The prudent counsels of Lord Mayo, who was himself a thoroughly practical man, had been set at nought, and the forecasts which he had made had turned out to be quite correct, the College having failed to turn out engineers of the quality and kind that the Government of India required. The expenses had also far exceeded the amount which was calculated at the time. So far from the original estimate of the cost of each student being adhered to, if the averages were made up properly the cost would be brought up to £300 per student. indeed, by the bad mode of stating the annual amount of the charges of the College, the average was as high as £500 per student actually passed out; and this was a net sum after deducting the receipts. These averages were to be contrasted with the estimated cost of £1,850 for 50 trained engineers, or only £37 per student. When the Duke of Argyll first proposed the College, he said there would be no unnecessary expenditure; and yet, within a few months, £58,000 had been spent in acquiring the property; and the whole amount of capital invested in the building and land, was £119,000. A very considerable profit had been obtained by the persons from whom the property had been purchased; and that profit, he had reason to believe, had been made in consequence of information furnished to the sellers. The capital account being mixed up with the ordinary annual charge was open to objection. The interest on that capital account ought to be a part of the annual current expenditure. But, by the mode in which the statement was made out, this liability was omitted. It was also worthy of notice that the purpose of the College had been changed. Instead of being an exclusive Training School for India, it had become one for the whole Empire; and this was entirely foreign to the work which India had to perform. Then, when the College was established, its course of study had no reference to any practical training, and nothing in the way of practical training was done for several years. In 1877-8, however, the sum of £2,552 was spent for the purpose of giving the students who had passed through the College the practical training outside the College which the College failed to give them; and in the following year £4,967 was spent for this purpose, while in 1879-80 the sum of £8,028 was spent for conferring practical experience. If the sum paid in the upkeep of Cooper's Hill establishment had been spent in encouraging the various Engineering Institutions throughout the country, it would have done a great deal more good.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he had no complaint to make of the spirit and tone in which that Motion had been brought forward. Nor was it at all his intention to argue that no Parliamentary Inquiry into the working of the College, and also into the system of recruitment for the Public Works Department in India, would be desirable. All he now wished to do was to offer to the House a few observations in order to show, as he thought he would be able to show, that a Parliamentary Inquiry, such as was asked for, would, at the present time, be premature, and was therefore undesirable. The speech of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) had covered somewhat wider ground than the terms of the Motion. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had only moved for a Select Committee—

> "To inquire into the working and expense of Cooper's Hill College, and to report if it is desirable, for the public service, to retain the present system, or whether any and, if so, what changes and modifications should be made."

An inquiry of that nature might very easily be understood, and he confessed that he had understood it as being limited to an inquiry into the working of Cooper's Hill College and the present system in force there. But he gathered from the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman that he wished to cover a much larger ground—namely, whether the recruitment of the Public Works Department in India was practically to be confined in future to the students of Cooper's Hill College; or whether the system of open competition was to be reverted to? Now, the wider scope given to the Motion by that speech increased his objection to granting the Committee at the present time; for he could not help seeing that such an inquiry at this moment, when the College had only been in operation for 11 years, and under the new and revised system not for one year, would be almost fatal to the prospects of the Institution. To revert to the principle of open competition might possibly at some future time be necessary; but to revert to it at present, when Cooper's Hill College, under the existing system, was absolutely in its infancy, would deal a fatal blow to the future of the establishment; and he must say that would be scarcely justified at the present time. He was scarcely concerned to defend the original institution of the College. The reasons which prevailed with the Duke of Argyll and the Council of India at that time were before the House. No doubt, it was alleged now that an adequate supply of engineers might be obtained for India by open competition; but certainly it was not conceived at that time that an adequate supply was forthcoming. The appointments were thrown open; but the result of the examination was that so few candidates presented themselves that it could not be really called open competition—in fact, almost all who presented themselves obtained appointments. It was said, indeed, that that fact was owing to the insufficiency of the pay and the prospects held out. That argument, however, was hardly borne out; because as soon as Cooper's Hill College was constituted a number of students did offer themselves, although they had to undergo a long course of training and had to pay considerably for it. [Mr. GIBSON: Better pay.] He was not altogether acquainted with the figures; but he understood that originally the inducements offered to students were very much the same as those previously offered by open competition. It was, however, suggested that they might revert to open competition in conjunction with Cooper's Hill College. Well, during the first years of that College, it was open to candidates to obtain their education where they pleased, and to compete with the students of the College at the final examination. But so few availed themselves of that privilege that it practically became a dead-letter, and it was not thought necessary to retain it on the re-organization of the College. The calculation which had been laid before the House by the right hon. and learned Gentleman was an exceedingly rough one; but he did not deny that the average expenses of Cooper's Hill had exceeded the receipts by something like £4,000 annually. It was also not unfair to say that the average cost of the education of each student was about £200, if interest on capital outlay were excluded, and £300 if it were included. That, no doubt, was a considerable charge, and he did not say it was one which ought to be permanently incurred by the Government of India; but, at the same time, the magnitude of the interests involved in the efficient management of public works in India was so great that any expense of this kind ought to sink into insignificance. The question was one of efficiency in the proper recruitment of the Public Works Department of India. Looked at in this point of view, Cooper's Hill had not been unsatisfactory. The Government of India had reported several times that they were fully satisfied with the recruits sent them; and in one of their despatches they stated that the Reports they received were universally favourable, and in some cases eminently so. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had referred to a letter of Colonel Chesney, which took notice of the want of practical training of engineers sent out. He had not seen the letter, and had not been able to follow the argument of the right hon. and learned Gentleman; but he could scarcely conceive that he intended to argue that the engineers sent out from Cooper's Hill College had less practical knowledge and training, and were less qualified to take up their work at once, than candidates who were sent out from any other Engineering School in the country. No doubt, from whatever school they came, they required some practical training; but he did not suppose it would be contended that a Scotch University or Trinity College sent out more practically qualified engineers than Cooper's Hill had done. He (the Marquess of Hartington) had stated that he did not feel himself called upon to defend the policy of the original institution of this College. It was done after the fullest consideration; and, the money having been spent and laid out, it was no use discussing whether it was a wise policy at the time or not. Nor did it devolve primarily upon him to defend the new organization. What he had done had been simply to carry into completion the arrangements made by his Predecessor. The fact was, that during 1876, 1877, and 1878, the excessive cost to India of this establishment had directed attention to it, and various proposals were under the consideration of the Government for the reduction of the charges. In 1879 the check which was then given by the reduction of the Public Works expenditure, and, as a consequence, the diminution of the employment for Civil Engineers, made the question still more urgent. It was very carefully considered by Lord Cranbrook and by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope). At that time the question of closing the College was mooted; and he had no hesitation in saying that the Government of India were not indisposed to recommend that course. Lord Cranbrook, however, doubted the expediency of the course favoured by the Government of India. Taking into consideration the very excellent, though somewhat costly, result of Cooper's Hill, he did not wonder that Lord Cranbrook had hesitated to destroy an Institution which had done so much good, and promised to do so much more. No doubt, as had been said, there were other Institutions in which engineering education was given. Engineering schools existed in the Schools and Colleges referred to; and he believed that in some cases degrees and diplomas in engineering science were conferred; but he did not believe that there existed in any part of the Kingdom an establishment devoted to education in civil engineering in which the appliances and the arrangements carried out so complete a system of engineering education as at Cooper's Hill.

Mr. GIBSON observed, that Trinity College possessed every appliance for the purpose of affording a complete education in engineering.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON was informed that there was no Institution where the appliances were so complete as at Cooper's Hill. Then, it must be remembered that the same article was not required in India as in this country. Any man proceeding from an engineering school in the United Kingdom or Ireland was kept for a time under the care of a competent engineer, possessing full practical knowledge, under whose direction he rapidly became competent. But in India the men were widely scattered, they had almost immediately to take up independent duties, and they were not, and could not be, retained under the care of professional experts, as would be the case in England. It did not follow, therefore, that because the engineering schools of this country were exactly adapted for the production of the article required for engineering at home, the same schools would turn out what was required for India. Under those circumstances, Lord Cranbrook hesitated to adopt the proposal to close the schools and to abandon altogether what had been done. He appointed a Committee, of which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stanhope) was Chairman, which conferred with certain leading members of the engineering profession. As a result, they made certain proposals which were adopted by Lord Cranbrook, and the constitution of the College was entirely changed. It had been originally computed that at least 50 engineers would be annually required to be sent out to India; but when the reduction in the Public Works expenditure of India was decided upon, it was found that probably 10, or 15 at the utmost, would be annually needed for many years to come. It was therefore evident that Cooper's Hill could not be kept up exclusively for the wants of India, and it was decided to alter the constitution of the College, and to throw it open to the public, and to abolish the entrance examination. The appointments in the Public Works Department, as many as were vacant, it was decided should be offered, from time to time, as prizes to the most successful students in the establishment. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had contended that every student would obtain an appointment at the conclusion of his course, whether he submitted himself to examination or not. That was not so. The right hon. and learned Gentleman took the years in which it was known that the number of appointments to be given would very much diminish, and on account of that knowledge the entrances fell off. It was hoped that this Institution might be made useful and available, not only to meet the wants of India, but also of the Colonies and Dependencies of this country, and, to a certain extent, for home requirements. With the object of adapting the education fully to the wants of the public, a Board of Visitors had been appointed, who were intrusted with the revision of the studies pursued at the College, and it was hoped that the course would thus adapt itself to the wants of the public and the profession. The Board of Visitors now consists half of gentlemen who were qualified by Indian experience, and half of eminent members of the engineering profession. Among the latter, he might mention Mr. Barlow, the President of the Institute of Civil Engineers, Mr. Fowler, the late President, and Mr. Siemens, whose reputations were well known. These were active and attentive Members of the Board, and they had from time to time recommended certain changes in the studies. This scheme was practically matured when he succeeded to the management of the India Office; and he had had nothing to do with it but to give his formal sanction to the appointment of gentlemen who had already been nominated for the Board of Visitors. The scheme only came into operation last September, and the support it had hitherto received from the public was by no means discouraging. No one desired that any considerable burden should be permanently imposed upon the Government of India for the purpose of maintaining this College. No doubt they would not be justified in imposing a heavy burden upon the Revenues of India, and they must endeavour to devise some other system; but there was no reason to think that under the new management any such terms would be imposed. At all events, considering what had been done, the expenditure that had been incurred, and the undoubted efficiency of the instruction which was now given at Cooper's Hill, it would be a matter of great regret that by a premature inquiry public confidence in this College should be destroyed, and the chance of its becoming a success should be put an end to. As he had said at the commencement, he did not say that this was not a subject which might hereafter be very usefully inquired into by a Committee; but it appeared to him that at the present moment, when a new scheme which was very carefully elaborated had only just come into operation, that course would not be an advantageous or a desirable one to adopt. The hon. Member for Monmouth (Mr. Carbutt) made some reference to the grievances of the civil engineers employed in the Public Works Department. The hon. Member referred to the Royal Engineers. Well, the position of the civil engineers had lately been under the consideration of the Government of India, and they made certain proposals which were still under the consideration of the Council of India. He had every disposition to give a fair consideration to that most important branch of the Civil Service, and he trusted that reasonable satisfaction would be given those men. It was true that a great many of the highest appointments were still held by the Royal Engineers; but they had had a long start in the profession, even the Stanley engineers being comparatively their juniors; and it was natural that the senior service should still hold a considerable proportion of the higher appointments; but there was no reason to believe that as time went on this would continue to be the case. He ventured to hope that the right hon. and learned Gentleman would be satisfied with having called attention to this very important question, and would not press his Motion to a division. It would be competent to the right hon. and learned Gentleman, when some further experience had been gained in the working of this College under the new management, to bring forward the subject again. He could not think that an inquiry at the present moment would be conducted under advantageous circumstances.

Mr. ONSLOW said, he had no wish to pass the slightest slur upon the management of the College. He had the pleasure of knowing several who had been connected with it, and those who had been educated in it, and he knew the great work the College had done. But, after all, the question to be considered was, What was the best plan for recruiting the Public Works Department in India? He had the pleasure of being connected with India some years ago, when this question cropped up in a forcible way. After mature consideration it was deemed that the best plan for promoting the Service of India was by having a practical College in England, where gentlemen could be trained for the services they had to render abroad. The question was forced on the Government of India by the great and overwhelming public opinion—an opinion in which he fully shared—that it was a matter of paramount importance for the prosperity of India that large sums of money should be spent annually on public works; and this, of course, necessitated a considerable increase in the staff of officers at that time employed. They had had officers as able and efficient coming from the Military Department as, he believed, they would ever get from Cooper's Hill College. But the number of engineers they could get in India was comparatively small considering the amount of work which had to be performed. So long, however, as they had Cooper's Hill to obtain recruits from, and also could obtain military engineers from Woolwich, there would always be some little friction and dissatisfaction—therefore, his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson) proposed to have a Committee to inquire into the system of education at Cooper's Hill; and, in fact, to have a thorough inquiry into the mode of recruiting the Public Works Department in India, and he thought it would be well to agree to the Motion. He supposed there never was a more efficient or abler engineer than the present Lord Napier of Magdala; but he was rather an exception. It would be very difficult to recruit officers of the same calibre as Lord Napier. He did not care what the expense of an establishment in this country for training young men might be, so long as they could send out efficient men to India. The question was, What was the best way of getting men into the Public Works Department? It appeared to him that it would be better if they had some more general system of getting men for that Department; that there should be examinations of candidates in Scotland and in Ireland; and that those who successfully passed examinations should be placed under efficient tuition in this country. The amount of money spent in India for public works was never the same from one year to another. The amount depended upon the sum that could be spared from the Revenues of India, and it was this fluctuating demand which had been the great difficulty of Cooper's Hill College. The fluctuations in the number of men trained in it, according to the state of the Indian finances, he believed, caused greater expense than any plan that could be adopted for recruiting men for any Department where the constant and regular supply was known. The noble Marquess had referred to an inquiry which had taken place; but it was simply Departmental, and it could not be so efficient as one by a Select Committee of that House, which would show whether military engineers would be the best to send out to India—in short, whether the teaching and training at Woolwich or at Cooper's Hill were the better; and another question whether Woolwich could supply the quantity of recruits necessary for the Service. He considered that it would be more satisfactory to the public, not only in this country, but in India, if the Committee that was asked for were appointed, though he admitted, at the same time, there was force in the observation to let the present system have a further trial.

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, the practical effect of appointing a Committee of Inquiry would be to paralyze the working of Cooper's Hill College, and, ere long, lead to its utter destruction. No doubt Cooper's Hill College must stand or fall upon its own merits. He quite admitted that if the question were a new one, and they were asked to establish such an Institution, there might be some ground for hesitation; but now that it was established, it was but just that it should have a fair trial. At the time of its institution it could not be denied that an Institution of that character was necessary. It was established at what he might call a period of inflation, when an exceptional number of engineers was suddenly required; and it was a time when we were not fully able to arrive at a definite conclusion as to the number of engineers that would be required in the future, or as to the extent to which we should be able to employ Natives. Therefore it was that the establishment of the College was forced upon the Duke of Argyll. It could not be doubted that the College had done admirably good work to the Profession and the country. Students had been sent from it who were a credit to their country and to their profession. There was one matter not much alluded to, which had always struck him as supremely important. He would refer to some remarks made by Colonel Chesney, who afterwards became the head of the College. Colonel Chesney said that the spirit of *esprit de corps* which such an Institution was calculated to engender was not the least of its merits, because it was a matter of feeling rather than administration. Colonel Chesney went on to say that he was only expressing the general feeling of the Profession when he said that the Institution had served to bring together, in the period of enthusiastic youth, the future members of the Service, who looked forward to passing their lives in a common calling in India. That was the spirit in which the College had been founded. How had it worked? He believed a corporate sense of honour—which was, perhaps, a better expression than *esprit de corps*—had been created, which led men to do their best to reflect credit on the Institution. The expenditure on the College, if great, could hardly be considered in recent years, at any rate, to be out of proportion to the service rendered, as it was of the highest importance that the best class of engineers should be secured. It was found, however, when the Public Works Staff in India was largely reduced in 1879, that only a small proportion of the students admitted to the College could possibly receive appointments to the Public Works Service in India; and, in consequence, a new system was organized, which had only been in operation for six or seven months. It was perfectly clear to his mind that an inquiry at this early stage could do no good; its only effect would be be to weaken and hinder the useful work which was being done. His right hon. and learned Friend proposed to go back to the open system. But it was perfectly clear that by competition alone the best men could not be obtained. The result of the existing system had turned out good practical engineers, and men who were bound in honour to do their duty. He trusted that the House would allow that system to be thoroughly tested, and would not break up an Institution which had done such valuable service.

Mr. PLUNKET said, he regretted that the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India had not seen fit to assent to the appointment of such a Committee as had been proposed by his right hon. and learned Friend and Colleague. He would venture to appeal once more to the noble Lord, in the interest not only of his own constituents, but also of the public generally, to allow a Committee to sit for the purpose of inquiry, by no means necessarily in a hostile spirit, into the working of Cooper's Hill College, in order to get to the bottom of the question, and to set at rest the discontent which prevailed in the public mind as to the management of that Institution. The argument of the noble Lord was that if there was an inquiry public confidence would be shaken. But he did not think that a fair inquiry, over which it was not improbable the noble Lord himself would preside, would tend to blight and wither the prospects of the College. What harm could happen? The Professors would still lecture, and the students attend their lectures. The noble Lord was entirely mistaken in stating that there was no practical school of engineering besides the College. In the University of Dublin there was a perfectly practical school of engineering, in which the curriculum was much the same as that at Cooper's Hill, except that the examination at the University was of a more practical and searching character. The Dublin engineering students had done much valuable work in the country. This and other schools, in fact, turned out all the engineers of the country, Cooper's Hill having merely a character more specialized. Then he did not understand from the speech of his right hon. and learned Friend that he wished to abolish Cooper's Hill, root and branch. That might possibly be the result; but it might be far otherwise. The great danger was in creating a monopoly, which always tended to encourage laziness, whereas, with free and open competition, you always got your money's worth. The present system at Cooper's Hill was a haphazard one, in which the rule prevailed of first come first served, and there was no adequate security of getting the best men. Another extraordinary thing connected with the College was this. The noble Lord said it now admitted other persons than those who were designed for the Indian Civil Service. On what ground, he should like to know, were they admitted? In his opinion, this was only an excuse for keeping up this expensive monopoly. There was another most remarkable thing with respect to which he should like some explanation. According to the 31st paragraph of the scheme, the College authorities might, on the application of students who passed out of the College, but who did not enter the Indian Civil Service, place them as pupils with eminent engineers on payment of a nominal premium. This was an additional attraction to induce men to come into the College; and, although they did not intend to go out to India at all, the College was to interfere in order to give them these extraordinary advantages. The College was well endowed, and no doubt it was a very excellent Institution; but this was no reason why it should not be inquired into. All the Civil Services were now thrown open, and a general system of open competition prevailed. By competition alone could the public be assured of obtaining the best men for the public service. He did not wish to say one word against the excellence of the College or of the students; but he thought his right hon. and learned Friend and Colleague had made out a case for an inquiry into the working of this Institution.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, that when the College was established the condition of the Public Works Service in India was not satisfactory, and it was felt that something should be done to supply young men for the engineering service in India. It was the case also then that there were no engineering schools in this country which sufficiently combined this branch with scientific education. He had listened with interest to the speech of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson); and, while one or two of his statements struck him as extravagant, in many respects his arguments were very cogent. He knew that in the University of Edinburgh the engineering school had been very much improved; and he thought that with respect to engineering schools Scotland and Ireland had an advantage over England. The English Universities, he thought, were too much hampered by endowments, which bound them to certain subjects of education, and it was a reproach to them that they were not provided with engineering schools. It might be fairly said that Cooper's Hill College was subsidized, and that it competed with the other engineering educational Institutions in the United Kingdom. He was not surprised that the right hon. and learned Gentleman, representing the constituency he did, should have brought this question forward; but they must give weight to the considerations put forward by the noble Marquess. Cooper's Hill College was established to meet a necessity, and it was, to a certain extent, successful. He should be sorry to see that College done away with, or undermined, without full consideration and adequate inquiry. The noble Lord told them that a new arrangement had been recently made, and he was apprehensive that any further inquiry might endanger the success of the present experiment. If he (Sir George Campbell) had that all-prevailing faith in the efficiency of the House of Commons to set everything right in every department of the British Empire, he might not be indisposed to support the proposal for a Select Committee; but he confessed the longer one sat in the House, the more one was convinced that it was overwhelmed with Business, and having regard to the breadth and largeness of the questions which might be opened up by an inquiry of this kind, it was a question whether it would be desirable to bring it forward until the Procedure of the House was reformed. On that ground, while confessing that he thought it extremely desirable that, if not now, at all events before very long, some sufficient inquiry should be made into the system by which the Public Works Service in India was supplied, he was not, for one, prepared to oppose the view that the noble Lord took that the present proposal was somewhat premature, and that they had better wait a little before Parliament should be asked to make the inquiry. With regard to the distribution of patronage in India, and to the appointment of military engineers, he most emphatically denied that there was any prejudice in favour of military engineers, or that civil engineers were likely to be unfairly treated. It was desirable in the interest of the Public Service that they should have in India men who were prepared to devote their lives to the country, who would become acquainted with the habits and language of the Natives, men not only good engineers, but men who must be able to manage vast armies of Natives, sympathize with them, and, as he said, to spend the better part of their lives among them. He was inclined to believe that the military engineers should confine themselves to military work, and that in future the Civil Department of the Public Works in India should be recruited by young civil engineers. They had in Scotland and Ireland established sufficient schools of engineering; and he felt that they should not be excluded from the appointment of students to these engineering posts.

MR. PUGH said, this was not a College for India only, but for home requirements. It was only Indian in this respect, that India had to pay the whole cost of it. He certainly thought the hon. Gentleman (Sir George Campbell) had by his speech conclusively shown a necessity for the proposed inquiry.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 78; Noes 27: Majority 51.—(Div. List, No. 68.)

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

POLICE PROTECTION TO PUBLIC SERVANTS.—OBSERVATIONS.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON, in rising to call attention to the increase to the rates arising, during a period of deep depression, from the necessity of adding to the local police forces, in order to protect public servants from personal violence, with the view of moving—

"That the obligation to provide special police protection to public servants is a subject of Imperial rather than local obligation, and should no longer be a charge upon the rates," said, that the Home Secretary seemed to think it was offensive in him the other day to draw the attention of the House to a matter which seemed to him to be of public importance. He trusted he would now retract that insinuation. This Resolution was one which was universally, or almost universally, accepted elsewhere as an axiom of government, and was both reasonable and politic. One Act of Parliament which established local police provided that special and extraordinary police services should be paid for by those who required them. The Chief Constables might, when applied to, and with the permission of the local authorities, provide constables for special duty. Under the Act 3 & 4 *Vict.* c. 80, s. 19, provision was made to that effect; and it had been largely taken advantage of by the managers of places of public amusement, as well as by contractors for large public works, and by others. According to the Metropolitan Police Returns, as many as 1,200 men were employed on such special services; and in the Civil Service Estimates it appeared that Royal and public personages and places were provided with police protection, the expense of which was charged on the Estimates, and was not thrown on the rates. Under this head the charge in respect of Marlborough House, for instance, was £595, and for the House of Commons £2,500. The Home Secretary had, indeed, argued that Cabinet Ministers were just the same as any ordinary individuals. He put that down rather to his own excessive modesty than to any want of appreciation of fact or of law. It would follow from this statement that the Ministers who, in the exercise of their public duties, brought themselves into unpopularity, ought to provide the necessary police protection for themselves out of their own pockets. What more monstrous proposition could be laid down? The necessity for that protection came from the discharge of their public duties, and not of private duties; and, therefore, the obligation to protect them fell necessarily, it seemed to him, upon the public. He took the case of the Flintshire Local Authority as an example of what was happening or might happen anywhere. In the autumn of last year, the Chief Constable of the county applied to the Local Authority for special additional police to protect the Prime Minister. The Chairman of the Local Authority appealed to the Court over which he presided, stating that the Home Secretary required the Chief Constable to furnish men for the protection of the Prime Minister. The Local Authority expressed their opinion that the safety of the Prime Minister was a national affair, and that, for that reason, the cost of his protection should fall on the National Exchequer; but instantly provided the special police contingent that was asked for. In the result a county singularly free from crime was charged with the expense caused by the crime of another part of the Kingdom. Now, the Local Authority ought not to have been called upon to make any such provision. Not long ago the local taxation reformers thought they had converted the Prime Minister to their views, when he surrendered at discretion before the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Harcourt). The right hon. Gentleman must excuse them if they were now rather doubtful, and called to mind his words, that any relief to the rural ratepayers would be nothing less than quartering the landlords on the Exchequer. The Prime Minister was quartering himself upon the ratepayers. There was, however, a far graver matter to consider—the inadequacy of the Local Authority to discharge the duty cast upon it. When the Prime Minister thought it necessary to make a visit to a political magnate in a neighbouring county, he was conducted by the Flintshire police to Chester, by the Cheshire police to Lancashire, and by the Lancashire police to Knowsley; he travelled like a State prisoner rather than a State official. Was it right, was it fitting, that the Prime Minister should be treated thus? He would not say one word against the rural police, who, however, were occasionally more distinguished for their zeal than for their discretion, as an anecdote which he would relate to the House would show. When the Prime Minister was at Hawarden the other day a poor stranger appeared on the scene, desirous of obtaining one of those letters of recommendation to a constituency which the right hon. Gentleman was so liberal in giving. He ventured to touch the hem of the Premier's garment, whereupon he was immediately seized and thrown into prison, until it was found he had committed no offence.

There could be no doubt that the ratepayers of Flintshire would willingly pay £50,000 a-year, if necessary, to secure the safety of the Prime Minister; but even if they paid £1,000,000 a-year that would not avail, for the circuit of their authority was limited, while the Prime Minister was ubiquitous. The Prime Minister had told them lately that they did not realize the gravity of the issues which lay before them. They must, indeed, be grave if for the first time the unprecedented degradation had come upon the country, that in Constitutional England the Constitutional Ministers of the Crown were not safe. He regretted very much that this should be the case for the first time under the Premiership of the present Prime Minister. Complaints had been made that police protection had been taken away from the lonely caretaker in Ireland. But that was no reason why the right hon. Gentleman should not be accompanied and guarded by a sufficient force of police. He hoped the House would accept this Resolution. He appealed to all sides of that House to show that they desired to acquiesce in the principle of his Motion; he would ask hon. Members who represented the Irish constituencies to show, by supporting his Motion, that they did not countenance or sympathize with the attempts against the persons of Ministers of the Crown, but were willing to vote Irish money to frustrate those plots. To the great Liberal Party he appealed to rush to the rescue of the right hon. Gentleman, who was termed by them, at all events in the country, the living incarnation of all the principles of Liberalism. As he could not move his Resolution under the Rules of the House, he would content himself by calling the attention of the Home Secretary to the matter.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, it is difficult, I am afraid, to treat this matter with all the seriousness which would seem to be demanded by the energetic rhetorical appeal of the hon. Gentleman for a combination of parties who happen to be absent—his appeal to the Irish Land Leaguers to support him, to the great party of local taxation which is absent, and to the Liberal Party, which is, at the present moment, I believe, at dinner. But whether this Motion was intended to be a local taxation Motion, or whether it was intended to be a great political and personal attack on the Prime Minister, I am left to doubt. The first part of it was a prosaic form of the local taxation creed —if the hon. Gentleman will allow me, without offence, to say so—run rather mad. The latter part of it was a sort of semi-political, semi-personal attack upon the Prime Minister. I will leave that part of the matter, because it has nothing to do with this question. The only point on which I will detain such of the House as are present is the local taxation question. The hon. Member has regard to the case of Flintshire, and I ask myself—"How is it that this Motion has come before the House?" There is a Member for Flintshire. There are Members for the Flint Boroughs, and for Cheshire, for Liverpool, and for Lancashire, representing the people who protected the Prime Minister when he went to Knowsley. But what has Shropshire suffered? I do not know if Shropshire is fertile of Ministers, and when they had their rates overburdened by what they have had to pay. The only thing I could think of as the origin of this Motion was that one of the hon. Members for Shrewsbury (Mr. Cotes), who was a junior Lord of the Treasury, had been protected at an enormous cost. Why did the hon. Member for Shropshire come forward with this Motion? Who have taken the matter up in Flintshire? The magistrates of Flintshire. But the great basis of all local taxation reform rests in the fundamental proposition that the magistrates did not represent the ratepayers. There is no body of men who are less representative of the sentiments of the ratepayers, or less fit to convey their views, than the magistrates; and if my hon. Friend, as a local taxation reformer, will bear that proposition in mind, he will master the grammar of the subject. As far as I know, the ratepayers have disavowed this Motion, and have condemned the view of the majority of the magistrates. It is a remarkable fact that while this matter is brought before the House by a Gentleman who has no connection with Flintshire, the motion at the Quarter Sessions was brought forward by a gentleman who does not reside in Flintshire, and who, for 12 or 13 years previously, had not been at any meeting of Sessions there. There is a gentleman whose opinion, at any rate, is rather taking, and that is the Chairman of Quarter Sessions. Having considered my letter, he was good enough to say that, though they were justified in asking the Home Secretary to repay some portion of the extra expenditure, he, on the other hand, if he had been the Home Secretary, would have sent the same answer as the Home Secretary had sent—that they were bound to protect their own ratepayers. Now, the hon. Member has stated that I considered the character of this Resolution was somewhat offensive. That is not my expression, but the word he adopted; but it was not my view of the subject. That view of the subject was entertained by a gentleman very well known in Flintshire to hold Conservative opinions; and he said—

> "Is it wise, courteous, altogether right, when we have the privilege of having resident in the county so distinguished a man to begrudge that small contribution towards the protection of his life and property? It is a matter in which politics should be completely put aside. It would be better to bear this little grievance than to lay ourselves open to the charge of unwillingness to protect the Prime Minister, whatever his politics might be."

These, I believe, are the views of the ratepayers of Flintshire, and the views of the people of this country. What is the rule? The hon. Member seems to be imperfectly informed of the practice in this country on this subject. He seems to have repeated a statement which was made by Colonel Rowley, that in the Metropolis there were specially employed for the protection of Her Majesty's Ministers 13,000 or 14,000 policemen—and that is the sagacious man upon whose advice and motion the magistrates of Flintshire adopted this resolution. Now, Sir, there is not one particle of foundation for that statement. There are not 13,000 police employed in the defence of Her Majesty's Ministers; and, in the next place, those who are so employed are paid precisely in the same way as the magistrates of Flintshire are called upon to pay. There is no special payment. I have before me a memorandum from Colonel Henderson, which states that it has always been held to be the duty of the Metropolitan Police to make proper provision for any special arrangements necessary from time to time for the protection of distinguished personages visiting the Metropolis, of Her Majesty's Ministers, and of such other persons as are held entitled to special consideration, and no payment has ever been made by the Treasury on that account. That is a matter which the hon. Member might have ascertained of Colonel Rowley, if he had taken the trouble to ask. Oh, yes; but then it is necessary to read those things intelligently to understand them. The hon. Member has referred to the Houses of Parliament. There is a payment made for the police employed inside the Houses of Parliament, but not for those employed outside. The whole cost of protection for Her Majesty and the Royal Family is borne by the ratepayers of London, subsidized to the extent of one-half from the Imperial Funds; and does the hon. Member maintain that the Queen is to be put on the same footing as public servants? He has not said so. The fact is that the principle is that very sensibly stated by the Chairman of Quarter Sessions of Flintshire, that it is the duty of every local authority to protect persons who are within their jurisdiction. That applies to the highest and to the lowest. It applies to Her Majesty's Ministers; it applies to the hon. Member; it applies to the Sovereign; it applies to the Royal Family. Now, Sir, I should like to know what the hon. Member's definition is with respect to public servants? He originally put it in the form of "Cabinet Ministers." I suppose the magistrates are public servants, and they must not go upon the rates; but the expense of protecting them must be borne by the Consolidated Fund. Officers in the Army are also public servants, and it must be understood that they are not on the rates. And when the Government is turned out, are they then to be protected or are they not? They cease to be public servants; and are they then to go upon the rates? Now, Sir, the hon. Gentleman is a little at fault in his history. He says that this is the first time that Ministers of State have ever required protection. Well, Sir, I will recommend the hon. Member to read in histories of the time of George III., during the Administration in the days of the Wilkes riots, or in the days of Lord George Gordon riots, and he will find that there have been Ministers in former times who have required police protection. Sir, there are people who require protection sometimes more than Ministers—the Leaders of the

Opposition. They are often quite as unpopular and require protection quite as much. I do not know whether the hon. Member has the disadvantage of being old enough, as I have, to recollect that time when the iron shutters of Apsley House had to be closed, and when it was necessary to protect the great Duke of Wellington against a popular siege in London on the anniversary of Waterloo; and I remember some verses of Lord Stanhope, in which it was said the English people were more shamed on the London streets than the French were on the Belgian plains. I want to know whether the hon. Member extends his principle to Her Majesty's Opposition? In reply to an inquiry which I made to the Commissioner of Police, whom I happened to meet to-day, he said he had been at quite as much pains to protect the Members of the Opposition as Members who were in Office. Members of the Opposition, as in the case of the Duke of Wellington at the time of the Reform agitation, may be just as much in need of protection as Ministers of the Crown. It is therefore quite impossible to admit of a limitation of this kind, apart from the universal principle acted upon everywhere, that each locality is responsible for the peace of the locality. When, for instance, the Queen or the Prince of Wales went down into the country, as the Prince of Wales recently went down to Liverpool, did the people of Liverpool or of other places visited grudge the cost of the extra police who were required to be engaged on account of the Royal visit? The police are responsible for the district, and you cannot take particular individuals and ticket them—"This is a servant of the Crown, and therefore it shall not be at the risk of the locality. You shall not protect him. You shall protect another man." The hon. Gentleman has a Colleague whose father was lately a public servant, holding the Office of Master of the Horse. Well, is Lord Bradford to be protected at the expense of the rates when he is not Master of the Horse, and to be protected by the Consolidated Fund when he is? Is that a thing that would be tolerated, or is it possible to work it? How are the police to determine whether a man is a public servant or not—whether he is to be protected at the cost of this fund or the other? I do not wish to speak at all disrespectfully of the great question of local taxation; but this is an instance in which it is not worth while departing from a very serious principle to gain, I think, no particular advantage. I therefore cannot concur in the view of the matter taken by the hon. Gentleman.

MR. ROBERTS said, he rose for the purpose of denying that the hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton) represented, in the course he had taken, the feelings of the ratepayers of Flintshire. Heavily burdened as they were, and notwithstanding that they were suffering from the depression of the mining and agricultural interest, they cheerfully bore the charge for the protection of the Premier, and the feeling prevalent among them was one of shame at the conduct of their magistrates. The motion at their meeting was moved by a comparative stranger, who had not attended Quarter Sessions before for the last 12 years.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CASE OF PETER DUNNE—MR. JUSTICE FITZGERALD.—OBSERVATIONS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he had given Notice that he would draw attention to the conduct of Mr. Justice Fitzgerald, at Maryborough, in detaining in custody Peter Dunne after he has been acquitted of the charge brought against him; and to move—

> "That the action of Judge Fitzgerald in detaining in custody Peter Dunne, after his acquittal on the charge preferred against him, and on account only of a demonstration in court over which the prisoner had no control, was an abuse of authority."

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR, continuing, said, that the subject-matter of his Motion he submitted to the Attorney General for Ireland three weeks ago, and furnished him with a verbatim report of the proceedings which took place from a local newspaper. Peter Dunne was tried before Mr. Justice Fitzgerald for manslaughter on the 3rd of March, and acquitted, the jury taking a very short time to arrive at their verdict. When the verdict was delivered no comment was made by the Judge; but it was received with applause. Justice Fitzgerald then said—

> "In consequence of that display I order the prisoner to be kept in custody until to-night, and if there is any more of such conduct I will keep all the prisoners in custody until the close of the Assizes."

The answer which the Attorney General for Ireland gave to his letter was that he had seen different reports of the case in *The Irish Times* and *The Daily Express* and was, therefore, not prepared to admit the accuracy of the report. But he contended that it was very likely, at any rate, that it was correct; and he would leave it to the House to judge of the fitness or candour of an answer of that sort. The Attorney General for Ireland went on to say that he entirely disclaimed any duty of replying to the question as to the conduct of the Judge; but he might say that, from what he had reason to believe took place, the learned Judge acted quite legally. In other words, the right hon. and learned Gentleman, although knowing nothing whatever of the circumstances of the case, and not having taken the trouble to make inquiries, was quite prepared to say that Judge Fitzgerald was right. He (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) would contest the legal opinion of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. He denied that the Judge had any right to detain any man against whom no charge was pending, simply because some other persons, over whom he had no control, chose to commit a contempt of Court. Sir William Blackstone, whom the right hon. and learned Gentleman would, perhaps, admit to be an authority, stated that when a prisoner had been acquitted by the verdict of the jury "he should be immediately set at large." The 8 & 9 *Vict.*, c. 114, provided that every person charged with any crime before any Court holding criminal jurisdiction within Great Britain or Ireland who on his or her trial had been acquitted "shall be immediately set at large in open Court." Archbold, in his *Criminal Pleadings*, stated—

> "If the defendant be acquitted on the merits, he is for ever free and discharged from that accusation, and is entitled to be immediately set at liberty unless there be some other legal ground for his detention."

It was not pretended there was any other legal ground for the detention of Peter Dunne. He believed the invariable practice was for a Judge, on a verdict of acquittal being handed in, to ask if there was any other charge against the prisoner, and if not to order his immediate discharge; but, whether the Judge so asked or not, the man, if no other charge was pending against him, was entitled to an immediate discharge. Other writers on Criminal Law were to the same effect as those he had already quoted. Whether the Grand Jury had or had not found a true bill did not affect the question. He maintained that it was a violation of the principles of the Constitution to deprive a man of his liberty because of an offence which he had not committed and for which he was not responsible. The persons who committed the offence were punishable by the Judge, who, if he had chosen, might have cleared the Court. He did not accuse Mr. Justice Fitzgerald of malice; but the learned Judge certainly acted in a very splenetic manner with regard to Peter Dunne. He was aware that it was laid down by Lord Coke and other high authorities that a Judge was in no case liable to an action for an abuse of his authority, or for exceeding his jurisdiction. Therefore it was that he brought the matter before the only tribunal which could express an opinion on it. The the terms of his Motion were very moderate.

Mr. SPEAKER: I suppose the hon. Member is aware that his Amendment cannot be put to the House.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he was aware of that fact; but he was anxious to bring the matter, not only before the House, but also before the country, as a protest against an improper and reckless use of power.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said that the hon. Member, in introducing his Motion, with a charming frankness had been pleased to put to the House whether he had been candid in answering a Question which had been put to him. The hon. Member had impeached the character of a Judge who, for learning and integrity, was in the first rank of Judges on the Irish Bench, and was universally respected by the Profession and the country. If the hon. Member was acquainted with the Legal Departments of Ireland, he would not have been so ready to bring forward this matter. The hon. Member had assumed that his statements were matters of fact. He disputed that assertion. There was no fact before the House; but only the statement of what he might, without offence, describe as an obscure local print. The two Dublin papers which had given accounts of the proceedings did not corroborate the story of the hon. Member. He was, therefore, not prepared to admit the facts. It was not shown that a reporter of the local paper was present, or, if there were one, that he was a competent reporter or a shorthand writer. The hon. Member had displayed a vast amount of burrowing ingenuity. But he had referred to no Irish Statute, and to no book of Irish practice. He had quoted English books of practice, and a series of Statutes which applied exclusively to England, beginning with the 14 *Geo.* III., which was passed before the Act of Union, and all to impeach the character of a learned and impartial Judge, of whom he had spoken in such terms of discourtesy as could hardly have been expected from anyone. The learned Judge had committed no offence. The mere fact of a series of Statutes being passed was evidence that they were intended to alter an already existing practice. In Ireland the law was that the Assize Commission was one unbroken period of time from the opening of the Assize to the proclamation of delivery. During the whole of that period prisoners remained amenable to the order of the Judge. The mere fact of the verdict being given for acquittal did not, either in England or Ireland, entitle the prisoner to an immediate discharge. The record had to be entered—which had not been done in this case—and until it was entered the prisoner could not be discharged. What took place was, that the verdict was received with great applause, and the learned Judge, in order to prevent a re-occurrence of that, said he would not discharge the prisoner until the rising of the Court, so that, after all, it was a tempest in a teapot.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR remarked, that the Judge threatened to keep the man in prison until next day, and he did so.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson), continuing, said, the Judge was strictly entitled to do as he was reported to have done when such an indecency—for it was an indecency—had been committed, representing, as it did, the prevailing feeling in the district against all law and order. The learned Judge, fearing a breach of the peace, was perfectly within his right in acting as he had done; and he himself, in the same circumstances, would not have hesitated to take the same course. In conclusion, he felt it his duty to say that a more learned, a more distinguished, a more upright, or a more fearless Judge than Mr. Justice Fitzgerald did not sit on the Irish Bench.

Mr. BIGGAR said, the Attorney General for Ireland had given a high character to Judge Fitzgerald. Others were entitled to hold a different opinion as to the merits of the learned Judge. Judge Fitzgerald was a very able man; but his reputation for impartiality did not stand so high as the Attorney General for Ireland would have the House to believe. The general opinion in Ireland was that Mr. Justice Fitzgerald was an exceedingly warm partizan of the present Government. He was a Privy Councillor, and in that capacity he directed prosecutions; he gave recommendations with regard to the general criminal policy of the Government, and then he tried the very cases based upon his own recommendations. Therefore, in point of fact, Mr. Justice Fitzgerald was prosecutor and Judge.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Mr. Justice Fitzgerald gives no advice whatever in reference to criminal prosecutions. I, and I alone, am responsible for them.

Mr. BIGGAR said, he did not state that Mr. Justice Fitzgerald gave directions in particular cases, but he did say that he gave recommendations to the Government with regard to the general policy of repression in Ireland.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): No, no; the hon. Gentleman is quite in error. Mr. Justice Fitzgerald gives no advice to the Government.

Mr. BIGGAR: Did the right hon. and learned Gentleman allege that a Privy Councillor was a perfectly ornamental personage? Did he give no advice at all, nor offer an opinion on any subject whatever?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): The

House will, perhaps, permit me to say that a Judicial Member of the Privy Council is most careful, and the Government are also most careful, that he shall have nothing whatever to say to any matter which comes before him as Judge.

Mr. BIGGAR said, that did not alter the case, for although individual cases might not come quite before the same person, that person might have his mind influenced in regard to a case which he might have to try. It was obvious that Mr. Justice Fitzgerald, being a Privy Councillor, and being consulted by the Government, gave recommendation from time to time as to their general policy. He could tell a story about Judge Fitzgerald, which he had from a political prisoner who was tried before him in 1867—namely, Mr. John Cleary——

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is now about to discuss the conduct of Mr. Justice Fitzgerald. The House is always very guarded in its language in reviewing the conduct of the Judges of the land; and the hon. Member is now, as I understand him, about to give to the House some hearsay story with regard to that Judge. I am bound to point out to the hon. Member that I think, considering that the House is not in a position to express its opinion on any Motion before it, it is not becoming to the Judge to give hearsay stories with regard to his conduct.

Mr. BIGGAR said, that, after this warning from the Chair, he would not enter into the circumstances of the case, but would merely say that, according to his informant, the strongest speech for the prosecution in that particular case was delivered, not by Counsel, but by Mr. Justice Fitzgerald from the Bench. With regard to the particular question before them, he would remark that in Ireland a newspaper which gave an unfair report of the proceedings in a Criminal Court rendered itself liable to prosecution for contempt of Court. If, therefore, the report as to Mr. Justice Fitzgerald was incorrect, the learned Judge had the remedy in his own hands, and it was significant that he had not availed himself of it. It was difficult to see how his action in detaining a prisoner could be defended on any reasonable ground. He would only add that he thought the terms of the Motion which his hon. Friend was precluded from moving should commend themselves to every fair-minded man in the House.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—SEARCH FOR ARMS—SUB-INSPECTOR BALL.

OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER said, he rose to call attention to the conduct of the Sub-Inspector of Police at Ballina in searching certain houses of that town for arms. He thought it was always desirable, when questions of this description were raised, as far as possible, some effort should be made to test the opinion of the House with regard to it; and he wished to say that it was not his fault that it was impossible to take that course in the present instance. Mr. Ball occupied the position of Sub-Inspector in the town of Ballina; and he would ask the House to consider the character generally which that town had borne in the report of the police with regard to public agitation, and then to consider the character of the persons who were subjected to the visits made by the Sub-Inspector of Police, and to consider the action of a Sub-Inspector in proceeding to search the houses of some of the most respectable merchants of that town on information which proved to be as unfounded as the search which he instituted proved to be fruitless. So far as his information went, he acted on the information of this private informer, without going to the trouble of consulting any of the local magistrates, or even the Resident Magistrate. The town of Ballina was the largest town in the county of Mayo, and the town in which the great land agitation originated. It was a town that had been subjected to many temptations; it had had the influence of surrounding movements of a very excited character freely brought to bear upon it; and it was a singular fact that throughout all this time the town had been characterized by its loyal and peaceful character. He said that, as far as his information went, the officer in question, acting upon the statement of a private informer, and without consulting any of the local magistrates, not even the Resident Magistrate, proceeded to search the houses of some of the most respectable inhabitants of a town remarkable for being well affected. The Sub-Inspector procured a force of military and police to carry out his object. One of the men whose house was searched was Chairman of the Town Commissioners, and all of them bore an excellent character. Owing to the action of Sub-Inspector Ball, a population of 10,000 in the town, and at least as many more in the country around, had become disaffected, simply because their previous good conduct afforded them no protection. This was a dangerous lesson to teach any people, particularly at a time in the history of Ireland when the country was heated to boiling point by the political passions of the hour. When the Town Commissioners asked the Lord Lieutenant for an inquiry, they meant that they should obtain one of an independent character. But the inquiry they obtained was one conducted by one policeman into the proceedings of another. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. E. Forster) had informed the House that it had been conducted by the County Inspector, who endorsed what the Sub-Inspector had done. The right hon. Gentleman also stated, in justification of the action of the Sub-Inspector, that though no arms were discovered, yet in the course of the search a case of revolvers had been removed from one shop to another. He found, however, that the person from whom the right hon. Gentleman derived that information was the very officer whose conduct had been incriminated. He maintained that with police surrounding the house, and stationed at all the doors, it would have been impossible that a case of arms could have been removed. There was no side of this story which did not show the Sub-Inspector of Ballina in an absurd and ridiculous position; and he thought when a gentleman occupying a responsible position had been found so incapable, the very least the inhabitants should be entitled to was to be relieved of his presence. He was not unreasonable enough to ask for his dismissal from the force; but his had been a great blunder, and there was a French proverb which told them that a great blunder was very often worse than a crime. The county Mayo was rather unfortunate. He was not entitled to call attention to Major Bond; but he did not know what grudge the Chief Secretary for Ireland had to Mayo that he should have thought a man who was unfit to be the head of the police in Birmingham was fit to be a Resident Magistrate in Mayo. They had also got there the eccentric Major Traill, whose conduct afforded amusement to the people. He was told that the Major drove into the town of Claremorris lately, and threatened to arrest his shoemaker under the Coercion Act because he had not mended a pair of his old boots. He protested against the people of his country being handed over to those men. He was aware that he was not now at liberty to make the Motion of which he had given Notice, owing to a division having been taken; but he had intended to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the character of the town of Ballina, and that of the persons whose houses were needlessly and fruitlessly searched by Sub-Inspector Ball, aided by a large force of military and police, should have protected them from domiciliary visits, the only result of which has been to create general disaffection and discredit the administration of the law."

Unless gentlemen occupying the position of Sub-Inspector Ball were taught to exercise discretion in the performance of their duties, he thought the Government were in a fair way of having their difficulties multiplied rather than removed, and having their efforts frustrated when they tried to restore peace and tranquillity to Ireland.

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he could not complain of the tone of the remarks of the hon. Member for Mayo, although the hon. Gentleman had given rather a mistaken description of what had happened in that case. With regard to Major Traill, he could only state that the district under that gentleman's supervision, owing in some respects to his energy, was one of the most peaceable in the county of Mayo. As to the search for arms in Ballina, of course it was a disagreeable thing that such searches should be made; but there could be no doubt that arms were concealed in many parts of the country, and the Government would be liable to much deserved criticism if proper efforts were not made to take arms from those who ought not to have them. The hon. Member was wrong in supposing that the Sub-Inspector in that case had acted entirely on his own responsibility. The whole necessity for the search was acknowledged by the Resident Magistrate, and the arrangements were made between the Sub-Inspector and the Resident Magistrate. Upon consultation with Mr.

Henn, it was considered necessary to employ the military in the search, there not being sufficient police for the purpose. Mr. Henn requisitioned the attendance of the military, and was, in fact, as much responsible for the search as the Sub-Inspector himself. It was true that no arms were found; and that was the case in almost every search that was made; but no one doubted that arms existed, or that it was remarkably easy to conceal them, and very difficult to find them, especially by searches that had to be made with considerable warning. With respect to the Chairman of the Town Commissioners, and another gentleman whose houses were searched, there was no suspicion that they were concealing arms; but they had several assistants in their business, and it was to see whether those assistants were breaking the law that the search was made. Upon full inquiry he thought the Sub-Inspector, in consultation with the Resident Magistrate, was justified in the course that was pursued; and in what was done there was a desire evinced to avoid, as far as might be, the giving of all unnecessary annoyance. Therefore, he thought he should have been much disregarding his duty if he had shown displeasure on the part of the Government at the action which had been taken. Arms were in possession of people in Ireland, and were used for very bad purposes; and he thought the House would accept the statement that the Arms Act was passed in order that, as far as possible, arms should be taken out of the hands of those who were likely to make a bad use of them. He admitted that Ballina was one of the most orderly towns in the West of Ireland—at any rate, it was one of which he heard least—but still it appeared to the responsible authorities necessary, on account of the possible action of some few individuals in it, to make these searches that Sub-Inspector Ball had made. As to the complaint that the Government had merely sent down the County Inspector to inquire into the matter, he should say he thought it the proper course under the circumstances, and also that no evidence was adduced at that inquiry which could justify its being submitted to any other tribunal.

Mr. SEXTON wished to say a few words on the subject of this Motion, which his hon. Friend the Member for Mayo had brought forward in such extremely moderate terms. Although he had no fault to find with the manner in which his hon. Friend had laid the case before the House, he thought his hon. Friend had considerable fault to find with the reply he had received. He thought that the right hon. Gentleman might have spared them his eulogium on Major Traill, one of those Resident Magistrates in Ireland who had done much to promote the state of affairs now existing in certain districts. They heard occasionally in that House very wise counsels from the Ministers of the Crown about the utility of protecting Civil affairs from the interference of the military in England; but the idea had never penetrated the walls of Dublin Castle. If his district were as peaceable as the right hon. Gentleman stated, why did Major Traill deliver from the Bench so much oratory with a strong flavour of gunpowder? The utmost that an official of his peculiar type could boast of was his selection from Dublin Castle, and the utmost that he could claim from Irish Members was the charity of their silence. This town of Ballina was situated partly in the county which he had the honour to represent, and he had some knowledge of it. He knew it to be inhabited by a very peaceable and industrious community; but he believed that its population were willing to take their stand with the rest of the Irish people, and would not claim for themselves an exemption from police indignities which they would not equally claim for their fellow-citizens of any other town. The maxim of the French statesman about too much zeal was not regarded by the Executive Government, and any blunder was readily condoned, provided that it was only directed against the Irish people. When the order went forth from Dublin Castle, the humble policeman or the Sub-Inspector had to obey. He thought he might say, with every confidence in that House, that where searches of this description were carried on in a country struggling with excited circumstances, and in a perilously troubled condition, they ought to be carried out under conditions that would tend to the preservation of the public temper and the public peace. Indeed, there were two considerations which ought carefully to be borne in mind. In the first place, when a policeman was about to institute a search, the Police Inspector ought first to consider well the sufficiency of the evidence upon which that search was to be made; in the second place, he should conduct that search in a careful, and not in an unnecessarily public manner; in the quiet, undemonstrative manner proper to a police officer. In Ballina the houses of the most substantial men were entered, the houses of men of substantial means and moderate principles. Surely these policemen must have known that if they had sent two or three officers, the gentlemen in question would have allowed them to look into their cupboards and boxes for anything they suspected to be concealed. In England, one or two policemen would have been sent from Scotland Yard, and the whole affair would have been perfectly quietly managed. This was not enough for Sub-Inspector Ball; and he had in the unquiet state of the country, been guilty of a blunder which was a crime. He had gone to the quiet town of Ballina with the force and uproar of a battalion of Uhlans—perhaps his military aspirations had never been gratified before—and for once in his life his love of extensive military parade was satisfied. But the town of Ballina had additional reasons to feel discomfited and outraged; yet that town had been described by the Chief Secretary for Ireland as a quiet town. If these things were done in a green tree, what would be done in a dry? He had one good reason for not asking for the dismissal of Sub-Inspector Ball, and that was because he knew it would be no use. But he thought they might at least ask that his energy, which was his most conspicuous quality—for no one would say that his discretion was on a par with it—might be employed somewhere else than in the town of Ballina. He had made himself notorious and disliked in the place. If the right hon. Gentleman was wishful of preserving the peacefulness of this town in which he took so much pride, he might remove Sub-Inspector Ball to some place where he would be more popular, because not so well known.

MR. REDMOND desired to say a few words before the House left the consideration of the subject before them. They had great reason to complain of the way in which the Chief Secretary for Ireland had treated the matter. It had always seemed to him that of the two Acts, that which was called the Protection of Person and Property Act and the Arms Act, the latter was the one which inflicted the greater hardship. Not one place only, but whole country sides, had been searched for arms without a single instance in which they had been found. It was impossible that policemen could be particular as to the information upon which they acted when so many fruitless searches were made. The additional responsibility of the Resident Magistrate only made the case worse. These searches were made at night. [Mr. W. E. FORSTER: They were not at night.] Well, if these were not at night, others were. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to regard those searches for arms very lightly. He had expressed a hope that the police would err on the right side—in other words, upon the side of searching the houses of innocent persons. This was very like the recommendation contained in a recent Circular issued by a County Inspector, and for which the Chief Secretary for Ireland was responsible, that the police should shoot men on suspicion. The action of the police in breaking into houses was a great provocation. Why did not the Chief Secretary for Ireland endeavour to prevent this source of disaffection? It was impossible for the Irish Members to assist the right hon. Gentleman in preserving order in Ireland. So long as the right hon. Gentleman had hand, act, or part in the government of Ireland tranquillity would be an impossibility, because the right hon. Gentleman was not a sufficiently strong politician to grasp the situation, or to control the men who, like County Inspector Smith, now acted in the name of the Government of Ireland. It appeared that police officers might issue Circulars inciting to murder without the knowledge or approval of the right hon. Gentleman. That course give rise to irritation and a spirit of retaliation among the people. Was it too much to expect that the right hon. Gentleman would stand up and make this concession to the wishes of the Irish Members, that the individuals who took the course in Ballina which was complained of would be removed from the town? It was often said the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues did not consult with the Irish Members on Irish affairs. If they did consult with them, their course of action, he believed, would be different. But they preferred to go on the even tenour of their way, and pursue a course of action in Ireland which was grounded on absolute ignorance of the real wants of the country, and which was carried out without a single spark of sympathy with the wishes or aspirations of the people. As long as that course of action was pursued the Government would be disgraced by such actions as the issue of the recent Police Circular, and the conduct on which the hon. Member for Mayo had commented to-night. He was not one of those who entirely regretted the continued blundering of the incompetent politicians who were responsible for the government of Ireland, because he was convinced that every blunder they made, every false step they took in the government of Ireland, brought nearer the day when their power in Ireland would be at an end, and when every vestige of British interference in Irish affairs would be swept away along with them.

PARLIAMENT — INTERFERENCE OF PEERS IN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN, who had on the Paper a Notice that he should call attention to the intermeddling of Peers in the election of Members of Parliament, said, that his Motion involved an accusation against two noble Lords, and some Friends of these Noblemen were anxious to take part in the discussion. He had delayed it from time to time to enable them to make the explanation which they deemed necessary. As they were not present he would not proceed with it on the present occasion.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—THE ASSISTANT SUB-COMMISSIONERS (KERRY AND WEST CORK).

Mr. HEALY said, he rose to make some remarks upon the action of the Sub-Commissioners intrusted with the carrying out of the Land Act in certain parts of Ireland. He wished it to be distinctly understood that the statements he was about to make were not within his own personal knowledge. He was merely the mouthpiece of the tenants of Kerry and Cork, who considered they had fair reason to complain of the administration of the Land Act in their counties. A mass of evidence had been put into his hands showing that many decisions given by Messrs. M'Devitt, Walpole, and Murphy left the rents double and sometimes treble Griffith's valuation. The important point he desired to raise was that those three Sub-Commissioners, Messrs. M'Devitt, Walpole, and Murphy, were operating in one of the most distressed districts in Ireland, and that their decisions had given the utmost dissatisfaction. It was remarkable that Messrs. M'Devitt and Company were hearing the cases on the estates of Lord Kenmare and the Marquess of Lansdowne; and he wanted to have from the Government a distinct denial, if such could be given, that the reason why the Sub-Commissioners who previously acted in those districts (Messrs. Reeves, O'Keefe, and Rice) were removed was not because of the decisions which they gave, and which were satisfactory to the tenants in some cases, but because of a Memorial of landlords in the district asking for their removal, and for the appointment of the present Sub-Commissioners.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, the hon. Member had been misinformed.

Mr. HEALY said, he made himself the mouthpiece of grievances in the locality. He had not had an opportunity of investigating the matter. In Kerry and Cork there was a tremendous amount of dissatisfaction with the decisions of the present Sub-Commissioners.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he understood the hon. Member to say that these gentlemen were sent to Kerry in place of another Sub-Commission, against which the landlord party had presented a Memorial. There was no Memorial, no such representation from Kerry.

Mr. HEALY said, he had been informed that the previous Sub-Commission had been sent adrift—if the statements which had been made to him were untrue, it was desirable that they should be corrected—and that Mr. M'Devitt had been appointed a Sub-Commissioner in response to a Memorial of landlords of Cork.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he had said there was no Memorial. He thought the hon. Member was alluding to Kerry. There was no Memorial from anybody in favour of Mr. M'Devitt. He never heard of such a thing.

Mr. HEALY said, that being the case, he was very glad to hear it, but a solicitor said Mr. M'Devitt got his appointment through his contesting Tyrone, and that he stated in one of his stump speeches—"Now we have our heel on the landlords, and we will crush the life out of them." Afterwards the Duke of Abercorn drew attention to M'Devitt's speeches—perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would contradict that—and said he would bring them before the House of Lords, when M'Devitt denied altogether the accuracy of the report, and said that, instead of being a tenant's man, he was altogether a landlord's man.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that was not the case.

Mr. HEALY said, that story was believed, and they had now the misfortune of having M'Devitt reinstated in the graces of the Government at the expense of the poor tenants. If, however, that statement was untrue, he would give the right hon. Gentleman some statements which were true. He would show the nature of the decisions given by Mr. M'Devitt and Company. In more than one case the judicial rent was allowed to be nearly 150 per cent over Griffith's valuation, in other cases 40, 50, 70, 100, and 120 per cent over Griffith's valuation. These decisions had given immense dissatisfaction. He gathered that from a letter written on 15th April last, by the Rev. John Savage, C.C., and published in *The Cork Examiner*. This respectable Catholic clergyman expressed, on behalf of his flock, deep dismay at the removal from the district of the previous Sub-Commission, and the substitution of Messrs. M'Devitt and Company, whose decisions in other places he had no reason to be satisfied with. The district was essentially poor, and it was but fair that the Sub-Commissioners who had some acquaintance with it should have been allowed to remain there. Mr. M'Devitt was a barrister whom the Irish Benchers improperly called to the Bar without having attended his terms, on the express statement that he did not intend to practise. He was no sooner called than he took all the practice he could get. Mr. M'Devitt was a Northerner, and why was he not sent to the North? The poor serfs of Kerry and West Cork were obliged to submit to decisions which he supposed would not be tolerated in Donegal. He had received a communication from a respected Catholic clergyman on the subject of the recent proceedings of the Sub-Commission. That gentleman said that the Sub-Commissioners were getting completely under the influence of the Government, and of persons high in authority; and their proceedings were such that the people were gradually losing all confidence and all hope on the subject of reduction of rent. He did not ask for the dismissal of Mr. M'Devitt; but he asked that he should be sent elsewhere, and that Mr. John Rice, who knew the district, and was generally respected and trusted by the people, should be allowed to remain. It was a curious fact that those in the district over which Messrs. M'Devitt and Rice had been placed, whose estates would be most interfered with, were Members of the Government. They had Lord Kenmare and Lord Lansdowne in Kerry; and why was it to go abroad, that in consequence of representations made by these Noblemen, men like Mr. John Rice had been removed from the district?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: No such representations have been made.

Mr. HEALY asked why Mr. Rice had been removed?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that he had no right to speak, and he had no authority in the matter, which lay under the control of the Chief Commissioners. But he believed the reason of Mr. Rice's removal—Mr. Rice was in all respects an excellent man—had some connection with property in the county of Cork, and it was a rule that a man should not exercise jurisdiction in districts where he had interests of his own.

Mr. HEALY said, he supposed that it was on the same principle that a gentleman who came from Bradford was sent to govern Ireland. Men who knew nothing about countries were the men sent into them. Mr. Rice was a native of Cork, and he had been chosen by Mr. Disraeli's Government as a Member of the Richmond Commission. He was good enough for the Government of Mr. Disraeli; but he was not good enough for the Chief Secretary for Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman apparently considered that the best men to send to Ireland to give decisions on matters vitally affecting the people was a foreigner. The right hon. Gentleman himself was a foreigner, and he thought the proper way to rule Ireland was by strangers; but the people of Ireland had very good reason to be suspicious of strangers. They knew what invasions led to in times past, and they would not have strangers any longer. They would have none but men whom they trusted; and if the Government refused to appoint these men, they would never produce contentment or peace among the people. He would mention another case in the county of Kerry. That was a case of a County Court Judge, Mr. O'Connor Morris, for whose actions, he admitted, the Government were not responsible. Mr. O'Connor Morris had recently to fix a fair rent for lands, of which the old rent was £3. The landlord's valuator, Mr. Cruikshank, valued some of the land at 10*s*. 6*d*. an acre, the bog land at 4*s*. 6*d*., and other parts at 10*s*. and 12*s*. 6*d*. an acre. Notwithstanding this evidence on the part of the landlord's valuer, the Judge fixed the rent at £2 12*s*. 6*d*. an acre—only 7*s*. 6*d*. below the old rent. Then he would refer to the appointment of Mr. J. R. Headeck as a Sub-Commissioner for Antrim and Derry. He hoped the farmers of the districts over whose interests Mr. Headeck would have jurisdiction would note the fact that Mr. Headeck was a Tipperary landlord, whose rents were considered by his tenants to be so excessive that he had recently been brought into Court by them. A man appointed to fix fair rents should be above suspicion; and it was an extraordinary fact that out of the whole of Ireland the Government should select for the counties of Derry and Antrim a landlord who was on the worst relations with his tenants. He would ask, also, why the names of the Sub-Commissioners had never been furnished to Parliament, as had been promised? The Government ought to appoint men of whom hon. Members sitting on that side of the House could have no complaint to make. That very day he addressed the Attorney General for Ireland a Question concerning Mr. Headeck's appointment; but he received no reply.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, interposing, said, he at once answered that Question by stating that Mr. Headeck was appointed a few days ago. He added that if the hon. Member would give him an opportunity of inquiring into the truth of the charge which had been made he would give him the required information.

Mr. HEALY observed, that he asked the Question of the Attorney General for Ireland, and that the Chief Secretary for Ireland said nothing about the matter.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he got up and said he should be able to reply to the hon. Member fully next week.

Mr. HEALY said, he had no recollection whatever of the right hon. Gentleman's reply. One of the Questions he had on the Paper related to Messrs. M'Devitt, Walpole, and Murphy. The right hon. Gentleman read a statement showing the number of appeals which had been made from their decisions. In his opinion, that simply proved that the tenants were poor men, and that they had no hope of justice; whereas the landlords had a powerful association at their back, and were prepared to push matters to the bitter end. The tenants were stricken down in the Courts; but the landlords were supplied with funds and allowed to carry on their own organization. The tenants' organization, as far as it appeared above the surface in the Courts, had been "felonized" by the right hon. Gentleman. In India, he believed, there were political representatives, who sent Reports to the Crown as to the feelings and condition of the people; but there was no one to stand between the Irish people and the Government. The information of the Chief Secretary for Ireland was derived from Executive officers who carried out the functions of the law. Independent men ought to be appointed in the various districts of Ireland to report to the right hon. Gentleman what the feelings of the people really were. Unless it were the intention of the Government to keep up a sense of exasperation, they would take some steps to ascertain the feelings of the Irish people, and to put the administration of Ireland into harmony with those feelings.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter) said, he thought the hon. Member had made charges against individuals under circumstances of very great unfairness. The removal of Mr. Rice was not mentioned in the Question put by the hon. Member that afternoon. [Mr. Healy: It was involved in it.] No Notice whatever had been given of it. Mr. Rice was removed by the Land Commission, and not by the Government. Supposing he had been a person connected with the ownership of land—not as a tenant, but as a landlord in the district—would not the hon. Member himself have said that he was not a proper person to sit as a Judge there? In fact, it had been repeatedly urged by the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) in the House that Mr. Bomford, one of the Sub-Commissioners, had been improperly permitted to sit and discharge business in the county of Cavan, with which he was in some way connected. As to Mr. Walpole, everybody who knew Ireland must admit that a more upright gentleman did not exist. The objection raised against Mr. M'Devitt at the time of his appointment was that he was too favourable to the class of tenants. There was, in reality, no more foundation for that allegation than there was for the complaint now made against him. With regard to the charge made against Mr. O'Connor Morris, an able and upright Judge, no Notice had been given of it. When the matter was investigated, no doubt it would be found that that gentleman had good ground for pronouncing the decision complained of. The allegation as to Mr. Headeck was that he was engaged in litigation with his tenants, and that he had treated his tenants badly in Tipperary. If, however, it was a fact that some of his tenants were in the Land Court, it did not at all follow that they and Mr. Headeck were on the bad terms that had been described. It was unfair that statements not founded on facts should be made about a Sub-Commissioner which could only have the effect of prejudicing the community against him. Whatever charge might be brought against the Government, nobody could suppose that they would willingly do anything to bring the Land Act into disrepute. Certainly, the removal of Mr. Rice and the appointment of Mr. Headeck were not made with any such object; and he felt sure that landlords and tenants in the North of Ireland would be calm enough to wait until the charges had been substantiated. It had been insinuated that Mr. Rice had been removed on account of influence exercised by landlords, and particularly by two Noblemen who had been named. He was able to say that this statement was without foundation. If they approached the Land Commission with the view of interfering with the administration of justice, he was certain what answer they would receive. He urged the extreme unfairness of making charges of this kind, and he asked the public to suspend its judgment, and not to be misled by uncorroborated statements in newspapers and private letters.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, that no one had any idea of attributing suicidal conduct to the Government. The fact remained that events occurred which very much astonished the Government when their attention was directed to them. He was aware that the Government were anxious to appoint Sub-Commissioners who would make the Land Act popular; but it was a fact that gentlemen were appointed Sub-Commissioners who had failed to secure the confidence of the classes for whose benefit they were appointed. The Government did not deprecate newspaper criticism in support of their policy, and they should not altogether disregard unfavourable criticism, particularly from friendly journals. *The Cork Examiner* was very fair and moderate, and yet it said that there were Sub-Commissioners of whom it would be glad to speak with confidence if it could. These questions could not take the Government by surprise if they were fully informed as to the antecedents of the gentlemen they appointed. But when an objection was raised they required three or four days or weeks to obtain information. He recommended the Government to pay more attention to the opinion of fair and moderate newspapers. He was certain that as time went on it would be seen more and more clearly that the whole object of the Irish Party was to make the Land Act more and not less efficient than it now was. It was already admitted on both sides of the House that the Act needed amendment, and there were many Members of the House who were now of the opinion of the small handful of Irish Irreconcilables of six months ago. With the object of permanently removing the grievances of the tenant, the Members of the Irish Party would support any measure that might be introduced on either side of the House, and if the Government would regard them as the mouthpieces of the vast majority of the cultivators of land in Ireland, it would greatly add to the prospect of peace in that country; but up to the present time the Government had set their face against every kind of counsel pressed upon them from those Benches. Now he asked the Government to turn over a new leaf, and to listen with confidence to the demands of the Irish people, instead of perpetually thwarting all proposals of reform. If they did this they would see the beginning of a new era. If they went a short way towards meeting the Irish Party, they would find that that Party would go a long way towards meeting them. After the heat and turmoil of the present conflict were passed history would admit the fact that on the whole the Irish Popular Party had been right in their contentions and their policy.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(1.) £33,361, to complete the sum for Royal Palaces.

MR. BIGGAR called attention to the item of £1,300 on page 4 of the Votes for the repair of one of the Palaces. It seemed a very large sum for the repair of one establishment, and he should like to have an explanation of the item.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the sum certainly was rather larger than usual; but it had arisen on account of the necessity of painting the exterior.

Vote *agreed to.*

(2.) £2,178, to complete the sum for Marlborough House.

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £90,921, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."

MR. HEALY wished to put a question to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Commissioner of Works with regard to the Royal Parks. He believed that the right hon. Gentleman had recently taken some steps in the direction of throwing Hyde Park Corner open to the public; and he thought the Members of the House should have an opportunity of knowing what changes the right hon. Gentleman proposed to make. One remark he desired to make in reference to Hyde Park was this—that the whole of Hyde Park and Rotten Row were devoted to the pleasure and amusement of the wealthy and aristocratic classes who could afford to keep their carriages, while the humble plebeian was forbidden all access to them if he could only afford to hire a hansom cab. If he could afford to pay half-a-crown for a hackney carriage, he was able to enjoy the drive; but if he could only pay 1*s.* for a cab, he was prevented from doing so. If, instead of having only 1*s.*, he happened to have a sovereign, he could go where he pleased; and he (Mr. Healy) wished to know upon what principle it was laid down that the man with only 1*s.* must not drive in the park, while the man with 20*s.* might? Why should the Committee be called upon to vote away the public money in order to give certain privileges to the aristocratic classes who were able to drive their carriages? He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would in future give instructions that the parks should be as freely open to people using hackney carriages and hansom cabs as they were to the more aristocratic owners of private carriages.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he had urged the point raised by the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down for the last 15 years, and he had divided the Committee upon it; but he had certainly never found himself in a majority. It was monstrous, he thought, that the public, who paid for the parks, should not be allowed to use them, and that the money voted for their maintenance should be practically devoted to the exclusive use of wealthy persons who possessed carriages. There was not a single other park in the whole of Europe in which this exclusive right existed. The great value of a park was that it was a place where the rich and the poor might meet together. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman would tell them that the traffic would not permit of the admission of other vehicles; but if that were the case, then he (Mr. Labouchere) would suggest that there should be one day on which cabs should be excluded, and another day on which private carriages should be excluded. He remembered the Predecessor of the right hon. Gentleman in the Office of Works, 15 years ago, telling him that poor people derived a special pleasure from looking at the wealthy classes driving along the parks in their carriages. They might, if they liked, look at the wealthy people driving by; but if they desired to take a drive themselves in hired cabs, they were prevented from entering the parks. He claimed that the general public had as perfect a right to the full enjoyment of the parks as the wealthy classes.

Mr. BROADHURST said, he hoped that there would be a more liberal distribution of free seats in the Green Park and St. James's Park. Twelve months ago an assurance was given that a larger distribution would be made of free seats; but, so far from the promise having been carried out, there had been no addition whatever to the free seats, except it was in Hyde Park only. What he desired to point out was that it was not in Hyde Park that a larger supply of free seats was required, but in the Green Park, St. James's Park, Battersea Park, and Victoria Park. Those were the parks to which the working classes went for pleasure and pastime; and in them it was most difficult to find a seat without being pounced upon by the proprietor's agent with a demand for 1*d.* or 2*d.* The Green Park and St. James's Park were the rendezvous of the workpeople of Westminster, Lambeth, Soho, and those living in the neighbourhood of the Strand; and these persons were charged 1*d.* or 2*d.*, according to the size of the chair they occupied. [*Laughter, and cries of* "No!"] He believed the charge was 1*d.* for a single chair, and 2*d.* for an armchair. [An hon. Member: No; only 1*d.* in each case.] He was glad to hear that there had been an improvement in that respect. He knew that it was so formerly. At any rate, the moment a person sat down in one of these chairs up went the agent of the proprietor, as though he had sprung from beneath it in some way or other, so rapid was he in the collection of the money. He thought that the collection of money for the use of seats in a public park ought to be entirely done away with; but if they could not do away with the payment for seats altogether, then he hoped the First Commissioner of Works would favourably entertain the proposition for largely increasing the number of free seats in the parks to which he (Mr. Broadhurst) had referred.

Mr. W. H. JAMES said, he would support the request for more free seats in the parks. He was also anxious for further information in regard to the contemplated changes at Hyde Park Corner. He did not propose, however, to discuss the merits of those changes at the present moment; but he simply wished to elicit a statement from his right hon. Friend the Chief Commissioner as to what his intentions were.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH asked whether, in regard to the contemplated improvements at Hyde Park Corner, it was proposed to take any money in the present Estimates? He presumed that if the necessary sum were proposed to be voted in a Supplementary Estimate the Vote would be laid in due course before the House, and would afford the proper opportunity for a discussion. He should like to know, in the meantime, how much money it was intended to vote now?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that it was his intention to take a Vote, probably not exceeding £3,000, in respect of the Hyde Park Corner improvements. That sum was necessary, not so much for the improvement itself, as for the removal of a reservoir which was rendered necessary by the scheme, and which it was also desirable to remove for other reasons. When the Treasury were asked to advance the money for the Hyde Park improvements he was bound to say that his noble Friend the Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Frederick Cavendish) was of opinion that the improvements were more of a Metropolitan than of an Imperial character, and expressed a doubt whether the House of Commons would feel justified in voting the money necessary to carry them out. His noble Friend, however, considered that he would be justified in asking for a Vote for the removal of the reservoir just mentioned; but that otherwise the whole expense of the improvement should be provided by the Metropolitan Board of Works or by the owners of private property. A Supplementary Vote would be laid before the House later in the Session. With regard to the question as to the seats in the parks raised by his hon. Friend the Member for Stoke-upon-Trent (Mr. Broadhurst), he might say that last year he had expended a considerable sum of money in providing additional seats in Hyde Park; and he had been under the impression that the same course had been taken in regard to St. James's Park. If he should prove to be wrong in that impression, he would undertake this year that an ample provision should be made for seats. No doubt, both St. James's Park and the Green Park were more used by the working classes than Hyde Park; and he should be very sorry that there should be any want of accommodation for them. In regard to the remarks which had been made by the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) and the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), he had to say that the complaint they had made in respect of the non-admission of hackney cabs in Hyde Park was one of long standing. In early times hackney cabs were permitted in Hyde Park and in the other parks, and the fact was recorded in the Memoirs of Pepys. The writer of that interesting diary frequently spoke of driving in Hyde Park in a hackney carriage; but at a subsequent period, when he was able to keep a carriage of his own, he appeared to be highly scandalized at the large number of hackney coaches that were to be seen there. At a later date, hackney coaches were altogether prohibited in the Parks, and the prohibition had been maintained because it was considered undesirable that the Parks should be converted into a mere thoroughfare for the use of people driving in cabs from one station to another. The prohibition had only been maintained in that sense; and there was no prohibition, even at the present moment, against the use of hackney carriages hired from a livery stable. The prohibition only applied to cabs hired in the streets. He thought it was for the interests of the public generally that the Royal Parks should not be made the mere medium of traffic from one part of London to another.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, there was another point upon which he was anxious to put a question to his right hon. Friend the Chief Commissioner in reference to the trees in Kew Gardens. He was given to understand that a good many trees had been cut down by the order of the Curator. The Curator pleaded, as his reason, not that the trees were objectionable, as trees, but that a good deal of flirtation went on beneath them. He thought it was hardly the business of the Curator to destroy the trees or to interfere in flirtations; and he wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman had heard of the action of the Curator, and whether he intended to take notice of it in any way? He had, however, risen for another object—namely, to move that the Vote be reduced by the sum of £17,680, that being the cost of Battersea Park, Kennington Park, and Victoria Park. He did not understand upon what grounds the cost of all the new parks that were made in London was thrown upon the Public Treasury. It appeared to him that it ought to be paid by the ratepayers of the Metropolis, and that it should not fall upon the taxpayers of the country generally. Those parks had been bought at very great expenditure and by the public money. He believed that Victoria Park was a Royal Park; but he did not know whether the others were or not. He thought the Metropolitan Board of Works ought to take them over, and that it ought to be distinctly stated in the House of Commons that they were not prepared, year by year, to vote large sums of the public money for the maintenance of the parks in the Metropolis. With every desire that these open spaces should continue to exist in the Metropolis, he could not forget that it was a very wealthy Metropolis, and that it ought to pay for the health and enjoyment of its inhabitants. He certainly failed to see why there was any more reason why the public generally should pay for the maintenance of the parks in the Metropolis than that the people of London should pay for keeping up the parks in other parts of the country. He, therefore, begged to move that the Vote be reduced by the sum of £17,680; and he hoped that the Amendment would be taken as a hint that a stop must be put to the present habit of throwing upon the Public Exchequer expenses which ought to be borne by the localities.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum not exceeding £73,241, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

MR. A. PEASE wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works if he could hold out any hope that Constitution Hill, from Buckingham Palace to Hyde Park Corner, would be thrown open to the public? It would be a great convenience to the public going by way of Pall Mall and St. James's Street to Hyde Park Corner to have this road thrown open. At present it was necessary that they should go round by a very circuitous route. There was no desire to interfere with the comfort or privacy of the Royal Family in the occupation of Buckingham Palace; but he believed that the route which would be taken would rather add to the privacy of the Palace than otherwise. He believed that the throwing open of the road would be most acceptable to the public; and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to see his way to making the suggested alteration.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, that, only an hour or two ago, the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary (Sir William Harcourt) positively stated to him, in answer to a Question, that there was no item in the Votes for constables employed in London on special services, such as gate-keepers in the parks, or at the House of Commons, or in the public gardens. Remembering the answer which the right hon. and learned Gentleman gave him earlier in the evening, he would be glad if the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works would explain what was the meaning of the sum of £7,000 which appeared in the Votes for Metropolitan constables, paid specially for their services as constables and as gate-keepers in the parks. The payments, he understood, were for special and extraordinary services performed in the Metropolis. The complaint he had to make was that when similar services were performed in other localities, the cost was thrown upon the local ratepayers. When he put his Question to the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary at an earlier period of the evening, the right hon. and learned Gentleman, in the most absolute and barefaced manner, if he might say so—[“Oh!”] Well, then, the right hon. and learned Gentleman, in the strongest and most emphatic manner, denied that this was the case in the Metropolis, notwithstanding that he was warned that such an item did appear upon the Estimates. With his usual confidence, the right hon. and learned Gentleman ridiculed the idea, and seemed to take it for granted that it was impossible he could be wrong.

MR. W. H. JAMES asked if the hon. Gentleman was in Order in referring to a past debate in the House?

THE CHAIRMAN said, that if the hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton) was referring to the debate which had taken place that night he was out of Order.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, he was only asking for information. He was much obliged to the hon. Member for Gateshead (Mr. James) for putting him right; but he merely wished to know why a charge appeared in the Estimates for the special services of constables in London, whereas charges for similar services were thrown on the ratepayers in the country. He thought that the whole of these charges, instead of being included in the Civil Service Estimates, ought to be paid for by the Metropolis itself. He again asked for some explanation whether it actually was the case that special services on the part of constables were inserted in the Estimates when they were rendered in the Metropolis, while similar services in the country were paid for out of the local rates?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he thought the hon. Member was wrong in the statement he had attributed to the Home Secretary.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF rose to Order. He wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman was in Order in alluding to a past debate?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that if there was any objection he would not continue the subject. The item referred to was for the services of police in the parks; and, personally, he thought it was a charge that ought to be borne by the local authorities, and not by the public generally. With regard to the question raised by his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), it was a question which had been discussed in the House in previous years—namely, whether the cost of some of the parks—Victoria, Battersea, and Kennington—should not be borne by the ratepayers? That was a question which might be fairly considered whenever the new Municipalities were provided for; and as that was a question that was likely to arise shortly, he thought it would be better to defer the subject until it could be properly discussed. Whenever that time did arrive, there were several items on the other side which would also have to be discussed; and he was by no means certain that the Treasury would be a gainer by taking all these matters over. For instance, there was the item of the City Police, of which the City at present bore the whole expense. Whenever the whole question came to be raised he did not think the public would gain much by throwing the expense of the parks upon the Metropolis, and having, on their part, to bear the expense of the City Police. The matter, however, was one which might be deferred until the question of the London Municipality came to be discussed. With regard to Kew Gardens, he had seen a statement in the papers the other day with reference to the cutting down of certain trees. Now, he should no more dream of asking a question of the Curator of Kew Gardens in reference to the maintenance of everything that was beautiful in Kew Gardens than he should of asking a lawyer an opinion about his brief, or a doctor about his prescription. He thought the question was one that might safely be left in the hands of Sir Joseph Hooker, who had the entire interests of Kew Gardens at heart, and who was not likely to allow anything prejudicial to happen to the trees there.

Sir PATRICK O'BRIEN said, that his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had asked a question about Battersea Park. Now, Battersea Park was a very old friend of the House. The sum of £500,000 was spent some years ago upon Battersea Park; and, at the time that arrangement was entered into, it was understood that the improvements effected in the surrounding property, under good letting, would recoup the Treasury for a considerable portion of the outlay. He was sorry to find that the promise had turned out as he expected it would at the time it was made. After an interval of some 20 or 25 years, the land and building plots, which they were told were to be so profitable, had not been utilized, and the £500,000 advanced by the Treasury had never been recouped. He should be glad to know what improvements had been made, and what funds were available for paying the large expense of the maintenance of Battersea Park, for which a sum of £5,300 was asked in the present Estimate? He thought that, to some extent, the promise made by the Government at the time the park was taken should be carried out, and that the country should not be saddled with this very large annual charge.

Mr. RITCHIE said, he must confess that he had heard with much astonishment the proposal of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). He was somewhat surprised that an hon. Member with such strong Radical proclivities should make a proposal to throw the cost of the parks at Battersea, Kennington, and the East End of London upon the ratepayers; but that the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works should give the slightest countenance to the proposal of the hon. Gentleman certainly filled him with amazement. Now, what was the proposal? It amounted to this—that the parks of the rich should be supported out of the Consolidated Fund; but that the parks of the poor in the East End and in other parts of London, used solely for the enjoyment and recreation of the humbler classes, should be supported by the ratepayers. Anything more astounding, coming from such a quarter, it was impossible to conceive; and whether the right hon. Gentleman made such a proposal now or at any future time, he should certainly give it a most uncompromising opposition.

Colonel NOLAN said, he wished to ask a question with regard to seed potatoes. He could not find any distinct reference to that subject in this Vote, and yet, when he had raised the matter previously, he had been put off until the present occasion. He wished to know if the Financial Secretary could inform him whether there was any provision in the Vote in regard to seed potatoes?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, he could assure his hon. and gallant Friend that the Vote had nothing whatever to do with seed potatoes.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, the hon. Member clearly thought the Vote referred to the question of seed potatoes, as it made provision for the Botanical Gardens at Kew. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works would explain what the items were that were included in the Vote.

Mr. W. H. JAMES wished to deny the assertion of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) that it was desired to pay for the Royal Parks out of the Consolidated Fund, and to tax the public for the East End Parks.

Mr. HEALY rose to Order. He wished to know if the hon. Member for Gateshead (Mr. W. H. James) was in Order in referring to a past debate?

Mr. W. H. JAMES said, he was not referring to a past debate, but to the present debate, in the course of which the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) had suggested that while the parks in the West End were supported out of the Consolidated Fund, those in the East End should be paid for out of the local rates. If the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets had given a little more attention to the debate, he would have found that nothing of the kind had been suggested. So far as the East End Parks were concerned, it was perfectly competent for the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) to form an opinion that the Corporation of London had ample means at their command to enable them to support them.

Mr. RITCHIE said, he thought the hon. Member must have been asleep, or dreaming, while the discussion was going on, for he had entirely misrepresented what he (Mr. Ritchie) had said. He had said nothing whatever to the effect that the parks in the East End of London should be supported out of the rates; on the contrary, he had strongly objected to that proposition. The point raised by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) was that the Royal Parks—the parks of the rich—should continue to be maintained out of the Consolidated Fund; but that the parks of the East End of London, which were essentially the parks of the poor, should be supported out of the rates. To that proposition he (Mr. Ritchie) entirely objected. There might be some technical distinction between the Royal Parks and the other parks in London; but the people of the Metropolis would fail to understand that distinction, and they would only see, in any proposition of the kind, a proposal that the parks enjoyed and utilized by the rich were to continue to be supported out of the public funds, while those which were used by the poor were to be paid for out of the local rates. The hon. Member for Gateshead (Mr. W. H. James) must certainly have been asleep, or dreaming, during the time that he (Mr. Ritchie) was making his remarks.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he had not the slightest desire that Hyde Park, or any park in London, should be paid for out of the Consolidated Fund. He had only proposed the Amendment, throwing upon the ratepayers the cost of the three parks he had mentioned, because they were the last three which had been taken over. If his proposition were accepted, he should be prepared, at another time, to move that all the parks in London should be supported by the ratepayers of the Metropolis. He had certainly no desire to draw an invidious distinction between the Royal Parks and those which the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) represented.

Mr. RITCHIE asked why the hon. Gentleman did not include the whole of them in his Motion?

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, his only object in dividing the Committee at all was to register a protest against the expense of the parks being thrown upon the public. He hoped that his proposition would be considered by the Home Secretary, and that the right hon. and learned Gentleman would insert some such provision in his new Municipal Bill.

Colonel NOLAN desired to have some particulars about the Vote for Kew Gardens, which was a very large one—namely, £10,000. Was the sum given simply for the support of the School of Botany? If so, it seemed to be a very expensive school. He noticed an item of £800 for a refrigerator; and he wished to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether Sir Joseph Hooker did anything more in connection with Kew Gardens than superintend the school? No doubt the school was a very valuable one; but he thought there might be a distribution of seeds in other parts of the Kingdom, and even in India.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, it was scarcely necessary to state that at Kew Gardens there was a very valuable School of Botany, and that it did an enormous amount of scientific work. No doubt the Vote for Kew Gardens was large; but that was on account of the variety and enormous quantity of work which was carried on there. He could hardly say what the amount of work was, or what the value of it was; but it was very well known that the amount of it was very great.

Mr. CARBUTT said, the right hon. Gentleman had not answered the question which had been put to him as to the use of Constitution Hill. At present a person desiring to go in a cab in that direction had to go round by Park Lane and through the back streets; but if he happened to have a carriage he could go right through the park and along Constitution Hill.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he had to apologize to the hon. Member for Whitby (Mr. A. Pease) for not having answered the question sooner. He was afraid he could hold out no hopes in regard to the throwing open of Constitution Hill. The question was rather a delicate one; it had not yet been raised, and at present he did not propose to raise it. It was right, however, to say that Her Majesty had given Her consent to the improvements proposed to be carried out in connection with Hyde Park Corner, although, to some extent, they would interfere with Her private gardens at Buckingham Palace. He would make some inquiries as to permission for cabs to cross Hyde Park. He was under the impression that cabs were now allowed to go across the western division of Hyde Park.

Mr. HEALY understood that the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) was going to divide the Committee upon his Motion. He presumed that it would be open for him (Mr. Healy), after that Motion was disposed of, to move the reduction of the Vote by a smaller sum?

The CHAIRMAN was understood to reply in the affirmative.

Mr. BUXTON asked whether, if Her Majesty gave up a portion of Her rights in connection with Buckingham Palace Gardens, it was proposed to make any addition to the Palace Gardens in another direction?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that was not the case. There would be no addition whatever to the gardens of Buckingham Palace; but, on the contrary, there would be a contraction of them.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked what was the meaning of an item in the Vote which stated that the roads at Kew cost £700 a-year? Were they public roads, or the roads of the pleasure gardens? If they were not in the botanic and pleasure gardens he did not see why they should be included in the Vote.

Sir PATRICK O'BRIEN said, the right hon. Gentleman had not answered his question—whether any income was derived from the improvements in Battersea Park?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the hon. Member (Sir Patrick O'Brien) was mistaken as to the original cost of Battersea Park. The cost was £200,000, and not £500,000. £100,000 had already been repaid by the sale of property; the remaining £100,000 had not been repaid; but there was a certain part of the property let on lease. In all probability something like £60,000 or £70,000 would never be repaid. The park had now been open for a considerable number of years. In regard to the Kew roads, he did not know exactly what the arrangement was; but he would make inquiries.

Mr. RITCHIE said, there was one question which he would like to put to the First Commissioner of Works upon this matter. During the hours of daylight or sunlight people could walk across Kensington Gardens; but at certain times, ranging from 4 until 7 o'clock, the gates were closed; and he wished to know whether they could not be kept open until a later hour? He was at a loss to understand why the gates could not be kept open to a much later hour, in order to save persons who lived on the other side of the park the trouble and inconvenience of going a long distance out of their way. Of course, he was aware that the keeping of the gates open might involve an additional expense; but the present regulations were a source of so much inconvenience that he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would reconsider the matter.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he could speak from personal experience of the great inconvenience which resulted from closing the park gates at so early an hour. He had repeatedly crossed the park in the afternoon, and found the gates closed at 4 o'clock on his return. The rule now in force seemed to him most unnecessary, and he hoped the First Commissioner of Works would take into consideration the desirability of altering it as soon as possible.

Mr. O'DONNELL suggested that the Committee might be able to get through the Business of the evening with a clearer idea of what they were doing by disposing of one matter at a time. Hon. Members had already before them an important question, raised by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), which had created a great amount of disinterested activity on the part of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie). It would be well to come to a settlement of that question first, because he was sure that the subject of seed crops at Kew Gardens, referred to by the hon. and gallant Member opposite (Colonel Nolan), had been very imperfectly explained to the apprehension of a large number of Members.

Colonel NOLAN said, he simply wished to know if Kew Gardens were used, to a considerable extent, for the propagation of seeds and plants for particular purposes, and if there was any other establishment in this country which was used for the same purpose?

The CHAIRMAN said, the hon. and gallant Member was not in Order in raising that question on the present Vote.

Colonel NOLAN remarked that he had carefully avoided alluding to seed potatoes.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, there was no other establishment in England used for the purpose alluded to by the hon. and gallant Member. He thought, however, there was one other in Edinburgh; but he understood that no plants were being propagated there.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, as the question before the Committee was the proposed reduction of the Vote by a certain sum of money which included the expenses of maintaining Battersea Park, he was surprised that when the right hon. Gentleman rose to reply to the questions which had been put to him, he should have omitted to answer the very pertinent inquiry addressed to him by the hon. Member for King's County (Sir Patrick O'Brien). It was mentioned in connection with Battersea Park that a large sum of money had been advanced some years ago, and the hon. Member for King's County had inquired the amount of the funds derived from the land. He would be glad to know what sum the right hon. Gentleman expected to get this year on account of Battersea Park, because the sum due in the shape of interest alone was more than enough to cover the item charged for maintenance.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, as the result of the pending division would possibly leave the park at Battersea within the control of that House, he begged, in the interest of the poor clerks and artizans who visited it, especially on Sunday, to ask what necessity there was for tying up the little pleasure boats on that day, without any regard to the feelings of those who would like to use them? He ventured to hope that the arrangements at the park, which would doubtless remain under the control of the House of Commons, would be made to suit the public requirements, and that between then and next year the grievance he had referred to would be remedied. He thought it was pushing Biblical prudery too far to say that we were not to be allowed to amuse ourselves in a harmless manner on Sundays. There were great numbers of young men in the Metropolis who would be glad to use their muscles in the wholesome exercise of canoeing, but who had no chance of doing so in consequence of the present absurd arrangements, the alteration of which, in the direction indicated, he felt sure would confer a considerable boon on a deserving class.

Mr. RITCHIE said, that the hon. Member for Dungarvan had certainly not acted upon the advice he had himself given to the Committee a short time ago, that questions should be dealt with in their proper order; and, therefore, he suggested to the consideration of the hon. Member whether it would not be better to reserve his observations upon canoes until the Navy Estimates were reached? He trusted the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works, although he had not replied to the question relating to Kensington Gardens, would endeavour to do something in the direction proposed.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he would make inquiries into the regulations for closing the gates at Kensington Gardens; and if he found it practicable to alter them in the direction suggested by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) he would certainly do so. Of course, he could not hold out any expectation that the gates would remain open all night, because there were many considerations which rendered that undesirable; but if it were possible they should be kept open longer than usual. He had found it necessary to shut up a portion of St. James's Park during the night, in consequence of complaints made to him by clergymen and others, and he was afraid his hon. Friend might not approve that step. With regard to Battersea park, he reminded the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) that this was not the only park in which there were lakes with boats upon them. It had been usual for many years past to let out boats upon the water in Hyde Park on week days, but not on Sundays, and he was quite satisfied that the public would not wish that practice to be altered. It might be a Sabbatarian view of the case; but he pointed out to the hon. Member that if the boats were let for hire on Sundays a considerable number of persons would be requisite to attend upon them, and these would, in consequence, be deprived of their day of rest. The tendency, on the whole, was to use the parks as places for walking in on Sundays, and there was a general feeling against them being made use of for other purposes, as was the case in former days. He remembered the time when a number of carriages were to be seen in the parks on Sundays; but that was not so now, the reason being, as he believed, that people wished their servants to be employed on Sundays as little as possible. He was sorry to say that there were long arrears of interest upon the money advanced for Battersea Park. The original sum expended was £200,000, of which £100,000 had been repaid.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, that, although there appeared to be a conscientious objection to the employment of men to take pence for boat hire on Sunday afternoons, the same objection was not felt to the employment of the persons who took pence on Sundays for the use of chairs in the parks. For his own part, he was unable to see any difference between the two cases.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE believed the Committee would understand that chairs were more essential than boats to the comfort of the public using the parks.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 44; Noes 139: Majority 95.—(Div. List, No. 69.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. HEALY said, he rose for the purpose of moving the reduction of the Vote by the odd £921. The right hon. Gentleman, in the reply he had tendered, had not given satisfaction as to this matter of refusing to allow cabs to pass through the Parks. He had only stated that the custom in question was an old one, and that was no explanation. Moreover, the case of Mr. Heeps that the right hon. Gentleman had quoted seemed, so far as he (Mr. Healy) could gather, to be altogether in favour of the argument to which the right hon. Gentleman had replied. When Mr. Heeps was poor he was in favour of being allowed to pass through the Parks in cabs; but when he grew rich he was scandalized at such a proceeding on the part of anybody else. A man who hired a hackney cab for, say, 1*s*., was not allowed to drive through Hyde Park; but a man who hired a carriage could drive through them as much as he liked. The disability in the case of the person who engaged the cab did not apply to Hyde Park alone, but to Richmond Park as well. It could not be said that the traffic was as great in the latter as in the former; and if there was anything in the argument that people driving in their carriages through Hyde Park, where there was such a large amount of carriage traffic, would be scandalized to see people in cabs admitted amongst them, the same argument could not apply in the case of Richmond Park. Whatever he might do in the matter of Hyde Park, would the right hon. Gentleman, at least, guarantee that in the, comparatively speaking, little-used Park at Richmond the restriction which was complained of would be taken off? This House of Commons was, broadly speaking, a House of rich men—to a great extent an aristocratic Assembly—and it did not come well from a Body, so many of whom were supposed to represent the aristocratic classes, to keep up this disability against the poor. When the House became more and more democratic, as it would become—nay, as it was becoming—no doubt it would put a stop to the Chamber being a preserve for the rich. Rotten Row, the Ladies' Mile, and other rides and drives, were kept up for the benefit of the aristocratic classes. The rich were allowed to air themselves and their conveyances in these places; and when, on behalf of the poor, it was urged merely that cabs should be admitted within the Park gates, those who made the request were met by the aristocratic classes saying, "Oh! the traffic is too great." Possibly, in the hours during which the aristocratic classes disported themselves in the parks, there might be too much of the present traffic for the admission of traffic of another kind; but there were certain hours during the night and day when fashion did not allow the aristocracy to show themselves in these places, and, during those hours, it could not be said that "the traffic was too great" to admit cabs. At 12 o'clock at night, for instance, the aristocracy were not riding and driving up and down, at any rate, in anything like numbers, and the sight of a hackney carriage would not annoy them, nor its presence interfere with them very much. It would not come between the wind and their nobility. Then, again, there were certain seasons when "nobody" was supposed to be in London; and if "nobody" was in Hyde Park, why was it that the poor were not allowed to drive through it in cabs? In the Phœnix Park in Dublin they could drive in cabs as much as they liked, and the Park was in that way a great boon to the public. People of the middle and lower classes, and, for that matter, anyone, could drive through the Park on Sundays on pleasure excursions; but directly a person in a hackney carriage came to Richmond Park gates he was stopped by a policeman or a "Ranger," and told that he could not go through. Probably if the hackney carriage driver was to remove the number from his conveyance and cover up his badge he might be allowed to drive through; but if he did that, he would be acting illegally, and subjecting himself to a heavy penalty. He (Mr. Healy) moved the reduction of the Vote as a protest against hackney cabs being allowed entrance to the parks, and so that, the attention of the right hon. Gentleman being called to the matter, he might consider it, and, probably next year, see his way to making some concession.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £90,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Mr. EDWARD SHEIL said, that in the Estimates under the head of St. James's Park, Green Park, and Hyde Park, there was an item for Police; and in another Vote in the Department of "Rangers" there was a sum of £1,273 for "Park Constables." How was it that this high charge for constables was not included in the large item immediately preceding it?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the constables of the parks were an entirely different body from the Metropolitan Police. The Metropolitan Police were employed in the parks; but, in addition to these, there were constables who were permanent officials there. The hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) was mistaken with regard to Richmond Park. ["No, no!"] Well, certainly, he was not aware of the restriction complained of by the hon. Member. He had recently driven through the park in a fly hired from the Station without being interfered with. With regard to Hyde Park, it was only a matter of public convenience whether or not cabs should be allowed in the drives. From Lancaster Gate to Queen's Gate cabs were allowed; therefore, if it was said that a thoroughfare was required in the park through which cabs could drive, the answer was that it already existed. There was no other drive in which it was considered necessary to allow cabs; but if a thoroughfare was desirable in any other direction, no doubt cabs would be permitted to use it. He objected to this being considered a question as between rich and poor; and, in the interest of the poor themselves, it was important that they should prevent the parks being used merely for traffic purposes, for enabling people to get conveyance from one point to another. The people who used the park went there for enjoyment; and it was, therefore, desirable to limit the use of it as a thoroughfare as much as possible.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he did not think the explanation they had just heard was particularly satisfactory, inasmuch as it left the question just where it was before. It seemed that a certain class of persons might drive in that part of Hyde Park set apart for driving, whilst another class were not allowed that privilege. People who used their own or hired carriages were allowed to drive there; but people who did not own and could not afford to hire a carriage and wished to go through in a cab were not permitted to do so; and if this was not a question between rich and poor, he was at a loss to know what could be. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of inconvenience to the general public, and it was to be presumed that by "general public" he meant everyone who could afford to keep or hire a carriage. This would remind hon. Members of the old definition of respectability which so much amused Mr. Carlyle—namely, "a man who could afford to keep a gig." As for the right hon. Gentleman's statement that he had been allowed to drive in a hackney carriage through Richmond Park, bold indeed would have been the policeman who ventured to stop the progress of the First Commissioner of Works. He (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) hoped that the right hon. Gentleman—who, he was sure, had as much contempt for class distinctions as had any Member of the Committee—would give them an assurance that this matter should have his attention.

Mr. BROADHURST said, the right hon. Gentleman was not correct as to the condition of things in Richmond Park. If he would go down by rail to Richmond Station and jump into one of the hackney chaises and ask the driver to drive him through the park, he would find that the cabman, although accepting his instructions, would put him down at the gate, and would take him not an inch further. He (Mr. Broadhurst) did not rise to support this complaint in the interests of those he represented, because he did not believe they used cabs very much; but he spoke in the interests of the Richmond cab-drivers, to whom it would be a great convenience and advantage, whilst it would be no damage to the park, if they were allowed to drive visitors from the station through it, just as, at the present moment, private carriages were allowed to pass through. The anomaly came in here—that the hired vehicle with a number on it paid duty to the State, and it was on account of paying that duty that it was not permitted to enter the park, vehicles that did not pay duty being permitted to go through. [*A laugh.*] Well, cabs, at any rate, paid duty; and the right hon. Gentleman might give the Committee an assurance that he would inquire into the matter, and if he found the statements hon. Members now made correct—that in Richmond Park, where there was no congestion of traffic at any time, these public vehicles were not allowed to drive through—the regulations would be altered as desired.

Mr. GREGORY said, this question had been treated as one entirely between those who rode in carriages and those who rode in cabs; but he would suggest that there was another class who had to be considered—a class to which he belonged himself—whether in regard to Richmond Park or Hyde Park—namely, those who passed through on foot. He himself was in constant danger in the streets from that rapidly passing vehicle called a "hansom," and also from the "crawling" cab; but in the parks he was free from that danger. He protested as strongly as he could against the introduction of the cab element into the parks.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, the hon. Member who had spoken last but one (Mr. Broadhurst) spoke as though the duty had been removed from all vehicles other than hackney carriages; and how he had arrived at that conclusion—unless, perchance, he had been allowed an insight into the Budget, which was shortly to be brought forward—it was hard to tell. As to this being a question as between rich and poor, he did not think there could be a more expensive habit than driving about in hansom cabs. It was to be hoped that when the right hon. Gentleman gave his attention to this matter, as he was invited to do, he would not give facilities to hackney carriages to invade the parks.

Mr. RITCHIE said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give some assurance to the Committee that he would consider the question of the desirability of allowing hackney carriages to pass through Richmond Park, as there was great distinction to be drawn between cabs in Hyde Park and cabs in Richmond Park. He did not think it was necessary to allow cabs to pass through Hyde Park, as he did not believe they would be able to get more rapidly from one end to the other than they did at present. The state of things in Richmond Park, however, was very different.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he should be sorry if he had misled the Committee on this matter. He had said that there was no prohibition against cabs passing through Richmond Park, and he had been of opinion that that was the case; but the hon. Member seemed to dispute it. He would promise to make inquiries into the subject.

Mr. HEALY said, he did not wish to put the Committee to the trouble of a division, and that if the right hon. Gentleman would promise to consider the subject with a view of increasing the facilities to the public for passing through Richmond Park, he (Mr. Healy) would withdraw his Amendment, and would put a question to the right hon. Gentleman on the matter some time next week. Hon. Members might fairly be satisfied for the present with the right hon. Gentleman's promise. If, however, he (Mr. Healy) was in the House next year he should interrogate the Government as to the desirability of allowing Hyde Park to remain open all day and all night, when the ordinary traffic there could not possibly be interfered with by the admission of cabs.

Mr. BYRNE said, that he himself had been prohibited from driving through Richmond Park in a fly. He had gone down on two occasions, once he had gone down for the purpose of getting a little fresh air, and that was the occasion on which he was prevented from passing through; but on another occasion, when they arrived at the Park Gates, the driver said they were going to Lord John Russell's, and they were allowed to proceed. From this it had seemed to him that the Park was not so much for the public as for Lord John Russell.

Mr. SCHREIBER said, he wished to draw the attention of the First Commissioner of Works to the condition of the Achilles in Hyde Park. What, he supposed, had originally been a flaw in the casting had developed, under the joint action of time and the London atmosphere, into a serious wound, not, as might have been expected, on the heel, but on the calf of the right leg. The condition of the statue gave him the impression that if it was not for the coat of mail behind it, the leg would break off and the statue fall forward. He had only risen for the purpose of calling attention to this matter.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he would certainly inquire into the matter.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £31,110, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883, for the Buildings of the Houses of Parliament."

Mr. GORST said, he wished to make a suggestion to Her Majesty's Government, which he thought would facilitate the course of Public Business, and it was, that they should now agree to Progress being reported. The noble Marquess the present Leader of the Government (the Marquess of Hartington) had announced that he intended to-night to make a proposition which he himself would admit was of an unprecedented nature. It was one to which the House could not be expected to assent without, at least, some discussion. In order that that discussion might take place, he suggested that the Government should agree to the Chairman reporting Progress.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he would move to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Cavendish Bentinck.*)

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, he did not propose to go beyond the next Vote. It would be convenient if the Committee would consent to take that. ["No, no!"] If he thought it would necessitate a long discussion, he would not suggest that they should take the next Vote. They, however, would be able to deal with the next Vote in a very short time.

Mr. HEALY said, if, as the noble Lord stated, it would not take them long to dispose of the next Vote, it would not take them long when it came on again.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

House *resumed.*

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next.

Committee also report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS (*re-committed*) BILL.—[BILL 113.]

(*Mr. Hibbert, Secretary Sir William Harcourt.*)

COMMITEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House will, upon Tuesday next, at Two of the clock, resolve itself into the said Committee."—(*Lord Richard Grosvenor.*)

Mr. CHAPLIN said, that on this occasion he rose for the purpose of opposing the Motion that the Bill be taken at 2 o'clock on Tuesday next. He had some reason to complain of the very scant Notice that had been given to the House of the intention of Her Majesty's Government to appropriate the Tuesdays for the rest of the Session. It was true the noble Lord had made an announcement to that effect last night; but he (Mr. Chaplin) should like to call the attention of the House to the circumstances under which that announcement was made. He did not say it was the fault of the noble Lord; but, whosoever the fault, it was the fact that the Motion was made during the dinner-hour, when the House was nearly empty, and nine out of ten Members in the building were not in a position to know that such an announcement had been made. Let the House for a moment consider what were the Motions that were to be superseded in this high-handed way by the action of Her Majesty's Government. He had looked at the list of Motions for Tuesday, and found that there was a Motion to be made on the subject of Lunacy, and another on the much-vexed question of the Deceased Wife's Sister. Whatever might be the opinions they entertained on the last-named subject, there could be no doubt it was one which excited very considerable interest in the House and very widespread interest in the country. Then, he observed, there was a Motion down for leave to introduce a Bill for Sunday Closing, which was also a question that excited great interest in the country and in the minds of many hon. Members in the House. There was, further, a Motion by an Irish Member in regard to the remuneration of teachers in primary schools in Ireland. Even this did not exhaust the whole list; because there were other Motions which would be brought forward on Tuesday, if opportunity occurred, which did not appear on the Paper. He happened to know of one himself—a Motion in which he was interested, which he submitted to the House of Commons last year, and which he had been anxiously waiting for an opportunity of bringing forward again this year. The question was one which excited great interest in the agricultural community of this country. He was anxious to call attention to this—that, in spite of all remonstrances from the Opposition side of the House last Session, it was the fact that the importation of diseased cattle into this country had been permitted almost every month. This was a state of things which caused great anxiety and alarm amongst the agricultural portion of the community, and it occurred at a period when the interests of agriculture were most depressed, and when the condition of the agricultural classes deserved the earnest attention of Parliament and the country. The Motion on that subject would be superseded entirely if this proposition of the noble Lord were accepted. But he wished to remind the House that it was not only the Motions which stood on the Paper for Tuesday next, but the Motions for every succeeding Tuesday in the Session, which would be superseded if the noble Lord's Motion were adopted. On consulting the Order Book, he found that the first Motion of importance down for a Tuesday after the Tuesday he had referred to was one which would ask the House of Commons to declare that the maintenance of the Church Establishment in Scotland was indefensible. No one who was at all acquainted with public feeling in Scotland, whatever opinion they might entertain with regard to it, could deny that this was a question which excited immense interest in Scotland at the present time; and it was a question which he should think, judging from what had fallen from him with regard to it, possessed considerable interest for the noble Lord himself. An hon. Member sitting on his left (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), he also found, had a Motion down on the Paper for a Tuesday—a Motion of immense importance, in which he proposed to call the attention of the House of Commons to the recent course of events in Egypt, and move a Resolution. This subject was one which deserved the attention of the House, and which ought not to be summarily disposed of by the action of the Government in taking the days of private Members. This Motion was followed by one standing in the name of a most devoted and constant supporter of the Government—the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands)—and it had reference to the present enormous amount of the National Expenditure. This Motion was practically a Vote of Censure on the Government for the extravagant expenditure in which they were indulging at the present time. He (Mr. Chaplin) should like to know what would have been said by the other side, supposing the Conservative Party had been in power, and they had been guilty of a similar expenditure to that which right hon. and hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench were incurring, and a Vote of Censure on them had been proposed, and they had endeavoured to supersede it by appropriating private Members' days? There was a vast number of other Motions—beyond those he had mentioned, he saw a list of eight or nine, all of them deserving of the attention of the House of Commons—which hon. Members were waiting for an opportunity of bringing forward. There was one which related to the question of arrears of rent in Ireland; another which called attention to the progress of Russia in Central Asia. Although it was perfectly true that there had been four or five occasions of late on which the House had been counted out on the nights which were appropriated to private Members, they must remember that these "counts out" had been very much the fault of Her Majesty's Government in not assisting, as they ought to have done, in keeping a House; and that it had so happened that those private Members who had Notices on the Paper which did possess great interest to the House of Commons had not been fortunate enough to obtain a place on the Paper, which gave a reasonable hope that their Motions were likely to be considered. All these Motions to which he had alluded were to be sacrificed by the action of the Government. If the Government had intimated to the House that they intended to raise any question of great importance on Tuesday; if they had given the smallest idea, for instance, that the House might expect to hear from them a statement on a subject which all classes were waiting so anxiously to hear something about—namely, the policy they proposed to pursue in Ireland for the future, in the place of that which had so disastrously collapsed—or, indeed, if they had given the House some reason to imagine that they intended to adopt some proposal really to facilitate the progress of Public Business in the House, and which would have commended itself to the general sense and feeling of the House of Commons, then, he believed, on both sides of the House, there would have been a general disposition to give them every opportunity they sought; but the House had heard of nothing of the kind. On the contrary, judging from the utterances of the Government, there was every reason to believe that they intended to proceed with their 1st Resolution as to Public Business in the House, without any alteration or modification whatever, although it was repugnant to almost every hon. Gentleman on that (the Opposition) side, and to the vast majority on the Ministerial side of the House. Practically, it came to this—that they were asked to sacrifice all the days of private Members for the rest of the Session in order to give facilities to the Government for proceeding with proposals which did not commend themselves in any considerable degree to the general sense or feeling of the House. But he thought he might, perhaps, on even broader grounds than these, ask hon. Members to resist this Motion. Unless he was mistaken, the present Government last Session appropriated a larger amount of public time than had ever, in his recollection, been appropriated by an Administration; and what had been the result? Nearly the whole of that time was devoted to the consideration of Irish questions, and to the development of what they were pleased to call the Irish policy of the Government; and what had followed on that, which he would call their misuse of so much time? Why, it was described the other night by an hon. Member who was a most devoted and consistent supporter of Her Majesty's Government—a Member for whose opinion the Government entertained the utmost respect, and whom they had appointed to serve in a most responsible position in Ireland—he was speaking of the hon. Member for the County of Cork (Mr. Shaw). This hon.

Member had said that what had followed on the policy of Her Majesty's Government, to which so much of the public time had been devoted, was this—"that at the present moment"—he (Mr. Chaplin) was quoting the hon. Member's exact words—"there was absolute war between the Government and the people of some counties of Ireland." If the Government had so misused the time placed at their disposal last Session, and then called upon private Members to sacrifice the days appropriated to private Members, and such results were to follow from that sacrifice, the less time that was in future placed at the disposal of the Government the better—for, so far as he was able to form a judgment, the more time they got, the more mischief they did. He therefore proposed to omit the words "at Two of the clock."

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "Two of the clock."—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I am not going to enter into the large question which my hon. Friend has raised; but, with every wish to further the Business of the House, there is one matter upon which I wish to ask a question of the noble Marquess, not relating to any Motion for Tuesdays, but to the Bills which come after Motions. Very often on Tuesdays the Motions disappear, and the Wednesdays are absolutely absorbed already, so that no one has a chance of putting down a Bill for fair discussion. The only chance, therefore, is that any Bill which it is wished to promote should be taken on Tuesday, when the Motions are practically disposed of. But if the Government take four hours from the Tuesday Sitting, there is very little chance for such a Bill, and its chance is almost reduced to a nullity. It is sometimes said that the House of Lords have not done much work; but they have undoubtedly passed one or two Bills of importance, and it is with regard to one of those measures, which deals with a question of vital importance at the present moment, especially having regard to the recent agricultural depression, that I wish to ask a question—I mean the Bill relating to Settled Estates. I shall not enter into the merits of that Bill, but it deals with that question in a large and comprehensive spirit; and I think it is due to the trouble taken by the Lord Chancellor upon the matter that the House of Commons should express its opinion upon the second reading of this Bill before any long time shall have elapsed. I am sure the noble Lord will agree that it is a matter of great importance, and one in which great interest is felt by the country. If the Government are going to take the whole of the Tuesdays into their own hands, I hope I may have an opportunity of taking a discussion upon the second reading of that Bill. I quite admit that, it being down for Tuesday, which is a Motion day, there is some chance of getting it on; but if you take half of Tuesday away, that chance is reduced to a nullity. I hope, if the Government persist in this Motion, some facility may be given for the discussion of that measure.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I do not propose to follow the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) into the remarks he has made with reference to the Procedure Rules of the Government, or their policy in Ireland. No doubt, the hon. Member thinks that any opportunity is a sufficient peg upon which to hang an attack upon the Government; but I am under the impression that sufficient time has been given to those subjects, and that, at all events, there will be other opportunities, perhaps more appropriate than this, for discussing them. The fact is that, although the time has varied in different ways, the practice of asking for Morning Sittings on Tuesdays and Fridays has been resorted to in previous years very much earlier than is now proposed. In 1878, when the Conservatives were in power, five Morning Sittings had actually been held before the date at which I am now addressing the House—namely, on March 19th, for Supply; on March 26th; on March 29th, for the Mutiny Bill; on April 12th, for Ways and Means; and on April 16th, for the Budget Bill. The hon. Member says the House might have considered this proposal if we had any measure of first-rate importance to bring forward. The hon. Member has altogether omitted to state whether he considers the Municipal Corporations Bill of importance or not. It does not appear to be one in which he takes any interest; but I venture to think it is, at least, of as much importance as any of those I have enumerated, and which, during 1878, were discussed at five Morning Sittings before this date. Then the hon. Member says we are going to appropriate the Tuesdays. That is putting the case a little too strongly. We are only going to ask the House to give us the Morning Sitting, and the Evening Sitting will remain for private Members; and if private Members will only avail themselves of the Evening Sitting they will still have as long a period for the discussion of any Motion as they have thought it desirable to take on any Tuesday up to the present time this Session. The hon. Member has alluded to some of the Notices, and he appears to consider that they relate to matters of very great importance. All I can say is, that it is extremely unfortunate that all the importance and apparent interest in these Motions should have managed to postpone themselves until a Tuesday at the end of April, and that, on those successive Tuesdays on which those measures of importance might have been brought forward, the House has been so unfortunate that nothing has been presented for its consideration except matters which could not attract the attention of a quorum of 40 Members. The hon. Member reproaches the Government with not having kept a House; but it is impossible for the Government to take that responsibility. It never has been taken by the Government. I do not think a quorum of 40 Members is an unreasonable proportion to ask the House to form; and if an hon. Member has a Motion to bring forward, and cannot secure the attendance of 40 Members without the assistance of the Government, I think he has no great reason to complain if the Sitting is cut short. The hon. Member has raised the consideration of subjects which are still on the Paper for discussion. I make this proposal, in great part, for the purpose of suggesting a way of preventing time from actually being wasted; and, as I have already said, on six successive Tuesday nights, although there is a great deal of work to be done, the House has adjourned within a few hours of meeting. That, so far as the Government are aware, is a state of things extremely likely to be repeated; and we think it will be for the convenience of the House and in the interests of the public that, at all events, the mornings of these days should be applied to making progress with Public Business. There is one other ground upon which I may appeal to the House to assent to this Motion. I think that any Member who has attended the course of Business during the present Session must have observed how large a proportion of the time nominally appropriated to the purposes of the Government is virtually appropriated to independent Members. The hon. Member talks of our appropriating the time of private Members; I have shown that we do not appropriate the whole of Tuesdays. We only ask for a certain portion of Tuesdays by taking a Morning Sitting; and if hon. Members will recollect how many Mondays and Thursdays, when Supply has been on the Paper, almost the whole time has been spent in Motions that the Speaker leave the Chair, I think they will come to the conclusion that some reciprocal concession is due to the Government. The hon. Member opposite said a short time ago that every delay in Business is owing to the mismanagement of the Government, and the Prime Minister said he never recollected a time when that statement was not made by the Opposition. I dare say it has often been made with considerable truth; but, at the same time, I think the House must admit that it is impossible for us, or any other Government, to make bricks without straw; and if the whole of the time on nominal Government nights is to be appropriated by discussions on the Motion that the Speaker leave the Chair, and we are not allowed the privilege which has been given to other Governments in the matter of Morning Sittings, I do not see how the House can expect the Government to make any progress. With reference to what has been said by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross), the Government altogether acknowledge the importance of the Bill to which he has made reference. That Bill was, I believe, accepted and supported by the Representatives of the Government in "another place," and I have no doubt whatever as to its importance. The right hon. Gentleman acknowledges that the prospects of taking a discussion on its second reading are somewhat remote. I do not know that I can recollect any recent occasion upon which the discussion of an important Bill has been able to take place on Tuesday night; and, therefore, I do not think the right hon. Gentleman makes any great sacrifice in regard to the proposal I now submit. I am quite certain, however, that my right hon. Friend at the head of the Government will be willing to admit the importance of the subject, and to make any arrangement by which it would be possible to give an opportunity for its discussion. I trust the House will agree to what I believe is a thoroughly precedented proposition. I may now add that, although we propose to ask the House to give us a Morning Sitting on every remaining Tuesday of the Session, the only question before us now is that a Morning Sitting shall be taken on Tuesday next.

Mr. GORST said, he hoped that the House would not be insensible to the observations of the noble Marquess; and if the noble Lord had asked the House to devote one Tuesday to the transaction of Government Business, he did not think that proposal would have been met with the opposition which had now been evoked.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I said, in giving Notice yesterday, that my intention was to ask the House to give us, as a rule, Morning Sittings on Tuesdays, but that nothing was now before the House except a proposal for a Morning Sitting on Tuesday next.

Mr. GORST said, it was the Notice of the noble Lord that he had that design on the rights of private Members which caused alarm. There was no action he studied in the opposition to the late Government with more interest than the noble Lord's own example. He found that in 1875, which was the first complete Session of the late Conservative Government, when they made a proposal, which, he admitted, went further than the present proposal—namely, to take the whole of Tuesday, June 22nd, the noble Lord, who was then the Leader of the Opposition, thought it his duty to come to the House and protect the rights of private Members. That was rather a remarkable Session, because the time of the Government had been greatly taken up, in the early part of the Session, by the renewal of the Peace Preservation Act, which had been in force for five years, and a great deal of time was wasted on the discussion of that Bill; but the noble Lord, on the 22nd of June, not only complained of the conduct of the Government in wishing to appropriate the time of private Members, but made an observation, on the proposal to take Morning Sittings, which induced the impression that he would hardly have made such a proposal as he now placed before the House. The noble Lord said the Government had made a liberal use of Morning Sittings, that had begun as early as the 16th March. There was another Morning Sitting on the 30th April; another on May 4th; another on May 11th; and the Morning Sittings began, as a rule, on May 24th in previous years. He (the Marquess of Hartington) found that the exceptional rule was never adopted earlier than May 11th, and the formal Resolution had been adopted on May 26th, June 3rd, or July 2nd. The example of the noble Lord, in making these observations, had such an effect on the present Postmaster General (Mr. Fawcett), who was at that time very jealous of the rights of private Members, that he moved an Amendment, resisting the proposal to take the days of private Members, and made some strong observations on the importance of preserving the rights of private Members, which, no doubt, if he were in his place to-night, he would now have repeated. He called upon the then hon. Member for York (Mr. J. Lowther) and other hon. Members to support his Resolution; and so impressed were the Government of that day of the reasonableness of that opposition, that they consented to the adjournment of the debate until the following Thursday. Mr. Disraeli being present on the Thursday, the Motion was not discussed, but was, for the time, abandoned. In consequence of the impression made by this opposition by the noble Lord and his Friends, in 1876 the regular Tuesday Morning Sittings did not begin until June 13th; in 1877 they did not begin until June 19th; in 1878, which was the year quoted by the noble Marquess, the general taking of Morning Sittings did not begin till June 4th; while in 1879 they only began on June 10th. He (Mr. Gorst), therefore, thought he was quite justified in saying that if the Government were now asking for a Morning Sitting for the specific purpose of making progress with the Corrupt Practices Bill, it would be wise for the House to agree for that particular purpose; but if the Government were, as the noble Lord threatened, going from Tuesday next to take every succeeding Tuesday, and so extinguish, to a great extent, the rights of private Members, he thought he was justified in applying to such Parliamentary proceedings the epithet "unprecedented."

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he was informed that the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General, on a former occasion, had referred to him. He had not been aware that the right hon. Gentleman had done him that honour; but the sentiments which he had expressed on that occasion were identical with those which he entertained now — namely, that the proposal to commence Morning Sittings was really one which it would be unwise for the House to decline to adopt. In regard to the question of "counts out," and the duty of keeping a House on private Members' nights, he ventured to differ from the opinion expressed by his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), that the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) was wrong in declining, on the part of the Government, any responsibility for the "counts out" which had taken place on various Tuesdays during the present Session. He agreed with the noble Lord that it had never been considered the duty of the Government of the day to keep a House on the days devoted exclusively to the Motions of private Members. The noble Lord also referred to the fact that much of the time which was nominally placed at the disposal of the Executive Government had been, during the present Session, monopolized, to a very great extent, by private Members in availing themselves of the opportunities afforded to them, on the Motion for going into Committee of Supply, of bringing forward independent Motions of their own. But the noble Lord might have gone a little further. He might have referred to the fact that not only had those legitimate opportunities of calling attention to grievances before going into Committee of Supply been taken advantage of by private Members, but that during the present Session there had been more than one instance, on a Government night, in which the very illegitimate practice had been resorted to of moving the Adjournment of the House at the time of Questions. He ventured to call the attention of the noble Lord, and of the Government generally, to the fact that if the legitimate opportunities were taken away from private Members, they would invariably find that the temptation was the greater to have recourse to the illegitimate practices he had referred to, and that private Members would adopt less orderly means for calling attention to grievances, and for eliciting the opinion of the House upon Ministerial answers to Questions, which seemed to annoy them, and which were deemed unsatisfactory. The Government, in the New Rules of Procedure, proposed to take away the opportunity of moving the Adjournment of the House at the time of Questions; and the proposal afforded an additional reason why the non-official Members of the House should feel disposed to scrutinize very closely any additional weapons that were proposed to be placed in the hands of Her Majesty's Government. He hoped the noble Lord would not lose sight of the fact that by proposing to take away from the Members of the House the time-honoured precedents under which they were able to bring forward almost any matter in which they took a legitimate interest, the Government had contributed largely to those disorderly practices which, undoubtedly, seemed to have made considerable way during the time that the present Ministry had held the reins of Office. He hoped that the noble Lord, seeing that the feeling of a large section of the House was decidedly opposed to the proposal which he had brought forward, would reconsider the decision to which he (Mr. J. Lowther) hoped the Government had not definitely arrived; and that he would, at any rate, allow the ordinary proceedings of the House to take their usual course until such a period of the Session had arrived as would enable the Government to assure the House that they had certain definite measures to submit, and to ask the House to give up its time for that purpose. When this system of Morning Sittings was first introduced, he remembered that it was distinctly laid down at the time by Mr. Disraeli that they were only for the progress of Bills in Committee. If the noble Lord had his *Hansard* in his hand, he would be able to see at once that that was the ground upon which the concession of Morning Sittings was originally advocated on that (the Opposition) side of the House. It had always been held that Morning Sittings should not be encouraged except when the pressure of Public Business was very great, and there were specific measures to bring forward.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he merely rose in order to point out that Her Majesty's Government were not so blameless and so free of responsibility in regard to recent "counts-out" on Tuesdays as they were endeavouring to make out. The right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken (Mr. J. Lowther) said it had never been the habit for the Government of the day to admit that it was any part of their duty to keep a House on the days devoted to the use of private Members. But he (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) apprehended that when the Government put an important Motion down upon the Paper, it really became their duty to keep a House in order that they might have an opportunity of bringing it forward; and that was precisely what had occurred in the present Session. On two, at least, of the days on which the House had been counted out, the Government had put down a most important Motion for the appointment of the Public Accounts Committee. Up to the present time there was no Public Accounts Committee in existence. On three or four occasions the Motion had been put on the Paper for Tuesday, and yet the Government took no pains whatever to keep a House. Under these circumstances, he could not agree with the right hon. Gentleman who spoke last that the Government were altogether free from responsibility for having allowed the time of the House to be uselessly frittered away.

Sir JOHN HAY said, he happened to have been present on five of the occasions when the House was counted out by Mr. Speaker; and he might, therefore, be supposed to be a witness upon the question now under consideration. If the noble Marquess simply proposed that the Government should have a Morning Sitting next Tuesday, and that the propriety of continuing Morning Sittings on the subsequent Tuesdays should be reserved for future discussion, he should have nothing further to say; but he gathered that the real intention of the Government was to take possession of all remaining Tuesdays during the Session. He was bound to say that, on three of the occasions on which he had been present, when it was moved that Mr. Speaker should count the House, the Prime Minister was in his place, and on two of them the right hon. Gentleman was taking notes, in order to answer questions of very great importance which had been raised in the discussion—once upon a Scotch question, and once upon an Irish question. On each of those occasions the Prime Minister was upon the Front Bench when the House was counted out. In one case there were 38 Members present, and in the other 34. The right hon. Gentleman remained on the Treasury Bench all the time prepared to take part in the debate, and to answer the various questions of importance which were raised; but, nevertheless, the House was allowed to be counted out. He must confess that that was a circumstance which he had never witnessed, either in the time of Mr. Disraeli or of Lord Palmerston. It was said that the Government had themselves arranged for these "counts out" on Tuesdays, in order that they might say to the country—"See how impossible it is to conduct the Business of the country unless we carry our Resolutions." He thought the Government were to blame for not having taken the entire Sitting on Mondays for the purpose of proceeding with the Estimates on that day without the interposition of any other Motion. That course might have been adopted from the very commencement of the Session, as it had been in other years, the only stipulation being that, on the first occasion upon which a particular class of Estimates was submitted, one Resolution having strict relation to them might be discussed. But no proposal of that nature had been submitted to the House this Session, and the result was that the House found themselves engaged in the consideration of the Estimates at 3 o'clock in the morning, and that many of the Votes were taken without any due and adequate discussion at all. It was said that this course had been taken by Her Majesty's Government, and that "counts out" on no less than six Tuesdays had been tacitly assented to, so that they might go to the country and impress the people with the absolute necessity of the *clôture.* So far as the future Tuesdays of the Session were concerned, he had a special interest in Tuesday, the 2nd of May, seeing that a Motion in his name stood first on the Paper. The second Motion on the Paper was one by the hon. Member for Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey Vivian), who desired to raise the important question of addressing Her Majesty praying her to withhold her assent to the Statutes proposed by the University of Oxford Commissioners for Jesus College. His (Sir John Hay's) Motion was even of greater importance, and he had very little doubt that he should be able to get a quorum, even if he were compelled to put it off until 9 o'clock. It was as follows:—

> "That the detention of large numbers of Her Majesty's subjects in solitary confinement, without cause assigned, and without trial, is repugnant to the spirit of the Constitution, and that, to enable them to be brought to trial, jury trials should, for a limited time (in Ireland), and in regard to crimes of a well-defined character, be replaced by some form of trial less liable to abuse."

He might almost suppose that Her Majesty's Government did not wish to have that question discussed, and that they intended, if possible, to prevent its discussion. He had, however, been promised so much support that he trusted, even if it were deferred until 9 o'clock, that he should obtain a fair hearing, and that the question would be duly considered. His own opinion was that the Government ought to be anxious to give facilities for the discussion of such a question rather than endeavour to defeat it by a side wind. At the present moment, and in the present state of Ireland, there could be no more important question for consideration than that of the persons who had been so long detained without trial.

MR. DILLWYN remarked, that hon. Members opposite professed great zeal for the rights of private Members, and called upon Members on the Liberal side of the House to participate in their feeling; but he did not think their zeal was quite pure in the matter. The hon. Member for Mid Lincoln (Mr. Chaplin) mentioned the case of several Members who had been shut out and prevented, by the counting out of the House, from bringing on their Motions; but towards the end of his speech the hon. Member let the cat out of the bag, and showed that the real desire on the part of hon. Members opposite was to stop any Government Business from being transacted at all. The hon. Member said that the measures introduced by the Government had been so objectionable in their character and so dangerous that he wished to see them stopped altogether, and that was the reason of his opposition to the present proposal. ["No!"] At all events, the hon. Member gave that as his own reason for the Amendment he moved; and he (Mr. Dillwyn) had no doubt that that reason was the very reason which would commend the Motion of the noble Marquess to the votes of hon. Members who sat on that (the Ministerial) side of the House.

MR. HEALY said, he should like to say why he had not the smallest objection to the Government taking a Morning Sitting on Tuesday; but why he should view with some anxiety any proposition to give up all private Members' nights to them for Morning Sittings. As yet the Government had given no indication of what their policy in regard to Ireland was to be; and if Morning Sittings were to be used for the purpose of passing a Coercion Bill for Ireland, he should give to the proposal the most strenuous opposition in his power. He would remind the House that Her Majesty's Ministers were already pledged with regard to a variety of measures, not one of which had as yet seen the light. One of these measures was for the extension of Municipal Government, others for Grand Jury Reform, Poor Law Reform, Bankruptcy, the Repression of Corrupt Practices at Elections, the Conservancy of Rivers and Prevention of Floods, the Codification of the Criminal Law, the amendment of the Laws affecting Patents, and the establishment of a Peasant Proprietary. Upon five of these subjects the Government stood positively pledged to introduce reforms, and in regard to three of them the pledge was given in the Queen's Speech. Not one of these Bills, nor, indeed, not a Bill upon any subject whatever, had been printed. Under these circumstances, until the Government showed their hand, it was not to be expected that the House would tacitly give up all its privileges, and enable Ministers to appropriate the whole of private Members' days to Morning Sittings. He thought the House should be fairly informed what the programme of the Government was, and what the measures were which they desired to carry out. He strongly objected to take any step in the dark, and he would strenuously resist any proposition to give continuous Morning Sittings to the Government until they stated the way in which they proposed to arrange their Business, and the use to which they intended to put the Morning Sittings. At the same time, he had no objection to give up next Tuesday. He was not about to enter any protest against the counting out of the House, for he had on several occasions approved the Speaker's attention being called to the fact that 40 Members were not present; and he should ever be willing to support a Motion to that effect. It had always appeared to him an extraordinary thing that millions of money should be voted when but a small number of Members were present; and he was inclined, on a future occasion, to move that the number required to form a quorum should be enlarged.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, he would remind the noble Marquess that there were some very important Motions upon the Paper for next Tuesday. Amongst those was the Motion of the hon. Member for Hereford (Mr. R. T. Reid), which excited a great deal of public interest, and which so large a number of Members of that House were pledged to support; and also that of the hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton), which, if the House met at 9, would, no doubt, occupy it until half-past 12 o'clock. The effect of the Government proposal to take Tuesday as a Morning Sitting, for the purpose of interposing another Motion, would probably be that the hon. Member for Hereford would have no chance of bringing on his Motion in regard to the Deceased Wife's Sister. If that were so, the responsibility would rest with the noble Marquess.

Viscount FOLKESTONE said, as the Government proposed to ask for a Morning Sitting, not only on Tuesday next, but on every Tuesday during the Session, hon. Members would be glad to understand that the Government would give timely Notice of their Motions on that subject, so that their proposals might be adequately discussed.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he thought it was not a fair argument to say that private Members had a very slight appreciation of their rights, because they did not keep a House on Tuesdays. The fact was that private Members had no corporate interest in any particular Motion. Before the House could take any interest in private Motions it was necessary that they should be laid before it, and when this had been done it would be an easy matter to keep a House on a future occasion. However important the question raised might be, unless this were done only five or six Members might know anything about it. The difficulty was that Motions had often to be introduced on the responsibility of a Member who had not made his position in the House; and in that case, unless the Government contributed to the keeping of a House, the Member, whose Motion might raise a question of great public importance, did not even obtain the opportunity of laying it before the House. Again, it was impossible to keep a House for private Members unless the Government accepted the responsibility of so doing, because there was scarcely any private Motion which would have more than a dozen backers. But he regretted to see that the occupants of the Front Benches were acting upon the principle that they had no responsibility towards private Members in this respect. He felt convinced that if this policy were pursued, a great many private Members would feel themselves relieved from their responsibility to the Government on the Government nights; and he could strongly corroborate the statement made by an hon. Member that evening, that, as surely as the Government prevented private Members bringing forward their Motions on legitimate occasions, the illegitimate occasions which would be availed of would multiply. It was neither in the purview of the proposed New Rules nor in that of the Rules now existing to prevent illegitimate occasions arrising; and the Government of the day would therefore do well to take great care that the Business on Tuesdays, up to 12 o'clock, should not be interrupted by "counts." He could quite understand the occupants of the Front Opposition Bench not wishing to throw stones at the Government about the matter of not keeping a House on Tuesdays, for both Parties appeared to be in permanent conspiracy against non-official Members in this respect. As he had before pointed out, the result of the present practice would be to increase the temptation to new Members to take illegitimate, if they could not find legitimate, opportunities of bringing forward their Motions.

Mr. CHILDERS said, there was no intention on the part of the Government to move any general Resolution with respect to Morning Sittings on Tuesdays, as the noble Lord the Member for South Wiltshire (Viscount Folkestone) seemed to suppose. The usual course was to move to put a Bill down for Tuesday, and to intimate that from that time there would be Morning Sittings on the following Tuesdays. His noble Friend had been very careful to explain that the Government would be quite willing that not the morning alone, but even the whole of any particular Tuesday, if within the control of the Government, should be given up for the discussion of any subject of adequate importance.

Earl PERCY asked if hon. Members were to understand that the Government practically intended to take all the Tuesdays during the Session for Morning Sittings, because, as far as he was aware, that was certainly not the impression which the House had derived from the statement of the noble Marquess.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that he and other Members, on a previous Tuesday, had inferred that there would be no "count out" from the fact that the Government had placed a Notice on the Paper relating to the Committee of Public Accounts. He pointed out that if private Members were deprived of the opportunities for bringing forward their Motions, which were accorded to them by the Rules of the House, they would be under the necessity of taking such care as they could of their own interest. There was an important Motion, of which he had given Notice, that he should have been glad to bring on if he could get the opportunity for doing so on Tuesday; but now that the Government were about to take Tuesdays for Morning Sittings this was no longer possible. He was, therefore, driven to the necessity of infringing upon one of the Government days; and, accordingly, he had given Notice that he should move the Resolution he had referred to on the next Government day—that was to say, the following Monday, on the Motion for going into Committee of Ways and Means.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, it was clear that the noble Lord had unintentionally conveyed a false impression to the House in his statement of the intentions of the Government with regard to the Morning Sittings on Tuesdays; because the statement he made had been entirely contradicted by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War. The right hon. Gentleman stated that the whole of the remaining Tuesdays throughout the Session would be taken for Morning Sittings, whereas the noble Lord gave the House to understand that the proposal was an isolated one and referred to next Tuesday only.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I gave Notice yesterday that I should propose Morning Sittings on Tuesday next, and on succeeding Tuesdays.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he was aware of that. Their complaint was, however, that the speech which the noble Lord made that evening had altered the impression which many hon. Members had, who came down for the purpose of preventing the Government getting next Tuesday and succeeding Tuesdays during the Session, their opposition having been mitigated by their belief, derived from the noble Lord's statement, that the Government only intended to take next Tuesday for the purpose of a Morning Sitting. They now found that it was the intention to take all succeeding Tuesdays.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 100; Noes 50: Majority 50.—(Div. List, No. 70.)

Main Question proposed.

Sir JOHN HAY asked for a distinct intimation from the noble Marquess as to when the Government would propose to take the remaining Tuesdays; and when they would propose to take Tuesday, the 2nd of May, because he had an important Notice down for that day respecting the imprisoned Irish "suspects."

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, if the right hon. and gallant Baronet would put down the Question on the Paper, he would answer it on Monday.

Earl PERCY said, he considered the reply of the noble Marquess to be so unsatisfactory that he felt bound to move the adjournment of the debate.

Viscount FOLKESTONE seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Earl Percy.*)

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, he would undertake that the Government would not attempt to fix a Morning Sitting for next Tuesday week until next Thursday.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committee *deferred* till *Tuesday* next, at Two of the clock.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the Bangor Gas Undertaking, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Lord Frederick Cavendish.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 138.]

House adjourned at a quarter after Two o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 24th April, 1882.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Second Reading*—Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London) * (56); Elementary Education Provisional Orders (West Ham, &c.) * (55); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Ballymena, &c.) * (57); Metropolitan Commons Supplemental * (38); Army (Annual) (65).

Committee — Report — General Police and Improvement (Scotland) * (48); Drainage (Ireland) Provisional Order * (51).

NEW PEER.

The Right Honourable Sir George William Wilshere Bramwell, Knight, late a Lord Justice of Appeal, having been created Baron Bramwell of Heyer in the county of Kent—Was (in the usual manner) introduced.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that Her Majesty had (by Commission) appointed the Earl of Cork and Orrery Speaker of the House in the absence of the Lord Chancellor and the Earl of Redesdale; the Earl of Lathom Speaker of the House in the absence of the Lord Chancellor, the Earl of Redesdale, and the Earl of Cork and Orrery; the Viscount Hawarden Speaker of the House in the absence of the Lord Chancellor, the Earl of Redesdale, the Earl of Cork and Orrery, and the Earl of Lathom; and the Lord Monson Speaker of the House in the absence of the Lord Chancellor, the Earl of Redesdale, the Earl of Cork and Orrery, the Earl of Lathom, and the Viscount Hawarden: The said Commissions were read.

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE LEOPOLD, DUKE OF ALBANY.

THE QUEEN'S ANSWER TO THE ADDRESS.

The LORD STEWARD of the HOUSEHOLD (Earl Sydney) *reported* the Queen's Answer to the Address, as follows:—

"My Lords,

"I have received with sincere pleasure your loyal and dutiful Address.

"The assurance of your lively interest in the intended marriage of Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, is most gratifying to me, and I share with you the confident hope that, under the blessing of God, this event may be an additional source of happiness to my Family and also to my People."

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 (SECTION 8, SUB-SECTION 9)—CASE OF "ADAMS v. DUNSEATH."

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

The Earl of DUNRAVEN, in rising to call attention to a statement of the Prime Minister relating to the decision of the Court of Appeal in the case of Adams *v.* Dunseath; and to ask, Whether Her Majesty's Government propose any legislation in reference to the Irish Land Act of 1881? said, the statement was one which involved most complicated issues. It had to do with that portion of the Land Act which dealt with the vexed question of the relative value to landlord and tenant of improvements.

When the Act of 1881 was in Committee in the other House, a sub-section was suddenly jerked into the Bill which gave rise to infinite discussions, Amendments, and suggestions, until it finally resolved itself into Sub-Section 9 of the 8th section, by which no rent was to be allowed or made payable in any proceedings under the Act in respect of any improvements made by the tenant or his predecessors, in title and for which, in the opinion of the Court, the tenant should not have been paid or otherwise compensated by the landlord or his predecessors in title. The sub-section was not very clearly expressed; but he thought the intention of Parliament concerning it could be sufficiently clearly made out by the discussions that took place concerning it. The difficulty of ascertaining the relative value of landlord's and tenant's interest in improvements had always been great, and was sufficiently indicated by the difference of opinion entertained by high legal authorities on the subject. The highest legal authority, the noble and learned Lord upon the Woolsack (Lord Selborne), on the occasion of the second reading of the Bill, said, in speaking of the value of the tenant's interest—

> "Now, both of these—the goodwill of the holding and the value of the improvements—are things which in no sense belong to the landlord. . . . That which the tenant has to sell . . . . is a thing which the landlord never had and never could have."—[3 *Hansard*, cclxiv. 533.]

According to the noble and learned Lord, therefore, the goodwill and the value in improvements were things which could not exist, except under circumstances in which the land was let to a tenant. A short time ago, however, Mr. Litton, one of the Chief Commissioners under the Act, speaking on the very case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath," said that—

> "Whatever might be procured from the motives I have referred to beyond commercial rent belongs to the tenant who holds the possession, just as it would belong to the landlord if he was about to let his land for the first time."

Mr. Litton, therefore, held views diametrically opposite to those of the noble and learned Lord upon the Woolsack. Among the several points decided in "Adams *v.* Dunseath," the most important related to the question whether the length of time during which improvements were enjoyed by a tenant could be looked upon as in any way compensating him for them. That point was amply discussed in the other House of Parliament and in their Lordships' House, and the Prime Minister made several statements concerning it. The Prime Minister stated that—

> "He objected to the time during which any improvements had been enjoyed being taken into consideration. The tenant's own improvements were the tenant's property. That was the doctrine upon which the Government took their stand. They did not admit that the time of enjoyment of improvements was any reason for handing them over to the landlord."

On another occasion he considerably modified that statement, and gave as a reason for changing the clause as it originally stood—

> "That if it were left unqualified, the tenant could claim for remote reclamations and for improvements made in pursuance of covenant."

These expressions of the Prime Minister, no doubt, appearing somewhat vague to Mr. Parnell, he endeavoured to elicit some more distinct opinion on the subject; and after the insertion of the present sub-section; he moved to introduce words to the effect that—

> "The time during which a tenant may have enjoyed the advantage of improvements shall not be held to be compensation within the meaning of this sub-section."

These were words which distinctly asserted the principle that, under no circumstances, could the tenant's interest in improvements be deteriorated or lessened by the length of time during which he had enjoyed the improvements, and they were opposed by the Government and rejected by a large majority. It appeared by that that Her Majesty's Government and Parliament held that, under certain circumstances, the interest of the tenant in improvements could be deteriorated by time. It was not very easy to reconcile these varying statements, or to understand exactly what the Prime Minister meant. But he (the Earl of Dunraven) presumed the meaning was this—that in respect of improvements the tenant was entitled to the full amount of money which he had expended in making them, and to a fair remuneration or percentage on it; but that if the value of the holding was increased over and above that, because the capabilities inherent in the soil were developed, then the landlord was entitled to reap the benefit of the improvements in that respect. Such was the general idea of Parliament on the subject; and Parliament further held it was extremely difficult, if not impossible, to define the principle accurately in an Act of Parliament, but that the Act could be safely left to be interpreted by the Courts, which were constituted for that especial purpose in Ireland. As yet only one case had been decided by the final Court of Appeal—the now famous case of "Adams *v*. Dunseath." It was a most important decision for both owners and occupiers. Chief Justice Morris, in giving his decision, stated that—

> "He expected that Court must determine, in regard to the important question arising in the case, principles by which the future action of the Commissioners would be regulated."

The High Court of Appeal decided various points, among them that, as regards improvements made prior to 1870, Sub-Section 9 of Section 8 of the Land Act of 1881 must be construed with due reference to the last paragraph of Section 4 of the Land Act of 1870, which section dealt with the question of compensation for improvements. The practical result of this decision was that the Court of Appeal held that the tenant's interest in his improvements was capable, under certain circumstances, of being diminished by the enjoyment of them. Now, he should have thought that the decision of the Court of Appeal was consistent with the intention of Parliament and with the views of the Prime Minister, as far as the intentions of Parliament could be ascertained from the discussions in Parliament, and as far as the views of the Prime Minister could be gathered from the statements of the Prime Minister. But the Prime Minister had lately declared that the decision of the High Court of Appeal in that respect, as far as that portion of it was concerned, was opposed to the intention of the framers of the Act of 1881. He (the Earl of Dunraven) had no wish that any man should be deprived of the full value of his improvements. It would be most unjust and unwise that such should be the case; but he failed to see that there was any danger of such an injustice being done. There were, besides, two other questions involved in addition to those in which improvements had been effected solely by the tenant. There were cases in which the prospective value of the improvements was accepted by the owner in lieu of a present money payment in the shape of rent. That prospective value was part of the consideration for which the holding was let. It was obvious that if the entire benefit of the improvement was handed over to the tenant, no such agreements would be made in future, and it was equally certain that if the benefit was transferred to the tenant great injustice would be done. Those cases were supposed to be safeguarded by Sub-Section 9 of Section 8. The Prime Minister stated that they were sufficiently guarded by the words "otherwise compensated." It might be that the insertion of the word "otherwise" was sufficient, and that the sub-section did protect cases where improvements were stipulated for on consideration of a low rent; but when the Court of Appeal gave a decision which bore upon these cases and protected them, the Prime Minister took exception to the ruling of that Court, and he (the Earl of Dunraven) could not but think that the rights of landowners were prejudicially affected thereby. There was another set of cases which were also affected by the decision of "Adams *v*. Dunseath"—namely, those cases where improvements had been made by loans from the Board of Works. Those would be indirectly affected. One Sub-Commission had decided to the effect that the improvements made by Board of Works loans became the property of the tenant after the instalments had been paid. The judgment of the Court of Appeal appeared to be contrary to that decision; because cases of improvements made by Board of Works loans would be affected by the concluding words of the last paragraph of Section 4 of the Act of 1870, which, according to the decision of the Court of Appeal, governed Sub-Section 9 of Section 8 of the Act of 1881. It was obvious, if the view of the Sub-Commission was to be accepted as correct, landlords would not be inclined to borrow any more money to improve their estates. No man could be expected to mortgage his property if he was to receive no benefit whatever for doing so. There had been between £3,000,000 and £4,000,000 borrowed by owners of land on the security of that land, and laid out in drainage and other main improvements for the general benefit of the country; and if landlords were to be deprived of the advantages they hoped to reap by that outlay a huge injustice would be done. It was for the wisdom of Parliament to decide whether such loans should be sanctioned in the future. In the past Parliament had deemed them most beneficial to the country. Parliament had encouraged landlords to borrow by many Acts of Parliament, which had been passed with the intention that landlords should benefit by the outlay of the loans. He did not believe that Parliament intended that the Act of 1881 should confiscate any benefit which the landlords hoped to gain by improvements to execute which they mortgaged their property. But if the decision of the Court of Appeal was erroneous, it was very doubtful whether those benefits would not be confiscated. The decision in "Adams *v.* Dunseath" naturally attracted great attention; and the Prime Minister, in reply to a question about it, stated, in effect, that in some respects the decision of the Court of Appeal was not in accordance with the intentions of the framers of the Act. The Prime Minister was, of course, quite within his rights in making that statement. No one could object to the Prime Minister, or any Member of the Government, stating that Parliament had passed a Bill contrary to the intentions of Her Majesty's Government, who brought it in. The Prime Minister would also have been quite justified in declaring that in view of the decision it would be necessary, in his opinion, to amend the Act. But he declared nothing of the kind; he said something very different. He declared that the construction which the Commissioners and the Sub-Commissioners put upon the judgment of the Court of Appeal was to be carefully observed by the Government, before they decided what they were to do in the matter. The Prime Minister constituted himself a final Court of Appeal; for, although he did not attempt to reverse this particular decision of "Adams *v.* Dunseath," he declared the decision of the Court of Appeal was contrary to his intentions, and he left it to be inferred that it was erroneous, and that the Act, if properly interpreted, carried out his intentions, by suggesting that it ought not to be considered in dealing with similar cases. He said, in effect, that the Act was falsely interpreted by the Court of Appeal, and that if the Sub-Commissioners were guided by that interpretation it would become necessary to amend the Act. Whatever might be meant by this statement, it certainly would be considered in Ireland to mean one thing, and one thing only, and that was that the Sub-Commissioners were strongly recommended not to pay attention to the judgment of the Court of Appeal, and that if they did so, and were guided by that decision, they would force upon the Government the disagreeable necessity of bringing in an Amendment Bill. He would leave it to their Lordships to consider what effect such a statement was likely to have upon men who were appointed by the Government, and appointed for one year only. Having passed an Act, and constituted Judges and Courts to carry it out, and a final Court of Appeal, it appeared to him an extraordinary proceeding for a Prime Minister to set himself above the Court of Appeal and advise the Sub-Commissioners to pay no attention whatever to a decision of that Court. On one occasion the Prime Minister "took the liberty," to use his own words, "to notice an error in the language of a learned Judge in Ireland." On another occasion he called in question the correctness of a decision of the High Court of Appeal. Such commentaries were not likely to induce respect for the law among the population of Ireland. It was most important that they should know the intention of the Government in this matter—whether they still intended to continue to carefully observe the construction which was put upon the decision of the Court of Appeal, or whether they intended to bring in an Amendment Bill this Session. He would like also to ask the noble Lord the Lord Privy Seal by what means the Government intended to find out what construction had been put upon the decision of the Court of Appeal by the Sub-Commissioners in Ireland? The Sub-Commissioners gave no reasons for their decisions. How, then, was it possible to discover how those decisions had been arrived at, unless the Government received information from the Commissioners which was not open to Parliament and the public? He submitted that Parliament had a right to be informed on a matter of this kind. Their Lordships' House had been severely criticized for appointing a Committee to inquire into the general working of the Act, although that Committee expressly stated that the terms of their Reference did not allow them to inquire into any particular decision. It was probably considered advisable to rally the Liberal Party at that time, and perhaps it was also deemed advisable to awaken the people—perhaps with a view to further legislation. Their Lordships might remember what the Prime Minister said in one of his famous Mid Lothian speeches. He was criticizing that House, and said that, whenever the House of Commons

> "Were backed by any strong national feeling it would be dangerous to confront or resist, the House of Lords passed their measures."

It seemed rather a curious form of adverse criticism to say their Lordships passed measures when there was a very strong national feeling that they should be passed. Then Mr. Gladstone continued to say that—

> "The moment the people went to sleep, and became satisfied, and ceased to take a strong and decided interest in public questions—that was the moment when the majority of the House of Lords grew powerful; then they mangled, then they cut about, then they postponed, then they rejected the good measures that went up to them from the House of Commons."

Anyone might suppose that in speaking of people "cutting about" and "mangling" the versatile intellect of Mr. Gladstone had led him to indulge the electors of Mid Lothian in a dissertation on establishments partaking of the nature of a laundry; but it really was of one of the branches of the Legislature that he was speaking. Well, it was probably thought necessary to awaken the nation and rally the Liberal Party, and the appointment of a Committee by that House was made to serve the purpose. He did not suppose a nation was ever awakened or a Party rallied under such a flimsy pretext; but almost before the words with which the Prime Minister denounced that House, rallied the Party, and woke the people ceased echoing, the same Prime Minister himself not only criticized the Act, but picked out a particular case for criticism, and informed the Commissioners, the Sub-Commissioners, and Parliament and the country that a decision of the Court of Appeal was wrong. And he went further, and told the Sub-Commissioners in Ireland that if they were guided by that decision of the Court of Appeal they would force upon Government the disagreeable necessity of bringing in an Amendment Bill. Could men be expected to do their duty under such circumstances? There were other evils likely to follow upon the statement of the Prime Minister. If the decision of the Court of Appeal was not to guide other cases, the result would be that all such other cases would have to go up to the Court of Appeal, and the present partial block in the Courts would be succeeded by an absolute block. Unless the Land Act was to prove a failure, it was necessary that cases should be largely settled out of Court; but it was difficult now for either landlord or tenant to discover any basis for negotiation with such diametrically opposed views expressed by the Court of Appeal and by the Prime Minister, and with the prospect of legislation hanging over them. It was essential also, unless Ireland was to remain in a state of chaos, that the differences of landlords and tenants should be largely settled out of Court. It was essential also that the authority of the Courts should be sustained, and due respect paid to their decisions. He feared that the authority of the Court of Appeal suffered by the statement of the Prime Minister; and he hoped Her Majesty's Ministers in that House would take the opportunity of giving their Lordships some explanation that might be satisfactory in the matter.

LORD CARLINGFORD, in reply, said, that he would not make any lengthened statement in answer to his noble Friend's (the Earl of Dunraven's) Question. He would not go into all the matters mentioned in his noble Friend's speech, neither would he attempt to discuss or defend every sentence in all speeches of the Prime Minister which had caught the eye of his noble Friend. He would confine himself to the Question as it stood upon the Paper. He was not able, at that moment, to add anything substantial to what was said by the Prime Minister when questioned—more than once, he believed—in the House of Commons on the subject, because the Prime Minister would himself have a very early opportunity of stating the intentions of the Government as to any Amendment to be proposed by them on any point of the Land Act of last year. But he (Lord Carlingford) would take the liberty of adding a few words upon the speech of his noble Friend generally. In the first place, he must protest against the extraordinary mare's nest which had been discovered by his noble Friend in the words of the Prime Minister in answer to the Question of a Member of the House of Commons. His right hon. Friend had said that it appeared to him that part of a certain decision of the Court of Appeal in Ireland, as to the legal bearing of a clause in the Land Act, was not consistent with the intention of the framers of that Act. His noble Friend had construed that expression of opinion as if it were a criminal interference with the working of the Land Act, or an indirect threat to the Courts which were administering the Act, as if it were an interference with the independence of those Courts. Anything more preposterous he (Lord Carlingford) had never heard than such a view of the effect of the words used by his right hon. Friend; and he was a good deal surprised at such a suggestion coming from his noble Friend. The Prime Minister had, in fact, simply expressed an opinion, and it was impossible for a Minister of the Crown not to do so when asked to answer a Question. There would be no interference with the working of the Land Act. That would go on through the Courts which were constituted for the purpose of administering it. What the Prime Minister had, in fact, expressed was his agreement with the Lord Chancellor of Ireland in his judgment upon the question arising in this now famous case; and he added that, rather than pledge himself to any immediate attempt at legislation upon the point, he and his Law Advisers would wait and see what amount of practical effect this decision would have. It was a doubtful point in their opinion, and was, he (Lord Carlingford) believed, a doubtful point now. In fact, he was not aware that the Land Commission itself had considered what the effect of the decision would be in the cases which have or would come before the Court. It was impossible to say what the practical effect of the decision would be upon the relations of landlord and tenant in Ireland, and upon the fixing of fair rents. It was surely natural that the Prime Minister should prefer to wait to see what that effect would be. The question was an important one, and if important results were to follow, differing materially from the intentions of the Government, it might be the duty of the Government to ask Parliament to correct that part of the Act. If, on the other hand, the practical effect of the decision was not of great moment, it might not be the duty of the Government to make that application to Parliament. In the meantime, the Courts would, of course, be bound solely, not by the expression of anyone in either House of Parliament, whether Prime Minister or any other person, as to what was the intention of the framers of the Bill, but by the judgment of the High Court of Appeal in Ireland. It was not necessary for the Land Commission to say that they felt themselves absolutely bound by that decision; but they had said so, and it was not for them to say otherwise. He would add a very few words as to what the Prime Minister really said. In effect his right hon. Friend at the head of the Government had expressed agreement with the Lord Chancellor, whose judgment differed from that of his Colleagues forming the majority of the Court over which he presided. The practical difference, as he (Lord Carlingford) understood it, was this—the Lord Chancellor thought that, in this matter, the Courts were to be governed by the provisions of the 9th sub-section of the 8th clause of the Act of last year, and by that only—a clause containing the important words which had been mentioned, as to improvements which had been paid for, or otherwise compensated, by the landlord. The majority of the Court, contrary to the view of the Lord Chancellor, were of opinion that the conditions and restrictions contained in the 4th clause, or Improvement Clause, of the Land Act of 1870 were still in operation, and were not overridden by the words contained in the Act of last year. That clause in the Act of 1870 declared that the value of the tenant's improvements was to be subject to reduction by lapse of time, or by any reduction of rent which he might have enjoyed. He should, however, like, in passing, to remind his noble Friend that the words referred to did not raise any great question of principle, because those conditions and restrictions were limited to cases of improvements made before the passing of that Act, and those only; so that as to any improvements made by the tenant since the 1st of August, 1870, the conditions and restrictions of the Act of 1870 had no application whatever, and they were governed solely by the words of the clause in the Act of last year. That was an important distinction in point of principle, and it would become of increasingly practical importance with every year that passed. But the truth was that the divergence between the Lord Chancellor and the Court of Appeal was, in his opinion, not so wide as it appeared at first sight, and his noble Friend had considerably exaggerated its importance. He (Lord Carlingford) understood that all the Members of the Court of Appeal agreed that there were two classes of interests concerned in the matter; there was a landlord's interest as well as a tenant's in the improvements, although they differed in degree. Those two classes comprised the improvements in buildings placed on the soil, and in the value of the soil itself, as enhancing the capabilities of the holding; and they would, on reading the judgment delivered in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath," find that the Lord Chancellor drew a great distinction between the tenant's work of improvement and its direct results on the one hand, and the capabilities of the soil belonging to the landlord on the other. It was true that Lord Justice Fitzgibbon, in his acute judgment, differed upon the practical point before the Court from the Lord Chancellor; but he drew substantially the same distinction between the very varying amount of the two interests in different classes of improvements, pointing out that in the case of a house or other building the tenant's interest absorbed almost the whole value, and the landlord's interest, if it existed, would be very limited; whereas, in the case of any improvements made in the soil, the tenant's interest would be more limited, and the landlord's interest might be very considerable. As to the practical result of the decision, he would ask the House to remember that, by the words of the Act of 1870, which, by that judgment, were imported into the Act of last year, and which governed the case they were discussing, the Court had a wide discretion in all cases to take into consideration the length of time during which improvements had been enjoyed. The Courts now also had to take into account the important question of rent. It was further to be supposed that all or most of the cases in which this question would come before the Courts would be cases in which the rent was a high one. He submitted, therefore, that, first of all, the divergence between the majority and the minority—that was to say, between the Lord Chancellor and the other Judges of the Court of Appeal—upon this matter, was not so great as it had appeared to his noble Friend to be; and, secondly, that the whole practical effect of the decision of the Court, as regarded the interests of landlord and tenant, had by no means yet become clear enough to see what it would be. The Prime Minister had, he thought, said a most reasonable thing when he stated in the House of Commons that the Government would wait and see whether, in their opinion, there was anything grave enough in the effect of the judgment of the Court to justify them in asking Parliament to correct that particular point in the Land Act of last year, for it would be neither wonderful nor blameworthy if, in one of the most difficult and, from its very nature, complicated pieces of legislation ever framed or passed, there should be points in the Act requiring correction. The Prime Minister would, however, at an early date, have occasion to state the views of the Government upon the whole of this matter, and upon the question whether any amending measure or additional legislation was required to the Land Act of last year. Under those circumstances, he (Lord Carlingford) would not anticipate the Prime Minister's statement.

EARL CAIRNS said, he wished to remind their Lordships that just before the Recess there was a statement made by the Prime Minister with regard to that House which, to his mind, seemed a very important one. He had said that the question they had to decide was not only whether an inquiry into the Land Act was desirable in this House, but by the House of Commons, and they took four or five evenings to determine whether an inquiry into the working of the Land Act was desirable or not, and came to the conclusion that, on the whole, an inquiry into the working of the Act would be injurious to the good government of Ireland, and, therefore, extremely inexpedient, but that their Lordships had found one evening sufficient for the purpose of voting that it was desirable, and that they had acted wrongly in passing such a Resolution. The progress of events, however, had placed beyond the range of controversy the question of the desirability of that inquiry very much more rapidly than, perhaps, their Lordships imagined. On the 9th of March the House of Commons passed their Resolutions declaring that any Parliamentary inquiry into the Land Act tended to defeat good government in Ireland. On the 15th of March the second reading of a Bill proposing an important Amendment of that Act was moved in the same Assembly. Upon the back of that Bill were the names of four staunch Supporters of the Government, who, he believed, voted for the Resolution of Censure upon their Lordships' action in the matter. What did the Government, who believed that any inquiry into the Act would not be favourable to the good government of Ireland, do? Did they ask Parliament to throw out—but he would not use that expression—did they hurl the Bill from the House? On the contrary, Member after Member rose and declared that any inquiry into the working of the Land Act would be fatal to it, although it was admitted there were many miscarriages, and that the results desired could not be obtained unless there was some alteration. What did the Government say? They could not admit the possibility of tampering with the Act; yet they actually, with the utmost humility, asked the promoters of the Bill to put it off for some weeks, saying that, in the meantime, they would narrowly watch the working of the Act, and state their views at the end of that period. But there were two points to which he particularly desired to direct their Lordships' attention. In the first place, the House was aware that over 90 per cent of the cases in which applications to break existing leases had been made had failed, with no other result than to entail upon the applicant the costs of the proceedings. A Question was put to the Prime Minister a short time afterwards on the point. He was asked as to the clauses of the Act which referred to the making of leases. He was asked, whether he knew it was a fact that 90 per cent of the applications made by tenants in consequence of the restricted scope of the 21st section of the Act were rendered ineffectual, and that Judge O'Hagan had publicly stated that fact; and also, whether it was proposed by legislation to remedy the defect? What was his answer? The Prime Minister thought there was considerable reason for an amendment of the law in respect to non-judgment. He thought the tenant in actual enjoyment of a lease, when he executed a new lease, or the tenant whose lease had just expired and was in occupation, ought to be placed on the same footing as a tenant from year to year. But he could not state, owing to the condition of Public Business, when the change would be introduced. This was a serious matter, because this particular clause was one of the greatest instances of legislation that had been proposed. When the proposal to break leases was first introduced into that House it was strongly opposed. He (Earl Cairns) had himself expected great objections to it; but he was somewhat surprised when he discovered that it was the wish of certain noble Lords in the House who were Irish landlords, and who felt that it carried with it some implication that they had done something wrong, that the clause should be passed. Accordingly they subsequently agreed to it, and what was the consequence? No case whatever was made out against the landlords; but now they knew that 90 per cent of the applications made had failed. The Prime Minister thought the law should be amended, on the ground of the decisions of the Court. He thought the tenants should have the redress to which they were entitled, as to which the Land Court in Ireland thought they had no claim. Now, he asked, how was it possible for Ireland to be peaceful, and for property to be secure, if declarations of this kind were to be made from time to time? The leaseholders were told that, so far from the law being settled, it was to be altered. What was the position of the 90 per cent? They were buoyed up by the promise of the Prime Minister, and hoped for that relief which they considered they were entitled to; while other leaseholders entertained the opinion that the law should be altered in their favour, and some alteration of the present system be effected. It was said that an inquiry into the working of the Act would be fatal. It might be asked if a declaration like this was likely to conduce to the peace of the country, for there was no reason for advancing it. He now passed to the second consideration. There was a strong feeling in the House at the time of the passing of the Act that in this matter, if necessary, there should be power of appeal to the highest tribunal in the Kingdom, the House of Lords; but the Government said they did not think there ought to be an appeal from Ireland to England; that the expense of such an appeal was objectionable, and they refused to allow it. They gave, however, an appeal to the highest Court which dealt with the subject—the Land Court, consisting of all the great judicial officers of Ireland. That arrangement was made, and it was, or it certainly ought to have been, understood that when a case came before the Land Court its decision was to be final. Well, there arose a very important case bearing upon the question of improvements. That case was brought before the Court and argued most elaborately for several days. Great pains and trouble and considerable time were taken before the Court gave its decision. It was divided in opinion, as Courts often were; but a very decided judgment was eventually pronounced. The reply of the Prime Minister to the Question put to him with reference to that question had been very clearly stated by his noble Friend (the Earl of Dunraven). He (Earl Cairns) would ask the Government, whether it was aware in that decision that, as regarded the improvements made by the tenants, the Land Court, in fixing a fair rent, had regarded the real enjoyment of the improvements as some compensation for the money spent upon them; and, whether the Government did not, in the course of the passage of the Bill through the House of Commons, distinctly state that no such construction was to be placed upon the clause? The Prime Minister stated it was not the intention of the framers of the Act that the tenant's interests in the course of his improvements should lapse, or be impaired in consequence of his enjoyment of those improvements. He (Earl Cairns) took it that the meaning of that was no reduction should be made because of a lapse of time. The Prime Minister said the wisest course would be to observe what construction the Court of Appeal put upon the clause, and its practical effect, before taking any action. He (Earl Cairns) agreed with what had been said—namely, that no person could have the least doubt as to how these statements would be received and understood in Ireland, and how they would be received by the Sub-Commissioners. They must remember who those Sub-Commissioners were, and that they were appointed annually. They were, in fact, in the position that Judges once were when they were supposed to be under the influence of the Government. Another thing was that it was perfectly in their power, having regard to the manner in which they gave their decisions, to conceal the principles upon which they proceeded; and, in point of fact, they did so. It was impossible to find out the grounds upon which they decided. It was clear how many unsophisticated persons would read this statement. The country would say the Government differed from the Court of Appeal, and they would have no means of knowing how far the Court of Appeal would be followed by the Sub-Commissioners in their judgments. What the Prime Minister said was substantially this. If the Sub-Commissioners did not follow the decision of the Court of Appeal they would agree with the Government, and the Government would not be put to the trouble of bringing in an amending Bill; whereas, on the other hand, if they did follow the decision of the Court of Appeal, they would, by so doing, say the Government were wrong, and consequently the Government would have to bring in an amending Bill. Was it accurate to say that this decision on the subject of compensating circumstances and improvements was not in accordance with the intention of the framers of the Act? He (Earl Cairns) did not know what the innate intentions of Her Majesty's Government were; but he knew what the expressed opinion of Parliament was, and what were the communications of the two Houses of Parliament upon the subject. The Prime Minister was under an entire misapprehension. The matter lay in a small compass. On the 12th of August his noble Friend (the Marquess of Salisbury) proposed an Amendment to the Land Act, to the effect that the Court, in fixing a fair rent, should consider the length of time during which the tenant had been enjoying improvements at a low rental, and that the time during which they had been so enjoyed should be held to be compensation for them. The terms of the Amendment were in substance taken from the Act of 1870, and the Amendment itself was adopted by their Lordships. It then went down to the House of Commons, where the Attorney General for Ireland said that, having regard to the clause already inserted in the Bill, the words were unnecessary, and asked the House to dispense with them, but suggested that the word "otherwise" should be inserted. His (Earl Cairns') right hon. Friend Sir Stafford Northcote hoped the House would not object to the insertion of the words, which he said were taken from the Act of 1870. The Prime Minister did not find fault with the words of the Act of 1870; but thought that if any doubt existed as to the meaning of the clause, it might be met by the word "otherwise," and he said that the Lords' Amendment might leave the matter ambiguous. The Amendment was then disagreed to, and the word "otherwise" put in. Thus the House of Commons disagreed with the Lords' Amendment, because, as had been said, having regard to the clause already inserted in the Bill, the words of the Amendment were superfluous. Now, after what passed between the two Houses of Parliament, were they to be told that a slur was to be cast upon the decision of the highest Court of Appeal in Ireland, because their decision was, it was alleged, not in accordance with the views of the Government? Statements recently made by the Prime Minister conveyed to the minds of the people of Ireland the impression that they were not obtaining from the Act the benefits they were entitled to under it. It made one tremble with despair to see how Ireland had been dealt with in the present Session. If there was one thing that he (Earl Cairns) thought the Leaders of both great Parties in Parliament were agreed upon at the commencement of the Session, it was that those Parties would be firm in resisting that unnamed but perfectly-well understood movement which was called Home Rule, and he had hoped that that firmness would be persevered in. But the fact was, the Prime Minister interposed declarations in the course of the Session which it was enough to describe as having been welcomed by the advocates of Home Rule as the grandest statements ever made. He (Earl Cairns) was satisfied that those statements, having been taken over to Ireland, had done more to unsettle the minds of the people than anything that had taken place for years past. Then, as to the leaseholders, the right hon. Gentleman had told them they had a grievance. If there was at the beginning of the Session one thing more settled than another, it was the position of leaseholders by the Act of last year—that was thrown to the winds by the declarations of the Prime Minister. The decision of the highest Court in the country was similarly blown to the winds; and then they were told, forsooth, that that House, in endeavouring to ascertain where the shoe pinched, had done that which endangered the peace of Ireland, because it presumed to inquire into the working of an Act which the Government had themselves done their utmost to discredit.

EARL FORTESCUE: After the announcement just made, I must ask pardon of the noble Lords who proposed and supported the Committee of Inquiry into the working of the last Land Act for having been deluded by the Government into voting against them. I voted thus, though that Act, undeniably confiscatory in its principles, had proved itself far more sweepingly confiscatory in its operation than Parliament had been led to expect; the Lord Privy Seal, indeed, said last Session that it would be beneficial to all except the few bad landlords in Ireland. I voted thus, though the appointment of Sub-Commissioners inspired little confidence, not so much on account of their general political partizanship—a charge which, while probably exaggerated, was not, I fear, by any means unfounded—but rather on account of the restriction in the selection of them imposed by Mr. Gladstone's unwise parsimony in judicial remuneration, of which this is by no means the first or only instance. I voted thus, though the Land Act has failed as a message of peace even more signally than I predicted it would to you last Session. I voted thus, though refusing a Parliamentary inquiry into very real grievances, while less utterly repugnant than would be the suppression of freedom of Parliamentary debate, was very uncongenial to me after supporting civil liberty all my life. I voted thus because, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, it seemed to me undesirable to disturb the public mind in Ireland about the Act before it had been practically at work more than a very few months. I ought to have known better, and remembered that Ministerial words sometimes require to be interpreted, as Tract No. 90 said the words of the Articles ought to be, in a non-natural sense. But I then little thought that a Statute, considered too sacred and fragile by the Government to bear even inquiring into, would within a few weeks be pronounced by its authors so far from perfect as already to require cobbling and piecing. And here, lest the memory of Ministers should lead them astray about this Act, as it did some of them about the Land Act of 1870, when they imputed its defects to Amendments made by their own Chief Secretary, their own Lord Chancellor, and their own Chancellor for Ireland, I would precautionarily remark that the Lord Privy Seal expressly admitted that the last Land Act, far from being injured, had been improved by your Lordships' Amendments.

Can any reasonable man doubt that, as pointed out by the noble Earl who so ably introduced the subject and the noble and learned Earl opposite, the language of the Prime Minister, by raising vague hopes in the Irish tenants, will have prevented many amicable arrangements being made between them and their landlords; or that it will have tended to encourage fresh refusals of rent, and to excite fresh outrages, in the expectation of thus extorting fresh concessions from the Government? And here I must remark that the Lord Privy Seal gave a very unsatisfactory answer to the noble Earl's comments upon the Prime Minister's extraordinary review of the decisions of the Court of Appeal, intimating his approval of the opinion given by the Irish Chancellor, and his disapproval of the judgment of the majority of that Court. This House —no thanks to Mr. Gladstone—continues to be, as it has long been, the highest Court of Appeal; but even here we should be very much surprised if we heard even the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack —the highest judicial person in the Realm—answering questions about any judgment given by another Court, not judicially brought before him. I must be allowed to protest against this as a practice all the more dangerous because, unhappily, sanctioned by a Prime Minister. I take a very gloomy view of the prospects of Ireland under the present Government. They ought not to believe that further agrarian legislation is the first requisite for restoring Ireland to the condition in which they received it from their Predecessors. What is most wanted is prompt and vigorous administration, speedy trial, generally without a jury, whenever evidence can be procured, heavy fines for offences levied on the district where evidence is withheld, and protection freely afforded to the law-abiding, even at the cost, if necessary, of increasing the Constabulary Force. The Government cannot deny that Ireland was handed over to them tranquil and orderly. The Prime Minister, more than three weeks after Lord Beaconsfield, speaking from official information, had publicly warned the country that Ireland was profoundly disaffected, declared that there was an absence of outrage and a sense of comfort and satisfaction in Ireland previously almost unknown. This was re-echoed by his supporters throughout the country, and the Government took credit for not having renewed, in spite of the warnings of their Predecessors and of the Resident Magistrates, the Peace Preservation Act, which they complacently allowed to expire. For the present lamentable and disgraceful state of Ireland I shall always consider the Government, by their credulity, vacillation, procrastination, and general helplessness in administration, to have made themselves deeply responsible.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: My Lords, my feeling is that we are often called upon to discuss the very gravest questions upon the most purely incidental event, and it puts us in a position in which, I think, the House is very often placed under circumstances of the greatest disadvantage. I do not think that the Government have given due appreciation to the magnitude of the interests at stake in the question put by my noble Friend on the Cross Benches (the Earl of Dunraven); but I am bound to say, as to the remarks of the noble Lord the Lord Privy Seal (Lord Carlingford) that they tend to allay alarms which have arisen in consequence of other utterances of the Government; and I do think that they show a due appreciation of the magnitude of the interests that are at stake upon the question placed before the House; but believing, as I do, that this is not a favourable opportunity for the discussion of the principles which are involved in the decision of the Court of Appeal in Ireland, I shall certainly postpone anything I have to say until a future occasion. But I do say this—that it is impossible to deny that the discussions which have arisen in this House to-night, and the discussions which have arisen "elsewhere," throw an entirely new light upon the discussion as to the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the Land Act in this House, and in which I took no part. I was not present on that occasion, and I must frankly confess to the House that I had made up my mind to vote with the Government if I had been there, and I would have done so on two grounds. In the first place, no one can deny that the Government are charged just now with the most difficult duty which has ever been imposed upon any Government in this country. We are bound to look upon them as the Executive Government of the country, and to rely upon the information possessed by the Government; and therefore I should not have been disposed to vote for any inquiry which the Government, upon their own responsibility, distinctly stated involved an embarrassment that would prove dangerous to the government of the country. That is one of the grounds. The second ground is that I think the appointment of a Committee so early in the Session might give rise to misunderstanding in Ireland, and might lead many persons in the country to suppose it was the desire of our House to deprive the people of Ireland of the substantial advantages which we, in common with the other House, had agreed to give them in the previous Session. On these two grounds, and on these two grounds alone, I should have voted with Her Majesty's Government on that occasion; but I cannot deny there are many questions upon which it is at least possible that we shall have something to say on a future occasion. There is the question of arrears. I do earnestly trust—though from the observations of my noble Friend opposite it may be otherwise—that we shall not be called upon to consider the fundamental principles of the Land Act in the present Session, and so dissipate the idea of finality. Finality is a difficult word to deal with; but finality ought to be adhered to in regard to a great measure of this kind, which involves an enormous re-distribution of property; and I cannot conceive the peace of Ireland being secured if we are perpetually to have questions re-opened which are fundamental questions. Putting aside, however, fundamental questions connected with the Land Act, there are a dozen others with regard to which it is of the first importance that this House should be duly informed as to the operations of the Act; and if we are to be called upon to discuss questions of emigration, arrears—as to which it is very possible that legislation may be required—and other questions which have been raised both in this and the other House, I think it is important that we should have the fullest information; and I think, therefore, the House has done wisely in seeking to gain some definite knowledge as regards them. Therefore, on the whole, though I am satisfied with the course which I have taken, I shall still look with immense interest on the Report which the Irish Land Act Committee may make; and I have no doubt some noble Lord connected with Ireland will raise the question, and give us an opportunity of considering the whole subject. It will be most unsatisfactory if, perhaps, at the end of June, or the end of August, or, Heaven knows, it may be the month of September, the House should be called upon to give its consent—"content" or "not content"—to some measure of which we know nothing in regard to the government of Ireland.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY said, he apprehended that the principal object of the speakers who had not favoured the action of the Government had been to show that that House was right in its recent vote for the inquiry into the Land Act. His noble Friend on the Cross Benches (the Earl of Dunraven) had brought forward the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath," and had argued it upon its own merits; but the whole object of successive speakers had been to turn the arguments so as to extract from them a proof that the Government were wrong and that House was right; but those conclusions rested on a very slender basis. It had been assumed, in the course of the debate, that the inquiry of the House of Lords into the operation of the Land Act was to be treated in the same category with decisions of the Courts in Ireland; whereas there was the greatest difference between the course pursued by the Government and what he must call the "fishing" inquiry proposed and carried in their Lordships' House, for the purpose of finding out whether there were any defects in the Land Act which required legislation; but he did not think it was possible for the Government to adopt a more prudent attitude than that of watching the decisions of the Courts of the Land Act. He was sorry to find that his noble Friend behind him (Earl Fortescue) had changed his mind. When his noble Friend told the House of the dangerous hopes which might be excited by any statements which might lead people to suppose that it was intended to change the Act of 1881, did he not see that that might be turned round and put another way; and what would he say to the fears which an inquiry might excite in the minds of those who took a different view, and who thought, perchance, alterations might be made, as the result of that inquiry, adverse to the interests of the tenants? It constantly happened that Courts of Law gave decisions on the meaning of Acts which were not in accordance with the intentions of the framers of those Acts, and opinions were freely expressed on such decisions by many persons, and even by Members of the Government. The Government were watching the decisions of the Irish Land Courts. That was their method of inquiry. Precisely what the Government had said ought to be done was now being done. The Act of 1881 was left to operate; and the Courts in Ireland, not an inquiry by the House of Lords, were interpreting and applying the provisions of that measure. The Government were anxious, before any conclusions were come to as to amendments of the Act, to see what was the effect of the Act, both in its practical working and its legal interpretation by the Courts. He deprecated the importation into the discussion by the noble and learned Earl opposite (Earl Cairns) of the question of leases, and thought that with regard to the question of compensation for improvements, where it was, no doubt, difficult to arrive at the precise understanding of the elaborate judgments delivered by the Court, exaggeration had been indulged in. No one deprecated more than he did continually meddling with this important law. The Government would adhere to the main principles of the Act; but it might, of course, hereafter be found necessary that in some details, in which the Act might be found by experience not to work well, there should be amendments. It had been said that the opinion expressed by his right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone) with respect to the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath" was meant to influence the Sub-Commissioners. But if everything said by a Member of the Government upon the subject of the Act was to operate upon the minds of the Sub-Commissioners charged with its administration, and to induce them to disregard their plain duty, then all he (the Earl of Kimberley) could say was, that they would be utterly unfit to perform the functions committed to them. He did not understand that his right hon. Friend desired for a moment to influence the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners. Was it not constantly the case that Judges placed an interpretation upon Statutes not contemplated by the Legislature, and that similar expressions of opinion were the result? As regarded the matter, he, for one, had considerable difficulty in arriving at the precise principles which governed it. The question seemed to be whether the intention of the Legislature was that, with regard to improvements, the Act of 1870 should be imported into the Act of 1881. It appeared to him that if the decisions of the Court were such as not to be in accordance with the intentions of the framers of the Act, then it was the obvious duty of the Government, at the proper time and season, to consider whether it was not part of their duty to propose the amending of the Act. It was not possible to suppose that this Act, in the sense that it would require no amendment in details, could be final; and what he apprehended was meant, when it was said they should not be continually making new laws in Ireland, was that the general principle of the Act should remain fixed, and that they should not be constantly altering their general policy; but as to the details, it was absolutely certain that questions would arise, sooner or later, upon which they might have to make some alteration in the law, large or small. It in no way followed that the time had arrived for a complete inquiry into the Act, because there was something in the working of the Act which should be remedied.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I do not think my noble Friend who has just sat down (the Earl of Kimberley) has given an accurate impression to the House of the purport of this debate, or of the objects which those who introduced the discussion had in view. He has represented the debate as if it were a mere re-discussion of the question whether or not a Committee of Inquiry into the working of the Land Act was desirable. That is a matter of some importance; and I think it is very clear, from subsequent events, that the House on both sides is very much of the opinion of the noble Duke (the Duke of Argyll) that there was sufficient matter for inquiry. But the particular object which I understood the noble Earl on Cross Benches (the Earl of Dunraven) had in view was to impress upon the Government a matter which the noble Earl (the Earl of Kimberley) has passed over lightly—namely, the effect upon public opinion in Ireland upon the permanent pacification of the country, of the hints, and of more than hints, dropped by the Prime Minister, that he is prepared to re-open the question of land legislation for Ireland. A great re-distribution of property has taken place; that which belonged to the landlord has been re-distributed by being taken from him and given to the tenant. After that has been done, whatever the opinions of the Government with respect to it may be, the one thing you desire is that men on both sides—landlords as well as tenants—should settle down to their new relations, and should make the best of the situation as they find it; that they should settle, by mutual agreement, such differences as exist between them; and that, as far as the conditions of the Act will allow, they should go on with the most vital industry of Ireland as if nothing of importance had occurred, and no further legislation were contemplated. But the Prime Minister has produced exactly the opposite result by the declaration he has made, and he has opened up a boundless field for doubt. No landlord will like to make any permanent arrangements; he will not dare to risk any further his private property, already so grievously compromised, when there is an almost unlimited possibility, to be inferred from the obscure hints of the Prime Minister, of a new attack on his rights, and of a new re-distribution of his property. On the other hand, the tenant will not wish to bind himself by any agreement, or prematurely to challenge the decision of the Court which may be held finally against him, when there is unlimited hope in the results of further agitation, when the words of the Prime Minister betray how sensitive the Government is to the action of agitators, and how ready they are to abandon and tear up that finality which they promised, and to enter upon a new course of land legislation at the bidding of the agitators in Ireland. I do not care, with reference to this matter, what is the opinion of the Government. What I say is that they are bound either to abstain from ambiguous forecasts of their intention altogether, or to make a clean breast of it, and tell us what they do intend. It is unpardonable for the Government to keep these two important classes in Ireland any longer in a state of painful doubt. The Government are only intensifying antagonism, which is too bitter already; they are only exciting hopes and fears which have already been too fatal to the peace and prosperity of Ireland.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he greatly doubted whether the course taken that evening was not an unwise one. When Questions were put in either House of Parliament, it was generally agreed that some answer was needed; and when answers to Questions were represented, as they had been that evening, in the case of statements made by his right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, as meaning something which did not appear, at all events, to persons whose minds were constituted in the ordinary manner, it was to be regretted; for consequences might follow from the present discussion, and from their being so represented, which it was not intended should take place. The people of Ireland might think that they had, in fact, some rights which were not yet conceded to them, and thus their minds might become unsettled; and the result would be that much more harm would be done by discussing these statements than by leaving them as they were—simply as answers to Questions put in one of the Houses of Parliament. He did not understand that any statement made by the Prime Minister was intended at all to intimate that the Government were going to re-open the question of tenure under the Irish Land Act. The statement appeared, as far as he could judge, to have reference only to the Question put, and to have been carefully made so as to avoid any such construction. One thing, at all events, he should have thought perfectly clear, and that was that the Prime Minister, whether he rightly interpreted or not the decision of the Court of Appeal, did not for a moment seek to cast a slur on the correctness of that Court; and he should not, until that evening, have thought it possible that anyone could hold the Prime Minister's meaning to be that the Commissioners and Sub-Commissioners were not to act upon the decision of the Court of Appeal, or that the action of the Government was to depend upon the question whether the Commissioners and Sub-Commissioners took their own course, regardless of that decision, or whether they followed that decision. The noble Earl raised a question which really depended upon the construction to be put upon the decision of the Judges; but, if he (the Lord Chancellor) were called upon to discuss that decision, he should reply that he was not in a position to do so, as the opinions delivered by the several Judges, in the case of "Adams *v* Dunseath," had not been laid before the House, and he did not know that they had been laid before the House of Commons. He must say that until he came down to the House upon that occasion, the notion that any human being would put such an interpretation on the Prime Minister's words as had been put, or would suppose such a conclusion to be deducible from them, never would have occurred to him, and he was perfectly certain it never could have occurred to the Prime Minister himself. Then, did the Prime Minister hold out any expectation that the Government would re-open the question of the Land Act and introduce some new Bill to overrule the decision of the Court of Appeal? Quite the reverse. He said that there had not been time to ascertain the practical effect of that decision, and that its effect would have to be watched. Again, the Prime Minister did not hold out any expectation that further power of breaking leases would be granted. Was any good to be done in Ireland by throwing doubt upon every statement of the Prime Minister, and by making every word of his a subject of debate? He did not think that any such uneasiness had been created by the statements of the Prime Minister as had been suggested, nor had they interfered with arrangements being made by landlords and tenants out of Court. If there had been any unsettling of men's minds, or any obstruction of settlements in that country between landlord and tenant out of Court, he thought that was much more likely to have been caused by the premature appointment of the Committee to inquire into the operation of the Land Act than by anything which had been said by any of Her Majesty's Ministers.

The Marquess of LANSDOWNE said, the noble and learned Lord (the Lord Chancellor) had stated that it would be very unwise to pay attention to so small a matter as this, and that it would be better to let these disagreeable questions rest. That was not the light in which he (the Marquess of Lansdowne) looked at this question. He thought his noble Friend (the Earl of Dunraven) had done good service in bringing it forward that evening—first, by enabling the Colleagues of the Prime Minister in that House to show that their minds were not so open to conviction as his; and, secondly, by giving the House an opportunity of protesting against the way in which these great questions of principle had been left in suspense by the statements which had been adverted to. Speaking as one who had some knowledge of Ireland and the Irish people, he must join with the noble Earl who had brought forward the subject in the expression of his conviction that nothing would more retard a settlement of that country than the creation of an impression that whenever the people found that legislation had not in all respects fulfilled their expectations, their claims for a revision of what had been done were to be admitted. The great fault, both of the Land Act of last year and of the Land Act of 1870, had always seemed to him to be their extreme intricacy. And not only was it necessary for the illiterate peasants whose interests were at stake to make themselves masters of two of the most complicated Acts of Parliament ever introduced into the Statute Book, but in addition to this they were obliged, before they could know how they really stood, to study the three elaborate judgments of the Land Commissioners sitting as an Appeal Court in Dublin, and the seven still more elaborate judgments of the High Court of Appeal to which these matters had, in the last instance, been referred. Most people had hoped that the question having been thus dealt with was at last finally disposed of, and that the parties would be satisfied with the settlement of a case by the High Court of Appeal; but now it appeared that that was not so, for no sooner was a decision come to than it was called in question by the Prime Minister himself, and a most unfortunate state of things was the result. The fact was that this perplexity had arisen from Ministers not being able to make up their minds as to which of two alternative positions they would adopt on the subject of tenants' improvements. One position was that improvements once executed by a tenant or his predecessors in title—which had been interpreted to include predecessors in occupancy—could never be exhausted by enjoyment, no matter how long or how profitable. That was one view. The other position was that the land was the property of the owner of it—that its capability of improvement, with all its resources, latent and apparent, belonged to him, and that he was to be at liberty to lend the use of that land to another person upon condition that the person cultivating it should develop those resources, and, having done so, should be allowed to recoup himself for the expenditure of his capital, skill, and labour; but that, after he had been so recouped, then the landlord's reversionary interest in those improvements should be recognized. According to the former view the improvement resulted solely from the tenant's efforts, and, therefore, belonged exclusively to him; according to the latter it resulted from the co-operation of the tenant's skill, labour, and capital with the capital which the landlord or his predecessors had invested in the acquisition of the soil and its capabilities, and, therefore, belonged partly to the one party and partly to the other. Those were the only two positions which could be assumed in regard to tenants' improvements. Both were intelligible, but they were irreconcilable; and it seemed to him that throughout all these discussions they had never had any clear statement from the Government as to which of the two they took up. He (the Marquess of Lansdowne) had himself pointed out that the second of the two views was the one which had always hitherto regulated the agricultural economy of the United Kingdom. It was the principle of the Land Act of 1870. It was the principle of the Agricultural Holdings Act of 1875. It was the principle favoured by that unquestionable patriot, the late Mr. Isaac Butt. It was the principle in all the most liberally drawn Scotch leases; and, finally, it was the principle which the Irish tenants themselves invariably acted upon in their dealings with their fellow-tenants. That principle was never repudiated till last year. It was first called in question by the Bessborough Commission, and ultimately by the Prime Minister. He (the Marquess of Lansdowne) said ultimately, because what was known as Healy's Clause formed no part of the original proposals of the Government—it was, indeed, no part of Mr. Healy's original proposal—and was only accepted at a late stage of the Bill, with the addition of qualifying words which it was impossible to doubt, were accepted by both Houses of Parliament with the idea that they had effectually protected the landlord against tenants' claims on account of these remote improvements. It was impossible not to see that that was the basis on which the Healy Amendment was accepted. The whole question had now been re-opened by the recent statements of the Prime Minister. They were now in this difficulty. There were 16 sets of Sub-Commissioners regulating these matters, and deciding innumerable cases, into every one of which this question entered, without any principles being laid down as to the manner in which they were to be decided. He did hope that, as they were told some statement was to be made by the Prime Minister, there would be, once and for all, a clear and definite settlement of the question. In the meanwhile, the old principle had been demolished, and no new one had been established in its place—or one so vague that no two persons understood it in the same sense. In whatever sense it might be finally decided by the Government, they should recollect that if it were enacted that tenants' improvements were not to be exhausted by time, and, further, that succession in occupancy was to be the same thing as succession in title, the Government would be driven by inexorable logic into the adoption of Mr. Parnell's theory that the "prairie value" of the land was the fair measure of the rent which a tenant ought to pay for it—a theory for advocating which Mr. Parnell had been thrown into prison. That seemed to him to be the real difficulty. He did hope that if the Government were going to address themselves to the question, and to legislate upon it, they would deal with it in a manner incapable of being misunderstood.

Lord INCHIQUIN said, the discussion which had taken place impressed him with the wisdom of the course that had been adopted in instituting an inquiry into the working of the Land Act. What he wished to find out was, how were the landlords of Ireland to ascertain whether the Sub-Commissioners, in giving their decisions, had acted upon the decision of the Courts of Appeal, or whether they had acted upon the hints which had been thrown out by the Prime Minister? Unless the landlords knew the grounds of the decisions, it was almost impossible that many cases should be settled out of Court by agreement between landlord and tenant. There was no security, as things were, that the tenant would not get paid twice over for his improvements—once when the fair rent was fixed, and then at the end of the statutory term. If their Lordships' Committee ascertained that fact, it would have done good service.

Viscount MIDLETON said, that he quite agreed with the noble Lord who had just sat down (Lord Inchiquin). If the Sub-Commissioners' decisions, when reversed by the Court of Appeal, were to be said not to express the intentions of Her Majesty's Government, what hope was there of any final settlement in Ireland? He had spoken with more than one agent, who had expressed the opinion that while the question which their Lordships had been discussing was unsettled, there was little hope of amicable arrangements between tenants and landlords. He knew of cases where there was a willingness on both sides to accept the decision of gentlemen in whom they had confidence; but those gentlemen, though enjoying the confidence of both parties, declined to act, because of the uncertainty as to the principles upon which they were to adjudicate upon the question of fair rent. He asked whether any man could counsel an extra-judicial settlement when the decisions were so entirely different from one another? Take another instance. A Sub-Commissioner was appealed to to say upon what principle he made his valuation. He replied that he valued, in the first instance, the tenant's interest at the full disturbance allowance, and then took the full capitalized value of the tenant's improvements—in other words, he gave the tenant compensation for disturbance when he had not been disturbed. He believed that there was not a single landowner in Ireland who was not earnestly desirous of settling all differences between them and their tenants; but their difficulty was in dealing with an Act which had no definite interpretation, and with respect to which the Government refused any indication of the lines on which it was to be interpreted. He hoped for an assurance that the insecurity which landlords felt in dealing with their property might at an early date be put an end to by some definite assurance from the Government.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.—(No. 65.)

(*The Earl of Morley.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Morley.*)

The Earl of LONGFORD said, that with regard to the manner in which this Bill had passed through the other House, he had to complain that many of the most important national Bills were either put aside or dealt with in a hole-and-corner fashion. He had endeavoured to learn something with respect to the efficiency of the Army; but he found upon inquiry that it was in a state of transition. In October last the Secretary of State for War made a public announcement of the satisfactory condition of the Army. He (the Earl of Longford) had thereupon written to him, asking him to name one single battalion possessing its full complement of men, and in every other respect efficient. The Secretary of State had adopted the *clôture* system, and never even answered his letter. He believed that no single battalion was at that moment in a state of efficiency. Last year there were several changes, the changes to territorial regiments, which had created more confusion than anything else since Babel; then there were various changes in the uniforms. The system of paying pensioners had also been changed, with the result that the pensioners, who were poor men, upon one occasion had to wait for their pensions. He did object to change in itself; he disliked changes which produced no advantageous result. He would like to know, as he was addressing the House, whether the recent change in the form of *Gazette* announcements to the commands of regiments and battalions indicates any change in the position or pay of commanding officers?

The Earl of MORLEY, in reply, said, the criticisms of the noble Earl upon the Army were of so general a character that they did not require answering upon the present occasion. As regarded the Question put by the noble Earl, he would say that the change in the form of *Gazette* announcements to the commands of regiments indicated no change whatever in the position or pay of commanding officers. The reason for the change in practice referred to was that there were now two lieutenant colonels in each battalion—one subordinate, the other in command—and it would be on many grounds desirable and convenient that the appointment to the command of a battalion or regiment should be announced in *The Gazette*, though the officer so appointed had already reached the rank of lieutenant colonel. In reference to the new scheme for paying military pensions by post-office orders, he differed from the noble and gallant Earl, who stated that the change would produce no beneficial results—he believed, on the contrary, that it would be of great benefit to the pensioners, who would not in future be obliged to attend at their pension offices every quarter to receive their pensions, a practice which often interfered with their employments, and was productive of other inconveniences. The scheme had been put in operation for the first time on April 1st; and some little friction had arisen, as might be expected, in bringing it into working. Delay in issuing pensions had, no doubt, caused inconvenience—it did not deserve the name of hardship—to the pensioners in some districts who, it must be remembered, received their payments three months in advance; but the greatest care would be taken to avoid any such delay on future occasions—it having now only been caused by temporary circumstances incidental on introducing a large change of system. As regards the condition of the battalions forming the First Army Corps, he admitted that at present there was a larger proportion of young soldiers in these battalions than was desirable; but this was the unavoidable result of having suddenly to raise their establishments to a strength much in excess of what they had been hitherto. This increase could only be made by rapidly recruiting into them. It must take some time to harden these battalions; but as soon as the newly-fixed establishments were in order, this hardening process would progress rapidly, and in future years the condition of the battalions in question would be satisfactory.

Viscount BURY considered that there was much to be said in regard to the administration of the Army, and asked that the next stage of the Bill should be put down as the first Order, so that noble Lords who took an interest in the Army might have an opportunity of addressing the House.

Lord CHELMSFORD said, he wished to point out that, as regarded the appointments of two lieutenant colonels, it was not a new regimental arrangement. In 1858, when he was appointed to the 95th Regiment, there were then two lieutenant colonels in all regiments in India. No practical inconvenience was then found in gazetting these appointments in the manner which existed before the recent change was made.

The Earl of MORLEY said, that he proposed to put this Bill down for Committee to-morrow.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2^a accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at Seven o'clock,
till To-morrow, a quarter past
Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 24*th* *April*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—Supply—*considered in Committee*—*Resolutions* [April 21] *reported.*

Ways and Means—*considered in Committee*—Financial Statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—The Resolutions.

Public Bills—*Second Reading*—Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) [21] [*First Night*], *debate adjourned;* Bankruptcy Law Amendment [87].

Committee — *Report* — Arklow Harbour (*re-comm.*) [137].

QUESTIONS.

STATE OF IRELAND—USE OF DYNAMITE.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that an attempt was recently made to blow up the house of Mr. John Ross Mahon, at Ahascreagh, with dynamite; whether Mr. Andrew Manning, Vice Chairman of the Ballinasloe Board of Guardians, and Mr. John Egan, have been arrested on suspicion of complicity with this outrage; whether he can state upon what kind of evidence such arrests were sanctioned by him; whether it is a fact that dynamite is largely used by the workmen of Mr. John Ross Mahon; whether seven cartridges of dynamite were found on the person of one of his workmen; whether this man has been arrested on suspicion; and, whether, under these circumstances, he will order a sworn investigation into the whole case?

Mr. J. N. RICHARDSON said, that, before the right hon. Gentleman answered the Question, he wished to know whether the Mr. Ross Mahon alluded to in the Question was the son of Mr. Mahon, who was murdered in 1849?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had no information as to the latter Question. With reference to the Question on the Paper, there was an attempt made to blow up this house with dynamite. The men who had been arrested had been arrested under the Protection Act. Dynamite had been used in moderate quantities in Mr. Mahon's works, and the police had removed some charges from an outhouse, in which they had been injudiciously left. He could not give the grounds for the arrest of these men, as it was not customary to disclose the grounds of arrests under the Protection Act. He did not think it was necessary to order a further investigation into the subject.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—SERGEANT MAGUIRE.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that Sergeant Maguire, chief clerk in the county inspector's office, Ballinasloe, absconded on the 16th of March last; whether he can state what amount of public money he embezzled; whether it is a fact that for years he had been in the habit of obtaining money under false pretences from newly appointed constables; and, what steps the Government have taken in the matter?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, Ex-Constable Maguire had been guilty of gross irregularity with regard to his duties as office clerk; but nothing came before the Court of Inquiry to ground a prosecution upon. Constable Maguire was no longer a member of the force.

STATE OF IRELAND—OUTRAGES AT LONDONDERRY.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has any objection to lay upon the Table of the House, a Copy of the Correspondence which has lately taken place between the Corporation of Londonderry and the Government, with reference to the occurrence of alleged outrages at the foot of Bishop Street (Without), in Londonderry, and of the consequent necessity for the erection thereat of a new and costly police barracks; whether the outrages so alleged were attributed to the Roman Catholics of the locality, and whether really no such outrages took place at all; whether, it being alleged that the Roman Catholics had severely beaten and injured some of the servants at Government House, the residence of the agent of the Irish Society, and that, in consequence thereof, the protection of the police for the agent was sought for and obtained; and, whether it has since transpired that no such outrage had been perpetrated, but that some of the

Society's employés, having stolen a quantity of whiskey that came by railway with the Society, they got drunk upon it, and beat and severely outraged each other, and then charged the peaceable Roman Catholic inhabitants of the locality with a party outrage?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the Correspondence referred to by the hon. Member had taken place; but there was not, he thought, sufficient interest in it to warrant its being laid on the Table, unless the hon. Member chose to move for it, when there would be no objection to its production.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—RELEASE OF PRISONERS DETAINED UNDER THE ACT—LIMERICK GAOL.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Messrs. James F. Daly, John Holloway, and Michael Bush, were released from the Limerick Gaol on April 1st without the usual caution being given to them by the Governor; if it is the fact that the Governor followed one of those suspects, James F. Daly, to the rooms lately occupied by the Limerick Central Land League, and the other two to the private residence of the Secretary of the Limerick Ladies' Land League, and there administered the caution; and, whether the Government approve the Governor's course?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the facts, as stated in the Question, were substantially correct. The Government did not approve the course taken by the Governor of Limerick Gaol in this matter, and had already signified to him their disapproval of what he had done. It was to be mentioned, however, in justice to the Governor of the Gaol, that he released the "suspects" in question in consequence of telegraphic instructions to do so, which were sent for the convenience of the prisoners themselves, in order that they might be liberated in time to reach their homes that same day.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. JOSEPH SMYTH.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will not again consider the case of Mr. Joseph Smyth of Columbkill, in the county of Longford, who has been confined for six months in Dundalk under a warrant charging him with being reasonably suspected of having taken part in intimidation; whether the district to which Mr. Smyth belongs is not and has not been peaceful and well conducted; and, whether, under the circumstances, he will direct that Mr. Smyth be released from prison?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, it should be taken into consideration.

ARMY—MILITIA REGULATIONS, 1880—BREVET PAY.

COLONEL O'BEIRNE asked the Secretary of State for War, If he will explain why some officers on full pay as captains and brevet majors in the regular forces, and holding appointments as adjutants of auxiliary forces, who, by paragraph 451, Militia Regulations, 1880, are entitled to receive brevet pay if appointed on or after the 22nd February 1871, were on application refused arrears of brevet pay accruing to them previous to the 1st April 1877?

MR. CHILDERS: In reply to my hon. and gallant Friend, I have to point out to him that the Warrant of 1877, which settled this question, only allowed these officers brevet pay from the 1st of April of that year. I myself have done nothing in this matter; and it would be unprecedented to disturb such a decision made by my Predecessor five years ago.

HARBOURS OF REFUGE (SCOTLAND).

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR (for Sir ALEXANDER GORDON) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, in view of the loss of life and property every year on the East Coast of Scotland, he will cause a survey and report to be made, by competent officers, of the two places they may find most suitable for the formation of two harbours of refuge, one on the south, and the other on the north, of the Firth of Forth, to which vessels navigating the North Sea, and fishing boats from the Coast, may run to for safety, at all times of tide, when caught in a gale of wind from the east?

MR. PEMBERTON asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether it is the intention of the Government to take any steps for the formation of a harbour of refuge on the South Eastern Coast; whether their attention has been directed to the advantages possessed by Dungeness for that purpose; and, whether the memorials addressed to the Board on this subject will be printed?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, the hon. and gallant Gentleman who had put the Question would see that it would not be right for the Government to propose an inquiry of the kind suggested unless they had made up their mind that at the conclusion of the inquiry they would recommend to Parliament the construction of harbours of refuge at the national expense. That was a very large question, which concerned not only the East Coast of Scotland, as was shown by the Question on the same subject by the hon. Member for East Kent. It would involve an expenditure of many millions in the provision of harbours of refuge which could be shown to be necessary at different parts of the coast of the Three Kingdoms. He was sorry to say that past experience, with reference to this matter, hardly justified the Government in taking any such course. The provision of harbours of refuge by the State had not been, on the whole, very economical or efficient. This subject was fully discussed some 20 years ago, and the proposal to construct large harbours at the public cost decided against. Under these circumstances, the Government certainly would not be prepared to recommend the House to embark in any considerable undertaking of the kind. In reply to the latter part of the Question of the hon. Member for East Kent, he had to say that only one Memorial had been received advocating the formation of a harbour on the South Eastern Coast. There was no intention on the part of the Board of Trade to print it; but if the hon. Member liked to move for it, he saw no objection to its publication.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — ELECTION OF GUARDIANS, CAVAN UNION — CHARGE AGAINST A RETURNING OFFICER.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been drawn to the charges of great irregularity brought against the Returning Officer of Cavan Union by Mr. T. Boland, in connection with the late election of guardian for Belturbut electoral division, and on what grounds has an inquiry been refused?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, Mr. Boland had been in communication with the Local Government Board, and that body was instituting an inquiry into the matter.

ARMY—SENIOR MAJORS—EXTRA PAY.

Colonel O'BEIRNE asked the Secretary of State for War, Why the advantage of extra pay granted to the two senior Majors of a Battalion of Infantry of the Line, or of a West India Regiment, by Art. 185—I. of the Royal Warrant for Pay, &c. dated 25th June 1881, has not been similarly extended to the two senior Majors of a Regiment of Cavalry of the Line; and, whether he will rectify this anomaly by a revised Warrant, granting the same advantage to Cavalry Majors as the Infantry Majors have obtained by the above-named Warrant?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to my hon. and gallant Friend, I have to point out to him that in the Cavalry, as in the Infantry, Majors of three years' service as such will receive the higher rate of pay. The special and temporary allowance to the two senior Majors of an Infantry Battalion were granted to protect them against a loss which cannot occur in the Cavalry, in which all the existing Majors, if qualified and recommended for promotion, became, under the new establishment, Lieutenant Colonels.

THE OPIUM TRADE—THE CHEFOO CONVENTION.

Mr. PULESTON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true, as stated in the public papers, that Her Majesty's Government, through its Representative at Pekin, is in communication with the Government of China in regard to the trade in opium between India and China; and, if so, at what stage matters have arrived?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Her Majesty's Government have been in communication for a considerable time with the Chinese Government, through Her Majesty's Minister at Pekin, respecting the opium trade and the arrangement on the subject conditionally agreed to in the

Chefoo Convention. The negotiations have been adjourned pending the consideration by Her Majesty's Government of a new proposal for the settlement of this question recently made by the Chinese Government. Sir Thomas Wade telegraphed, on the 9th of February last, that he was reporting fully on that proposal, and Her Majesty's Government are now awaiting his Report.

EDUCATION (WALES)—REPORT OF DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE.

Mr. PULESTON asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether the Government have approved the Report of the Departmental Committee on Education in Wales; and, whether he can state that a measure to give effect to its recommendations will be shortly introduced?

Mr. MUNDELLA: The hon. Member for Devonport asks whether the Government have approved the Report of the Departmental Committee on Education in Wales. My answer is that the Government propose to legislate on the lines of that Report, and have announced their intention to do so in Her Majesty's Speech at the opening of Parliament. In a later Question my hon. Friend the Member for Merthyr (Mr. Richard) asks me whether I expect soon to introduce the promised measure. I can only say that we shall be ready to introduce the measure as soon as there appears any reasonable prospect of making progress with it.

ARMY—RE-ENGAGEMENT.

Colonel COLTHURST asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will make known to the Army that private soldiers enlisted before August 1870, i.e. under the Act of 1867, may be allowed to re-engage, on the recommendation of their respective commanding officers, if of good character and otherwise eligible?

Mr. CHILDERS: Yes, Sir; the pledge which I gave to the House on Monday last, that the rule for the re-engagement of privates shall be made perfectly clear, will be fulfilled, and the necessary order will issue shortly.

LANDLORD AND TENANT (SCOTLAND) —THE EVICTIONS IN SKYE.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Lord Advocate, Did Lord Macdonald, in Syke, take away the pasture land from the tenants some years ago, without reducing their rents, and is the present struggle for restoration or reduction of rent; and, did he, or the Home Secretary, order Captain M'Caul to send the police to Skye, without consulting the Glasgow magistrates; and, if so, did the order instruct Mr. M'Caul to refuse all information to his superiors, the Lord Provost, Magistrates, Members of the Corporation, and Citizens of Glasgow? The hon. Member said he also wished to know whether the police who went on this expedition were armed with revolvers; and whether civil officers were entitled to be armed when going upon such expeditions?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): I have made inquiry with the view of enabling me to answer this Question; and the information I have received is, that till about 70 years ago the piece of hill pasture in question was occupied by the tenants of several small townships in the neighbourhood. At that time it was taken from them, and their rents were reduced from £280 in the aggregate to £200, at which latter figure they have stood since then. After the pasture ground was resumed, it was used as a market stance, and as a place for impounding strayed cattle. As it was uninclosed, the cattle and sheep of various persons were grazed upon it by tolerance, but not under lease or any other agreement. It was let for the first time about 17 years ago, and the animals belonging to the tenants in the neighbourhood were then excluded from it. No alteration was made upon their rents, which had continued to be paid down to the last few months without complaint. In answer to the second part of the Question, I have to say that neither the Home Secretary nor I gave any order, or had any communication with Captain M'Caul or the Glasgow police authorities on the subject of sending policemen. The application to the Glasgow authorities was made by the Sheriff, under the 90th section of the Police Act of 1866. The application was not, in the first instance, made to Captain M'Caul, but to the Lord Provost; and, the Lord Provost having assented, the Sheriff addressed a requisition to the Chief Constable, under which the constables were sent. I believe it is the case that the Sheriff did express the opinion that it would be desirable that the despatch should be made with as little publicity as possible, that being, in his judgment, essential for the proper execution of the duty, and in that opinion I entirely concur.

IRELAND — MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD — CIRCULAR BY THE INSPECTOR OF POLICE, CO. CLARE.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What course the Government propose to take with respect to County Inspector Smith, of Clare, who issued the Circular of the 4th of March, addressed to the sub-inspectors under his command; whether any communications have been addressed to the sub-inspectors of Constabulary in Clare, instructing them that the Circular in question has been withdrawn; and, whether a copy of such communication will be laid upon the Table, or its substance imparted to the House?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: The Inspector General of Constabulary informs me that, acting on his own responsibility, he has ordered the withdrawal of the Circular to which the hon. Member alludes. As regards the other part of the Question, I am in communication with the Lord Lieutenant on the subject, and I will take care that the House is informed of the conclusion at which we arrive. But, in the meantime, I must state that no proper precautions for the protection of Mr. Clifford Lloyd in the performance of his arduous duties will be neglected.

STATE OF IRELAND—OCCUPATION OF HUTS BY PERSONS EVICTED—INTERFERENCE OF THE POLICE.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Government will undertake that in future there shall be no interference with persons building or occupying huts on sites properly procured, or with evicted tenants availing themselves of the shelter thus provided?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Where the huts are merely for the shelter of the persons building or occupying them there will be no interference; but in all cases the action of the Government must depend upon the particular facts of each case.

Mr. SEXTON: I am sure the House will believe that it is with extreme reluctance that I resort a second time in this matter to the use of the Forms of the House. ["Order!"]

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY: I rise to a point of Order, Sir. It will be in the recollection of the House that the hon. Member for Sligo, on Thursday last, put a Question to the Chief Secretary for Ireland with reference to this matter, and moved the adjournment of the House in order to discuss it. I am quite aware—[*Cries of* "Order!" *from the Home Rulers*]—I am explaining the point of Order which I wish to put—I am aware that it is the practice of the House, under the exigencies of the moment, to extend its indulgence to any hon. Member who wishes to raise a Question upon a Motion for Adjournment; but I submit that when an hon. Member intends a second time to make use of the Motion for Adjournment on the same Question it is an abuse of the indulgence of the House, and an excess of even that outrageous licence which has grown up of late years.

Mr. HEALY: On the point of Order, Sir, I—[*Cries of* "Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: As has been stated by the right hon. Gentleman who raised the point of Order, this case is certainly without precedent. The House is very indulgent to hon. Members in allowing the adjournment of the House to be moved before the commencement of the appointed Business of the day. That step was taken by the hon. Member for Sligo upon an occasion last week, when the same subject now raised was fully discussed; and I am bound to say that I consider that to raise again the same Question upon this occasion would be a gross abuse of the privilege ordinarily conceded to hon. Members. At the same time, I am not prepared, without direct instructions from the House, to say that the Question of Adjournment shall not be put from the Chair.

Mr. SEXTON: Mr. Speaker, I shall not proceed, as I originally intended, considering the nature of the remarks you have addressed to the House, and especially the considerate manner in which you, at the close of your statement, guarded the Privileges of the House. I shall merely ask leave to read a letter from a parish priest of Tulla, with respect to an interview which he had with the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary on the subject before the House—

> "DEAR SIR,—As I had a large share in the erection of the wooden huts in the parish of Tulla, I take the liberty of sending you the following facts in connection with them. When the Chief Secretary visited here, I asked him if it were legal for me to assist the lady (Miss Kirk) who had just arrived from Dublin for the sole purpose of erecting huts for the evicted tenants and giving them temporary relief. Here are Mr. Forster's words—'It is perfectly legal, and nothing could be more legal than for man to assist man, and so long as the lady confines herself to these duties she should not be molested.' I then promised the Chief Secretary that I would act as a special policeman, and see that this lady did not in any way incite the people to pay no rent. I now assert that this lady did not, either directly or indirectly, interfere in anything outside what Mr. Forster had declared to be 'perfectly legal,' and that she always declined to answer any question outside the building of the huts and the distribution of a little charity. Miss Kirk is now in Limerick Gaol for acting legally. With regard to the erection of these huts, Miss Kirk and I were opposed to them whenever lodgings could be procured. Now, we erected them on sites for the most part where both landlord and occupier had given full and free consent. Only three of the entire number have been erected on land without the consent of the landlord, which consent would be applied for had we known his address. On the day of eviction the owner and occupier of a fee-simple property voluntarily came forward, and offered sites for huts for all evicted tenants. Several huts are erected, and others in course of erection, on that fee-simple property. Some of the evicted, with families of 10 and 12, first went into lodgings with neighbours who had large families and small houses. These lodgings were convenient to the holdings from which they had been evicted, and yet, as they had not sufficient accommodation, they went a considerable distance to wooden huts. This does not look like watching the farms. I know nothing about some of the evicted having paid their rents and are afraid of returning to their farms. Intimidation and outrage in the district have ceased. By Miss Kirk and myself telling these people that if any outrage or intimidation took place we would immediately break off all communication with them, we brought about a condition which the vast police, and military force too, had failed to effect."

Mr. Speaker, I submit that letter to the consideration of the House. I thank you sincerely for the manner in which you have guarded, on this occasion, our Privileges in this House; and I give Notice that I shall, on the earliest available occasion, call attention to the subject.

MR. REDMOND wished to put a Question arising out of an answer given by the Chief Secretary a few moments ago. Had the attention of the right hon. Gentleman been called to Section 41 of the Code for the regulation of the Royal Irish Constabulary? The section in question provided that—

> "Before issuing any orders of a general nature to police officers under his command the County Inspector will submit them to the Inspector General for his approval."

What he wished to know was, whether the order directing the issue of County Inspector Smith's Circular was submitted to the approval of the Inspector General?

MR. W. E. FORSTER replied, that he was quite cognizant of the section of the Code referred to by the hon. Member, and that the Inspector General was not aware of the Circular before it was issued. He hoped that on a future occasion he should be able to give the House much information on the subject.

STATE OF IRELAND—THE REMOVAL OF PLACARDS BY THE CONSTABULARY.

MR. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, on Sunday the 9th instant, the constabulary tore down and destroyed placards which were posted in Lady's Island, county Wexford, inviting the tenants on two neighbouring estates to meet, in order to discuss the best manner of protecting their interests; and, whether he has sanctioned such action on the part of the police; and, if so, whether the Irish Executive intend to prevent, in the south of Ireland, meetings of tenants similar to those constantly held, unmolested, by the farmers of Ulster?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, it was the duty of the police to remove placards of an unlawful character. Placards had been posted announcing a meeting at this place, and a meeting had been held at which a "no rent" resolution was unanimously adopted. [Mr. HEALY: Hear, hear!] When the placards were put up for the second meeting the police considered that the adjourned meeting would be of a similar character, and removed the placards, as was their duty.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MARTIN SCANLAN AND OTHERS.

MR. LABOUCHERE (for Mr. O'SHEA) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord

Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether No. 452, Martin Scanlan, No. 453, John Gregg, No. 454, Matthew O'Brien, No. 456, Michael Minogue, No. 458, John Clune, and No. 459, Martin Crotty, are correctly included, and whether the grounds for their arrest are correctly stated, in the Return of all Persons detained under the statute 44 Vic. c. 4, dated 1st April 1882?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, the grounds of the arrest were incorrectly stated, but were given in the Return. They were originally arrested for treason-felony, but not under the Protection Act. They were remanded to Ennis Gaol, and were re-arrested under the Protection Act on the expiration of their term of imprisonment.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT—RESTRICTIONS ON THE MOVEMENT OF CATTLE.

Mr. Alderman W. LAWRENCE (for Sir Sydney Waterlow) asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether, having regard to the high price of meat consequent upon the restrictions placed upon the movement of cattle after exposure for sale in the Metropolitan Market, and seeing that only one case of foot and mouth disease has appeared in the Metropolitan Market since the 23rd January (that case about 19th February), and that at this season of the year and during summer months the Home Counties draw the greater part of their beef supplies from the London Cattle Market, can he hold out any hope of an early modification of those restrictions, in order that the London Market may be placed on the same footing as the markets in other large towns, viz.: Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, Wakefield, Birmingham, &c.?

Mr. MUNDELLA: We cannot admit that the high price of meat is caused by the restrictions placed on the Metropolitan Market. The price of beef in that market was exactly the same during the three months which preceded the imposition of the present restrictions and the three months during which they have been in force. The price of mutton here, as elsewhere throughout the country, has been higher during the last three months. The Privy Council, however, are fully alive to the inconvenience caused by the restrictions, and are considering whether they may not now safely return to the state of things which existed up till the end of last year, under which animals sold in the Metropolitan Market may be taken into the country for slaughter.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—POLICE PROTECTION (CARETAKERS) — CASE OF RICHARD ROCHE.

Mr. CHAPLIN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that, in the case of Richard Roach, a caretaker in the employ of the Emergency Committee in Dublin, and who was shot dead on the night of the 17th, on the property of Mr. Caldwell, near New Pallas, county Limerick, that special police protection had been applied for and refused by the Irish Executive; and, whether he will lay upon the Table the Correspondence between the Emergency Committee and himself, the Under Secretary, Mr. Clifford Lloyd, and the Inspector General of Constabulary, with regard to the granting of special police protection to the men employed as caretakers by that Committee?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the protection applied for was not thought necessary by the authorities at Dublin. The murder was not committed at or near the house, but at some distance from it. There had been no application for protection for these persons in going to and fro, and police protection would not have been required for three or four well-armed men if they kept together; but, unfortunately, three out of the four went away, leaving the other man by himself.

IRELAND — THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY — PENSION TO WIDOW OF SERGEANT KAVANAGH.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What pension the Government has determined to award to the widow of Sergeant Kavanagh, who was assassinated whilst performing his duty at Letterfeach, county Galway?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he was glad to be able to say that a special pension of £40 per annum had been awarded to Mrs. Kavanagh so long as she remained unmarried, and of £2 10*s.* to each of her children until they attained the age of 15 years.

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT — THE NEW WAREHOUSING SCHEME—SURVEYORS.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, What is the number of surveyors of each class to be added to the Outdoor Department of Her Majesty's Customs consequent on the transfer of work from the existing Warehousing Departments to the Outdoor Department; and, whether it is the intention of the Treasury that the whole of the surveyorships thus created shall be given to the clerks of the Warehousing Departments who consent to be transferred with their work?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Nine surveyors will be added to the first class, 12 to the second, and 24 to the third; but I cannot at present say how far these posts will be assigned to the outdoor and clerical branches of the Service.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS—COLLISIONS AT SEA.

Captain PRICE asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been called to the numerous collisions which take place between steamships, and the great loss of life and property arising therefrom; and, whether he would consider the expediency of amending the Merchant Shipping Act so as to make it compulsory for all vessels carrying passengers to be fitted with longitudinal bulkheads so as to subdivide their water-tight compartments?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I am fully aware of the number of collisions between steamships. It is, however, satisfactory to know that the number of lives lost by collisions at sea has decreased considerably during the past two years, notwithstanding the great increase in the number and size of seagoing steamships. For the greater security of life and property, I look rather to the strict observance of the Rule of the Road than to any attempt to regulate the details of construction of ships by Act of Parliament. This view is supported by experience. At one time the Merchant Shipping Acts contained an enactment on the subject of bulkheads; but the minimum required by a Statute is apt to become the maximum in practice; and since the Compulsory Clause was repealed the number of bulkheads has greatly increased, and they have also become more efficient.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — MR. MOLONEY.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that Mr. Moloney, at present confined as a suspect in Grangegorman Prison, Dublin, has been refused permission to see his wife except in the ordinary cage, and for fifteen minutes only each day; whether these rules have not been modified in the case of other prisoners who have been permitted to receive visits from their wives of an hour daily, and without the presence of warders; whether it is a fact that upon some occasions when Mr. Moloney had already received visits from friends from the country, even the visit of fifteen minutes in the cage was refused to his wife; whether there is any special reason for these rules being more rigidly enforced in the case of Mr. Moloney than in the case of other prisoners; and, whether the continued imprisonment of Mr. Moloney is due to the fact that Mrs. Moloney is a member of the Ladies' Land League, and that if she retired from that association the Government would release her husband?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that Mr. Moloney was at present confined as a "suspect." As regarded the visits of his wife, he was allowed to see her just in the same way as other "suspects" were allowed to see their friends. The Rules were not more rigidly enforced in his case than in the case of others. His continued detention was not due to the fact that his wife was a member of the Ladies' Land League.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PERSONS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT — GRANGEGORMAN PRISON.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, although there are only two suspects in Grangegorman Prison, visitors are sometimes kept twenty minutes waiting before they can see their friends; no other visitor being in the Gaol; whether the air in the visiting cells is so bad that visitors have, on almost all occasions, made complaints on the subject; whether the cells are so cold that the suspects complain they

> "have to take off their boots and lie under the bed clothes for warmth from 8 o'clock till bed time at 10 o'clock;"

whether it is a fact that the exercise ground consists of a small cottage garden; whether it is a fact that, when a suspect desires to take a bath, he must go down to the convicts' apartments and use their bath; whether it is a fact that there is no hospital in the prison, and not even a room with a fire in which sick persons might lie up; whether the association room is connected with the only closet in the gaol; whether this closet, frequently getting out of order, the atmosphere in the association room is not sometimes abominable; and, whether he will at once have these complaints inquired into?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that three persons were detained as "suspects" in this prison. Visitors to them were never kept so long as 20 minutes before they saw their friends. The architect had reported that the air in the cells was good, that they were well ventilated, and kept at a fair temperature. The baths used by the "suspects" had never been used by convicts, and the sanitary arrangements of the gaol were in good order.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — MR. MURPHY.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, on the 25th of January, Mr. P. J. Murphy, of Cork, was liberated from Kilmainham Prison, on parole, for such time as was necessary to attend to some urgent private affairs, and having been required to sign an undertaking to give notice to the authorities when such affairs were duly arranged; whether, on the 12th of February, Mr. Murphy returned to Dublin, and wrote a letter to the authorities, informing them that he had returned to surrender his parole, and would remain for three days at the Imperial Hotel, in Dublin, ready to receive orders to return to prison; whether he remained for that period ready for re-arrest, and, in fact, called at Kilmainham, but received no intimation whatever from the authorities; and, whether, under these circumstances, his release did not become unconditional?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the facts were as stated by the hon. Member. Nothing had, however, occurred to alter the decision which had been come to by the authorities in this case.

ENTAIL BILL (SCOTLAND)—LEGISLATION.

Mr. DUFF asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he will state to the House when Her Majesty's Government propose to introduce the Entail Bill for Scotland mentioned in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech from the Throne, in order that it may be considered before the meetings of the Commissioners of Supply?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour), in reply, said, that the Bill had been prepared, and would be introduced as soon as the state of Public Business would permit, and he should see whether the desire expressed by his hon. Friend could be carried out.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — PERSONS CLAIMING TO BE AMERICAN CITIZENS DETAINED UNDER THE ACT.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can state when he can lay the Correspondence with the United States relative to suspects claiming American nationality upon the Table; and, whether he can also present to Parliament the representations addressed last year to the United States Government in respect to the incitements offered in the United States to outrage in England, to which representation no answer has been received? The hon. Gentleman said he wished to know whether in case of the answer being unfavourable the hon. Gentleman would lay upon the Table that portion of the Correspondence which had been already published in America?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The Correspondence to which the hon. Member refers will be presented to Parliament before the close of the present week. There will be no objection to presenting the representations addressed last year to the Government of the United States.

MERCANTILE MARINE—THE RECENT ACCIDENT TO THE "ALBERT EDWARD."

MR. ALDERMAN W. LAWRENCE asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been directed to the accident that occurred on Tuesday last to the "Albert Edward" steamboat a short distance from Boulogne, on her passage to Folkstone, by the bursting of one of her cylinders; and if he has any official Report upon the subject explaining why she remained for four hours at anchor without receiving any assistance from the authorities at Boulogne; and, as to what provision is made by the Railway Companies at Folkestone and Dover to render assistance to a steamer disabled on her passage, so as to prevent in future the passengers being detained four hours at anchor, and then towed into Dover or Folkestone by a steam-tug in eight hours more? He wished also to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman's attention had been called to a letter in *The Times* of that day giving a full narrative of the dangers run and the miseries endured by the passengers; and whether it was not compulsory on Channel passenger steamboats to carry lights in case they were overtaken by fog?

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND asked whether the *Albert Edward* was not the same boat which had some of her machinery broken only the week before Easter, and drifted four or five hours before reaching Calais Harbour?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: With respect to the last Question, I have no information. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will put the Question another day. As regards the additional Question of my hon. Friend the Member for the City, my attention has been called to the letter to which he refers, and it is no doubt the fact that the Channel boats, like all other passenger boats, are required to carry a proper supply of lights. As to the Question on the Paper, the Board of Trade have instructed their officials to make a preliminary inquiry into the accident that recently occurred to the steamship *Albert Edward* shortly after leaving Boulogne on her passage to Folkestone; and when the Report of this inquiry is received, I will consider whether any further investigation is necessary. As to the vessel not receiving assistance from the authorities at Boulogne, I have no official information; but I learn from a private source that a pilot boat was sent off, the state of the tide preventing a tug from leaving the harbour. As to the last part of the hon. Member's Question, I will communicate with the Railway Companies.

ARMY (INDIA)—PROMOTION OF CAVALRY OFFICERS.

COLONEL WILLIAMS asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether he has any objection to lay upon the Table of the House the Papers showing what steps have been taken to relieve the stagnation of promotion amongst the Officers on the Cadres of Cavalry of the Indian Army, these Officers having been been led to believe, from various official communications addressed to them before, during, and since 1880, that "the question was then under the immediate consideration of Her Majesty's Government;" whether it is a fact that every Officer on these Cadres, after completing twenty years' service, serves pecuniarily at a disadvantage with his juniors of the "General List of Officers of Cavalry," by reason of those Officers being granted substantive promotion, and increased pay, after stipulated periods of service, these advantages being withheld from their seniors in the Cadres; and, whether this supersession in substantive rank, with the loss of the pecuniary advantages attaching thereto, is not a contravention of the guarantee given to the Officers of the Cadres above mentioned, by the "Henley Clause," and in antagonism with the opinions of the Committees presided over by Lords Hotham and Cranborne, and Sir T. Aitcheson, respectively?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The officers of the Cadres of the Cavalry of the Indian Army continue under the same rules of promotion as they enjoyed under the East India Company. Through slackness of Cadre promotion, they have for the most part fallen behind the Staff

Corps and General List officers in attaining the higher grades of substantive rank; yet every one of them had the option, in 1866, of joining the Staff Corps, and thereby placing themselves on an exact equality with the officers of whose more favourable promotion they now complain. That they did not take advantage of this is probably due to their desire to preserve the present advantage of considerably higher unemployed and furlough pay than that drawn by the Staff Corps and General List officers; and, secondly, to their hope that their ordinary Cadre promotion would, as has proved to be the case with the Infantry, prove more favourable to them than the promotion by fixed periods in force with the Staff Corps. As a fact, their promotion has been considerably less favourable than that of the Staff Corps and General List; but they are protected from supersession by the grant of Army—that is, brevet—rank, on the completion of the same periods of qualifying service as the Staff Corps and General List. Their rights and privileges have been strictly maintained, and there has been in no degree a contravention of the Parliamentary guarantee. Still, there is no doubt that the position of the local Cavalry officers, especially in the junior grades, is so depressed that some exceptional and remedial measures are needed. I have, therefore, recently addressed the Government of India on the subject, and have suggested a measure, which will, I believe, prove efficacious. Until I receive their reply, I do not think I could properly lay the incomplete Correspondence before the House; nor would it be right that I should indicate the remedial measures which I had suggested, until the Government of India has had an opportunity of considering and expressing an opinion on it.

NAVY—PAYMENT OF NAVAL PENSIONS.

Mr. GORST asked, Whether it is a fact that the payment of Naval Pensions due April 1st has in the Chatham district not yet commenced; what steps will be taken by the Admiralty to expedite the payment of these pensions; and, whether measures will be taken to prevent on a future occasion the inconvenience and distress caused by the non-receipt of moneys upon which the pensioners have been accustomed to rely?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to the hon. and learned Member, I have to remind him that I answered a general Question on this subject some days ago, and on Friday I stated that the delay in paying the pensions at Plymouth, which I was at a loss to understand, had led to an officer being specially sent there. We also found delays at Chatham, and sent an officer on Saturday there; and I hear by telegraph to-day that the issue to 2,700 pensioners (Army, Navy, &c.) is now concluded. These delays, as I have already informed the House, will not occur again.

Mr. PULESTON asked whether there was any objection to allowing these pensioners to go personally for their pensions? It would save both time and expense.

Mr. CHILDERS: The present system was established in order to remove the temptation which existed previously to pensioners to go and spend their money as soon as they received it. There is no intention to return to the old arrangement.

Mr. MACLIVER asked whether it was a fact that the pension papers must be signed by four Staff officers?

Mr. CHILDERS: I am unable to reply to that Question without Notice.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS asked whether it would not be desirable to station a Staff officer at Woolwich?

Mr. CHILDERS: I do not think that it is necessary that an officer should be stationed at that place.

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT—THE NEW WAREHOUSING SCHEME.

Mr. ANDERSON asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If it be the fact that, in reorganizing the Customs Service, the Indoor Warehousing Department is being abolished or greatly reduced, and the servants are offered only the ordinary terms of retirement, or the acceptance of outdoor service, involving longer hours, nightwork, and exposure in duties not strictly analogous to their former employment; and, if it be the fact that, when similar changes were made in the Admiralty and War Office, an Act was passed (41 and 42 Vic. c. 53) giving gratuities to those who were thus retired, and why the

Customs servants are to be less liberally dealt with?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: I cannot admit that the alternative offered to the displaced warehousing clerks is accurately described in the Question of my hon. Friend. The new service will practically be not very unlike that to which they have been accustomed; and so far as the hours are different, they will be compensated by some increase of pay. Failing the acceptance of this alternative, they will receive pensions at the special rate allowed under the 7th section of the Superannuation Act, in case of abolition of office. I cannot but think that much groundless alarm has been excited by too literal interpretation of the technical term "outdoor." As regards the suggestion in the latter part of the Question, I have to observe that the very peculiar circumstances which were held to warrant the exceptional terms given in the War Office and Admiralty, under a special Act, do not exist in the present case.

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY (SCOTLAND).

MR. BUCHANAN asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether he will lay upon the Table the recent Memorial of the Edinburgh Geological Society with regard to the Scottish Geological Survey, together with the reply thereto of the Science and Art Department?

MR. MUNDELLA: I shall be glad to lay the Correspondence on the Table if the hon. Member will move for it.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—INTERFERENCE OF THE CONSTABULARY.

MR. LALOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true that, on the 15th instant, the constable of Ballybrittas Station, in the Queen's County, accompanied by a sub-constable, visited the residence of Mr. Edmund Nolan, of Belin, and told him that—

> "He had been ordered by the sub-inspector, Mr. Grene, of Maryborough, to call on him, Mr. Nolan, and ask what terms he had made with his landlord;"

and, if so, is it to be understood that for the future the police force in Ireland shall have added to their other duties the responsibility of collecting rents, and otherwise acting as land agents?

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, that the statement was not true, and that the police would not be employed in collecting rents.

ISLAND OF CYPRUS—THE NEW CONSTITUTION — REPRESENTATION OF MUSSULMEN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Mussulman community of Cyprus have presented a Petition to Her Majesty's Government against the new Constitution of the Legislative Council in that Island, by which it is proposed that the Council shall consist of nine Christian to three Mussulman members, and whether the following is an accurate representation of the tenour of the Petition:—That the British Government, in proposing this change of proportion (the present members on the Council being half Mussulman and half Christian), have not considered the loyalty with which the Mussulman inhabitants of Cyprus accepted the change of administration, refusing to listen to the Anti-English party who tried to stir up agitation; that the British Government have not considered the character of the agitation which is now going on among the Greek population for the ruin and oppression of the Mahometans; that they have not considered the fact that the Mussulmans, who have for over three centuries possessed the Island, have always treated their Christian fellow-citizens with justice, and protected them in the enjoyment of their property and religion; that the Government have not consulted the British Authorities in Cyprus before using this new Constitution; that, although in the 10th and 11th Articles of the new Constitution it is stated that the British Government, in accordance with the terms of their Convention with the Sultan, wish to give the population of Cyprus a law and not privileges, yet by the 4th Article (which establishes this Council of nine Christians to three Mussulmans) they give to the Greeks the greatest possible privilege—one which they do not even possess in Greece itself; that in Asia Minor, where the Mussulmans are in a large majority, the Christian population have equal numbers and equal votes on the Administrative Councils, and of the fact that under the proposed change the Mussulmans who are in a majority in Nicosia, the principal town, would be at the mercy of the Greeks, and in view of the fact that the Greeks openly assert that they mean to use their majority on the Council in order to oppress the Mussulman population, and to obtain the independence of Cyprus; the Petitioners finally pray that either the proposed Constitution of the Legislative Council be modified and restored to the old plan of equal numbers and equal votes, or that the Mussulman population be allowed to emigrate in order to escape the loss of their rights and their personal safety; whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to the inflammatory articles inciting to race persecution and revolution which appear in the Greek journals of Cyprus; and, whether, in view of the very grave statements contained in the petition of the above Mussulmans of Cyprus, which is signed by the Mufti and other notables on behalf of the whole Mussulman population of the Island, Her Majesty's Government will either withdraw the Article complained of, or fix an early day for the discussion of the question in Parliament?

Mr. COURTNEY: Sir, a Petition has been received from the Mussulman community of Cyprus; but the representation of it in the Question of the hon. Member cannot be accepted as accurate. The Petition and the reply will be included in the Papers shortly to be presented. I may, however, say now that the document commented on in the Petition is not a draft of a Constitution with definite Articles, but a despatch containing a general outline of a proposed new Council. It is not proposed that the Council shall consist of nine Christian and three Mussulman members. These will be the members elected by the Mussulmans and Christians, and in addition thereto there will be six official members, and the President will also have a vote. The present Council is not half Mussulman and half Christian. Sir Garnet Wolseley appointed one Mahomedan and two Christian unofficial members; but there is now one vacancy among the Christian members. It is not the case that the British authorities in Cyprus have not been consulted. There have, in truth, been long and frequent communications with them. It will be seen, without going through all the paragraphs of the Question of the hon. Member, that the fears of the Mussulman community, to whose loyalty and good behaviour the Secretary of State willingly bears testimony, rest on misapprehension of the nature of the proposed Council, and it is not proposed to withdraw the scheme. It is not thought that any particular attention is due to the articles in the Cyprus Press more than to other strong articles which appear in newspapers throughout our Colonies. It is not intended to fix an early day for the discussion of the question in Parliament.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked of what nationality the six official members were to be?

Mr. COURTNEY: As they will be appointed by England, they will be probably English.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that, in consequence of the unsatisfactory answer of the hon. Gentleman, he should call attention to the subject on an early day.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MESSRS. NALLY AND O'KANE.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, On what grounds the warrants were issued against Messrs. Nally and O'Kane, and who was the person at whose request these gentlemen were told that the warrants were suspended, and that they might return to Ireland?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had already explained the circumstances of this case, and he could not go into any more details.

CROWN AGENTS FOR THE COLONIES—INSPECTOR OF COALS AT CARDIFF.

Mr. LEWIS asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether Mr. John Batchelor, of Cardiff, has recently been appointed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies Inspector of Coals to the Crown Agents for the Colonies, or by whom such appointment was made; whether he had any experience whatever on the subject of coal exploration or coal mines, or any practical knowledge of coal or the coal trade; whether he is the same person as carried on business as a timber merchant and shipbuilder during all his business life; whether he is also the same person who was for some time previous to his appointment the leader of the Liberal party in Cardiff; and, whether the appointment was conferred by the Colonial Secretary spontaneously or at the solicitation of Mr. Batchelor?

MR. COURTNEY: The appointment to which the hon. Member refers is made by the Crown Agents on their own responsibility. The Secretary of State transmitted to the Crown Agents one testimonial which was sent to him in favour of Mr. Batchelor; but did not interfere further in the matter, and never heard anything about Mr. Batchelor's political antecedents. I myself received, and forwarded, a similar testimonial. Another letter which I received, referring to Mr. Batchelor's political services, I entirely suppressed. The Crown Agents report that Mr. Batchelor was one of several applicants who submitted their testimonials on the death of the late holder of the office in question; that he was then selected, with two or three others, as appearing to possess the best qualifications for the post; and it was eventually conferred upon him after communication with those who, in the Crown Agents' opinion, were competent to speak as to his special knowledge of the duties he proposed to undertake. The Crown Agents add that in making their appointments they are not actuated by political considerations, their object being to secure the most efficient servants they can get.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—"UNITED IRELAND"—ALLEGED EXCESS OF DUTY BY A CONSTABLE AT WATERFORD.

MR. LEAMY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that on Sunday last a police constable entered the house of Mr. Patrick Kavanagh, Michael Street, Waterford, and, finding Mrs. Kavanagh engaged in reading "United Ireland," attempted to take it from her, and in the attempt threw her down, put his knees on her stomach and tore her clothes, while he searched her in a most insulting manner, Mrs. Kavanagh being unable to offer any resistance, as she has been for some time partially paralyzed; whether he also assaulted her daughter, Miss Kavanagh, and then proceeded to search the premises, knocking the furniture about in all directions; and, if these statements are correct, what course the authorities propose to take to mark their sense of such an outrage?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had made inquiry into this case, and found that the constable was guilty of this assault. He was not aware of the instructions that had been issued against seizing the recent numbers of *United Ireland.* He saw a woman reading a number of the paper, and wanted to take it. She resisted, and he then took it from her by force. The constable was summoned before the magistrates, and fined 21*s.* and costs. He denied the particulars of the aggravated assault; and he (Mr. W. E. Forster) imagined that the magistrates must have agreed with him, because the Mayor and one of the Justices present said that, although it was their duty to fine him for assaulting the woman, they believed he only did it in what he considered the discharge of his duty.

MR. SEXTON asked if the right hon. Gentleman was aware that some of the magistrates expressed their disbelief in the accuracy of his statement?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I was not aware of that.

LAW AND POLICE—THE RIOTS AT CAMBORNE.

MR. LEAMY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is true, as reported in the "Cornish Telegraph" of Thursday 20th instant, that, on Tuesday last, a riot occurred at Camborne, Cornwall, which began in an attempt to stone two Irishmen who were in the custody of the police; that the houses of the Irish in the town were wrecked, and the property in them destroyed and several of their occupants brutally ill-used, that, in one case, a poor old woman who had been bedridden for a couple of years was pulled from her bed and left writhing in agony on the floor; that an attack was made on the Catholic Chapel, and that—

> "First the windows were smashed in, then, after repeated efforts, the doors were forced. Inside, the rioters lost all control of themselves, and did most wanton damage. They broke up

> the crucifixes and pictures; the image of the Virgin Mary was torn from its place, thrown amongst the mob, and trampled to pieces. The confessional-box was speedily converted into fire-wood. The altar and its fittings were torn down, the gaseliers were broken off, and the organ destroyed—the scene within the Church beggaring description;"

whether any of the rioters have been arrested; and, whether any steps have been taken to protect the life and property of the Irish residents in Camborne and to restore law and order in that town?

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY: Before the right hon. and learned Gentleman answers the Question, I may, perhaps, be allowed to put another on the same subject. I wish to ask him whether he has seen the following statements in *The Standard* of this morning, and whether they are true so far as he knows:—

> "About a dozen men suspected of being ringleaders in the riots, were also sworn in, and placed on duty in the Town Hall;"

and, again—

> "Complaint is generally made that there were rumours for a week or more before the Petty Sessions day that there would be a riot, and that the Catholic chapel would be wrecked, of which rumours the Magistrates were informed by the priest. No precautions were taken to prevent the threats being carried out. Secondly, that after the riot no protection was provided for the threatened Irish in the outlying villages. And, thirdly, that when the county police were brought to Camborne they were kept shut up in the station, so that they were utterly useless, and the victory lay with the mob. Not one of the rioters has yet been apprehended?"

MR. BELLINGHAM asked whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman had seen the statement in this day's paper to the effect that the conduct of the authorities had been the subject of ridicule throughout the country amongst all classes?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have received reports on the subject from the Chief Constable and from the Justices, which are too long to read to the House; but the effect of which, to my mind, is that none of those reports in the newspapers are correct. They are entirely exaggerated, and altogther inaccurate. That is the answer I have to give with reference to the newspaper reports. With regard to the latter part of the Question, I am informed that the steps which have been taken to protect the life and property of the Irish residents in Camborne, and to restore law and order in that town, have been sufficiently effectual, and that no repetition of these disgraceful riots has taken place. I saw the Chairman of the Local Quarter Sessions at the House here on Friday, just before he was going to Cornwall, and I impressed upon him the necessity and propriety of making every effort to arrest the authors of these riots. I have received a telegram to-day showing that one of the persons has been arrested, and that it is intended to make further arrests.

MR. HEALY: May I ask whether it is not true that the special constables sworn in to prevent the riot were the ringleaders of it?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have no information to that effect.

MR. LEAMY: Is it true that the Roman Catholic Church was wrecked and the sacred ornaments torn down?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The accounts I have received say that that statement is quite untrue. Some of the windows were broken; but a very gallant lady routed the mob with a candlestick. [*Cries of* "Read!"]

> "She was carrying out a pair of large candlesticks when she saw a man trying to unship the altar rail. She put down one candlestick, clubbed the other, and went for him. He ran away, leaving his pocket-handkerchief behind him; and every soul in the place scuttled off, hiding their faces in their coat-collars."

All the sacred vestments and other articles were rescued.

MR. BELLINGHAM: Was the church in such a state that no service could be held in it on Sunday?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I believe it was thought indiscreet to hold a service there last Sunday.

SOUTH AFRICA—NATAL—ALLEGED MASSACRE.

MR. R. N. FOWLER asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether his attention has been called to the following statement of the "Grahamstown Journal" of March 8th:—

> "The correspondent of the 'Independent' at Taungs, March, 4th, says—'On Feb. 13th a patrol of Boers and Mosheshe's men captured thirty unarmed men of Jan Macsibi's on the road from the Diamond Fields, took them to their laager and massacred twenty-seven of them. On the 21st the whole force of two hundred and fifty Boers with Moshete's and Matchain's people attacked Montsioa's station

with three cannon; in the afternoon they tried to storm the station by driving cattle in front of them against the trenches; at the third attempt Montsioa sallied out, captured all the cattle, and repulsed the Boers to their laager. Their loss is unknown, but must be heavy. At daylight on the 25th the Boers again attacked the station. . . . . Thirty-eight Boers and allies were left on the field, and among them the Boer commandant and the leader of Moshete's army;'"

and, whether he can give the House any information on the subject?

MR. COURTNEY: I have not seen the paragraph in *The Grahamstown Journal*, except in the Question of the hon. Member; but we have received, under cover from Sir Hercules Robinson, a letter from Mr. Bethell, agent to Montsioa, containing almost identically the same statements. Sir Hercules Robinson had already directed the Resident at Pretoria to inquire into the truth of the allegation of the murder of unarmed Natives, and we look for a further Report on this and other points.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—THE TENANTRY.

MR. HEALY asked, If any information has reached the Government as to whether a number of the tenants who have made applications to the Land Court to fix a fair rent are in the meanwhile allowing their farms to remain untilled; and, if he can give the House any idea to what extent this practice is prevailing?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I have no information to that effect. I have asked the Land Commissioners personally, and they likewise have no information.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE.

MR. PEMBERTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, having regard to what took place in this House on Thursday last, during the time usually devoted to answering Questions, he has considered the desirability of moving the 2nd Resolution, relating to the Business of the House, before the 1st Resolution is finally disposed of?

MR. GLADSTONE: We do not think it desirable to do so, even to avoid the inconvenience to which the hon. Member refers.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—"ARREARS."

MR. T. A. DICKSON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If Her Majesty's Government are prepared to submit any scheme to the House, in reference to the question of arrears of rent in Ireland?

MR. GLADSTONE: On Wednesday a Bill will be discussed which will give the hon. Member an opportunity of raising the question. If he likes he can put this Question then.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — FOREIGN SUBJECTS DETAINED UNDER THE ACT.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked, Whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce some measure to enable the Executive to deal with suspects claiming foreign nationality, on the principles laid down in the Act 11 and 12 Vic. c. 20?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: It is not the intention of the Government to introduce such a measure.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE — THE CHANNEL TUNNEL SCHEME.

MR. ARTHUR VIVIAN asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether an opportunity will be afforded to Parliament of expressing an opinion on the general question of the desirability of a Channel Tunnel before any sort of sanction is given to any scheme by the Government?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have already stated that nothing should be done without the House having a full opportunity of expressing its opinion upon the subject. If my hon. Friend means to inquire whether the Executive Government, in their corporate capacity, will do anything to prejudge the opinion of the House or to limit its discretion in any way, I would say certainly not.

RATING — VALUATION OF GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHMENTS.

MR. BOORD asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the grant in lieu of rates, in respect of Government establishments situate in the parishes of Woolwich and Plumstead, is still paid on a valuation made in the year 1874; whether large additions and improvements have not been made in the said establishments since that date; and, whether he will consider the propriety of causing a fresh valuation to be made?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: The valuations on which the Treasury contributions in lieu of rates are made were settled in 1875 for the parishes of Woolwich and Plumstead. I believe it is true that since that date there has been considerable outlay on the property. It would be undesirable to reopen the question of the valuations until all the Government property in the United Kingdom has been assessed. This task will, I hope, be completed in about two months, after which the whole subject will be carefully considered.

LAW AND POLICE—THE RECENT ATTACK UPON THE SALVATION ARMY AT CHESTER.

Mr. CAINE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to the recent trial, at the Chester Sessions, of the ringleaders of the riots against the Salvation Army in that city, who were charged with violent assaults on the members of that religious body, by which many peaceable citizens were injured, one woman having been at the point of death for more than a week, and a young man having become totally blind in consequence; if he is aware that the prisoners were all found guilty by the jury, and were proved, during their trial, to have been persons of known bad character; and if it is true that the Recorder of Chester inflicted no punishment, but simply bound them over to come up for judgment if called upon; if he is aware that the rioters dealt with summarily by the borough magistrates, at the time these ringleaders were sent to trial, are still in prison; and, if he will take into consideration how far the Law is properly vindicated by the lesser offenders receiving a more severe punishment than the ringleaders?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he had no power over the magistrates in such matters. He could not order a heavier sentence than the magistrates thought fit to inflict.

FRANCE—THE COMMERCIAL TREATY—RENEWAL OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

Mr. MAGNIAC asked, Whether there was any truth in the report that the Government had made proposals to France for a renewal of the negotiations for a Treaty of Commerce, in consideration of certain concessions in respect to cotton and silk?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: There is no foundation for the report.

ISLAND OF CYPRUS—THE NEW CONSTITUTION — REPRESENTATION OF MUSSULMEN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Mr. MAC IVER inquired, Whether it was true that the Mussulman inhabitants of Cyprus were only to have three representatives on the Council out of a total of 18?

Mr COURTNEY, in reply, said, three Mussulman members would be elected to nine Christians—a proportion which fairly represented the population of the Island. The other members were official.

THE LAND LEAGUE AND FENIANISM—MR. ARNOLD FORSTER AND THE "PALL MALL GAZETTE."

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a letter in to-day's *Pall Mall Gazette*, signed "Arnold Forster," maintaining that there is no distinction between the members of the Land League and the Fenians; whether it is a fact that the principal members of the executive are now in prison; and, whether it is usual to allow persons confined under the Protection of Person and Property Act to write letters to newspapers on political matters?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: The hon. Member should give Notice of his Question; but I do not think I am bound to answer such Questions at all.

CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS—PRIVATE SECRETARIES TO MINISTERS.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR, who had a Notice standing on the Paper to the effect—

> "That the practice of appointing clerks of the Treasury Office, and other gentlemen who have acted as private secretaries to Prime Ministers and Chancellors of the Exchequer, to important posts in Departments of the Civil Service other than the Treasury, is calculated to discourage zeal and industry in such Departments to the prejudice of the Public Service,"

remarked that, although he regarded the subject of his Notice as one of great importance, still, as it appeared to be the general wish of the House that the Prime Minister should be allowed to make his Financial Statement at as early an hour as possible, he had yielded to the suggestion of his hon. Friends around him that he should withdraw his Motion. He therefore begged leave to give Notice that he should postpone his Motion until the next occasion when the House was asked to go into Committee of Supply.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

WAYS AND MEANS—FINANCIAL STATEMENT.—COMMITTEE.

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GLADSTONE): Mr. Lyon Playfair—I think that my first duty on this occasion is to tender my acknowledgments to hon. Gentlemen opposite, and especially to the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor), for the courteous announcement which he has just made to the House. I believe, however, that I may say, without offence, that the Motion of the hon. Member for Queen's County would have been an innovation, and that it would have been in my power to have counteracted it by another innovation quite within the limits of the Orders of this House—namely, by making the Financial Statement with the Speaker in the Chair. I think, however, that the Committee will feel that it is much better that these two innovations should pass into the usual place of unfulfilled resolutions, and that the Financial Statement should be made in the usual manner, by which perfect freedom of remark is allowed to all hon. Members who may see occasion to enter into the subject. With respect to the general financial condition of the country, I will only say that essentially the position of the Expenditure is that it is a somewhat growing Expenditure, and that with respect to the Revenue, that it is a sluggish Revenue. It is much as it has been during the last two years—this being the third occasion during the existence of the present Government on which I have had cast upon me the duty of making the Financial Statement to the House. It is very remarkable that although employment is generally active, and although the condition of trade cannot be said to be generally unsatisfactory, yet the recovery of the country from the point of extreme depression has been a slow and a languid recovery, especially as far as regards the action of that recovery upon the Revenue of the country. No doubt, there is a natural explanation of the circumstance in the extreme excitement —the unnatural and the unhealthy excitement—of prices which existed during the period of prosperity which preceded the time of depression; and it is to that cause that we must look for the slackness of the recovery to which I have referred, and not to any diminution whatsoever in the resources of the country, or any deterioration of its industrial prospects. I go at once now to lay before the Committee the particulars which it is customary for them to receive on this occasion. I shall have to deal in the first instance with the financial year 1881-2, which reached its close on the 31st of March. The Expenditure of that year was estimated at £86,190,000; the actual Expenditure was £85,472,000, showing that the Expenditure fell short of the Estimate by £718,000. The comparison of the Expenditure with the Expenditure of the preceding year is a more serious matter. Of course, it is well within the Estimate; but the topic to which I next pass—namely, the comparison with the preceding year—requires a little closer investigation. The Expenditure of 1880-1 was £83,180,000; the Expenditure of 1881-2 was £85,472,000, showing an augmentation of £2,365,000. But, in order that the House may understand the position of these two years relatively to other years, and of the second year relatively to the first, it is right that I should mention to them what was the amount of special War Charges connected with various subjects of policy which have been repeatedly before the House, and which came upon both of these years. I will give the particulars for the two years—first, for the year 1880-1; and, secondly, for the year 1881-2. In 1880-1 the Charge on account of the Transvaal was £656,000 in connection with warlike operations in that country; £446,000 of that sum was on account of the Army, and £210,000 on account of the Navy. The Charge imposed upon that year in respect of the debt created by an arrangement shortly before we came into Office, for the purpose of getting rid in a small number of years of the debt of £6,000,000, contracted a few years ago for purposes connected with the War between Russia and Turkey—that Charge—namely, the charge of the Annuity by which the debt is to be extinguished—was in 1880-1 £1,129,000. There was also a Loan of £2,000,000 contracted by my Predecessor in Office, and advanced without interest to India. The Charge in respect of that Loan in 1880-1 was £62,000. Besides, there was a Vote of £500,000 asked by the present Government from the House in aid of Indian Finance, and voted before the expiration of the financial year to which I am referring. The whole of these special Charges for the year 1880-1 was £2,347,000. In the year 1881-2 those Charges underwent a considerable increase. The Transvaal Army Charge was £1,066,000; the Transvaal Navy Charge was £303,000; and the Transvaal Civil Charge, for expenses which it was necessary to contract in connection with the re-transfer of the Civil Government, was £400,000; or in all, on account of the Transvaal, £1,769,000. The Charge in respect of the £6,000,000 Vote of 1878 was, for the year 1881-2, £1,350,000. The Charge for the Indian Loan was £88,000; and the Charge for the Grant in Aid of Indian Finance on account of the Afghan War, was, as before, £500,000. There was also a small special Vote for the Zulu War, to liquidate the account of £135,000; making the total amount of the special War Charges for the year 1881-2, £3,842,000, instead of £2,347,000. There was thus an excess of the War Charges for that year over those of 1880-1 of £1,495,000. That, however, still leaves an increase of Expenditure of between £800,000 and £900,000. I will not attempt minutely to explain that excess. The House is aware that some classes of increase in our Expenditure may be called normal, and that some classes of increase even represent a corresponding profit. Among what are commonly called normal augmentations are such augmentations as those in the Education Vote, and among those which are usually connected with a corresponding increase of profit are the very heavy and large augmentations of expenditure for the cost of establishments and buildings in connection with the Postal and Telegraph Services. In the particular case I refer to, the increase in the Postal and Telegraph Services for 1881-2 over the former year was £317,000. The cost of the Census was £140,000; the cost of the increased Education Estimates was £140,000; and the special Expenditure connected with the state of Ireland, partly for the increase of Constabulary and partly otherwise, was £190,000. These sums account for nearly £800,000 of the augmentation which I have pointed out to the House. It is not necessary to pursue the matter into more detail. Well, then, Sir, having compared the Expenditure with the Estimate, and having compared it with the Expenditure of the previous year, I have next to compare it with the Revenue of the year. That account will not be found to offer a very brilliant result; but, at the same time, it is so far a satisfactory result that the balance is on the right side. The Income for the year was £85,822,000, and the Expenditure £85,472,000; so that there is a small Surplus of Income over Expenditure amounting to £350,000. It is a matter of interest to compare the Revenue of the year with the Estimate of what that Revenue will be, because it tends to throw light on a subject to which I have referred—namely, the languid manner in which the Revenne is at present recovering from a state of depression. The subject, however, in one of its branches leads into discussions of very great moral and social interest, although they are discussions impossible at the present moment to lead to anything like a demonstrative result. Comparing the Revenue with the Estimates of the year, I find that the Customs, which were estimated to yield £19,180,000, yielded £19,287,000; the Excise, estimated to yield £27,444,000, yielded £27,240,000; Stamps, estimated at £12,290,000, yielded £12,260,000; the Taxes, estimated at £2,760,000, yielded £2,725,000; and the Income Tax, estimated at £9,540,000, yielded the unexpectedly large amount of £9,945,000. I take all these items together, adhering to the practice—the convenient practice which has now been established for some years—of distinguishing between the Tax Revenue of the country and the non-Tax Revenue—

between that which is derived directly and that which is derived indirectly from taxes. I find that the Tax Revenue, estimated at £71,210,000, yielded £71,457,000; an excess, although a very small excess, which I wish to bring under the notice of the House in connection with the present state of our relations between trade and industry on the one hand and the Exchequer on the other. Coming to those portions of the Revenue not derived from taxes, they stand more favourably on the whole. The Post Office, estimated to yield £6,800,000, yielded £7,000,000; Telegraphs, estimated to yield £1,600,000, yielded £1,630,000; the Crown Lands, estimated at £390,000, owing to difficulties connected with agricultural depression on a limited scale, yielded £380,000; the interest on Advances and other moneys included under the same head, estimated at £1,200,000, yielded £1,219,000; and the Miscellaneous Items, estimated at £3,900,000, yielded £4,136,000. Upon the whole, the non-Tax Revenue, estimated at £13,890,000, yielded £14,365,000; and the total Revenue of the country, estimated at £85,100,000, yielded £85,822,000; or an excess of £722,000 over the amount at which it had been taken at the commencement of the financial year. It has been my practice for a good many years to give the House what is necessarily a rough Estimate, but still an Estimate, on a matter of great importance—namely, an Estimate of the real increase, or the real augmentation, of the Revenue, because the accounts of the Revenue, as published, are not sufficiently clear, and those who are conversant with the subject are well aware that they are not always a safe guide to the rapid conclusions which some writers and observers are apt to arrive at from a rough inspection of them. I want, then, but not at any great length, to compare the Tax Revenue of 1880-1 with the Tax Revenue of 1881-2; but, of course, in order to make that comparison just, I must introduce certain rectifications to insure that I am dealing with exactly the same elements. The Tax Revenue of 1880-1 stood at £69,814,000. But then there was a sum of no less than £1,320,000, which was arrested on its way to the Exchequer, being part of the receipt of the Malt Tax Duty, which in due and regular course was employed to discharge the claim of the malsters for drawback. Therefore, adding that sum, which I suppose to have been arrested, for the purpose of comparison, to the Revenue of 1881, the addition gives a total of £71,134,000. But now I have to make an addition on the other side; and I have to make a deduction, for the purposes of comparison, because in that year we received a very large sum from the imposition of an additional 1*d.* on the Income Tax, a sum estimated at £1,460,000. I do not, however, take the whole of that sum, because about £400,000 of the produce of that 1*d.* may be considered to have been also enjoyed by the year just expired. I, therefore, deduct £1,060,000, which leaves the Revenue for 1880-1, for the purposes of comparison, at £70,074,000. The Tax Revenue of 1881-2 stands at £71,457,000; but then it was augmented by two sums, one connected with the change in the Spirit Duties, and another connected with the change in the Probate and Legacy Duties, which were estimated to add to the Revenue £575,000, although they did not add quite so much. Therefore, deducting that sum for the purpose of comparison, it leaves the Tax Revenue of 1881-2 at £70,887,000. Deducting therefrom the Tax Revenue of 1880-1—£70,074,000—I have a residue of £813,000, which, as nearly as I am able to estimate, indicates to the House the true increase in the Revenue of the country from the same sources in the two years respectively. It is rather remarkable how closely that increase corresponds with the increase of population. The increase of the population is something over 1 per cent. This augmentation in the Tax Revenue is also something over 1 per cent. This is not the representation of a very bad year, neither is it the representation of a very good year, because in a fat year we ought to be able to do something more than merely keep pace with the increase of population, in order to make up for the deficit of the lean years in former times. The sum of £813,000 may be said to exhibit the true increase of the Revenue from the same sources and under the same supposed conditions of law. But I must not pass from this portion of the subject without adverting to those points in which changes have been introduced into the law, although there is only one of them upon which I shall have occasion to dwell. The first I shall mention is a subject on which no change has been introduced into the law, although I have been exceedingly desirous to introduce a change. That is the Duty on Silver Plate. There are two reasons that would recommend the abolition of that duty. The first and the special reason is the very great anxiety entertained by the Indian Government that that duty should, if possible, be removed, they believing it to be a very serious hindrance to the introduction of silver goods from India, and being under the belief admitted by all the authorities of this country, who, of course, speak with considerable weight, that a large trade would probably take place in the introduction of silver goods from India if the duty were abolished. But a more general reason, undoubtedly, recommends the abolition of this duty—namely, that it perplexes the market, and places transactions in new and in old plate on an embarrassed footing relatively, and inflicts much greater mischief in the limitation of industry, and possibly tends to lower the standard of our manufactured silver goods, while obstructing the progress of taste in design; these being objections which cannot at all correspond with any benefit derived from that source by the Revenue. Then, when it is said, "Why not abolish the duty?"—the abolition of the duty raises the formidable question of drawback; and the question of drawback is far more formidable, and far more difficult, and I will even say, in my opinion, far more questionable than it is in regard to any other Excise commodity whatever. Whenever this duty is abolished, if no drawback is given, at least the producers of silver goods in this country must be heard and their arguments considered. I am not prepared to make any proposal in this direction at the present time. As the House is aware, I have no Revenue to give away. The sum is not large enough, and, therefore, is not worth considering in that way. But I am not prepared to propose a drawback on silver goods; and, on the other hand, I doubt whether the trade is sufficiently lively and progressive to enable it to meet the change, or, at any rate, to make it content to meet the change without a drawback. The House will understand that, in this case, the drawback is extreme; I conceive it in principle to be disputable. Our rule is this. We give drawbacks upon Excisable commodities, but not on every commodity that has not yet reached the hands of the consumer, and only upon Excisable commodities, so far as we can get at them, in the hands of the wholesale dealer, where we have distinct cognizance of those commodities, and where we can know what we are about. But there is no such cognizance in the case of silver goods. When the duties are once paid on the goods they are distributed over the whole country, and the claim to drawback is a claim which, in this instance alone, is made on behalf of the retail dealer. The amount of that drawback would not be a large sum in itself; but still it is extremely large with reference to the revenue in question—from £50,000 to £60,000 a-year—and the drawback, if it were given, would not be less than three or four times that revenue. That forms a very awkward combination of circumstances on which to give it consideration. I do not myself, upon the whole, incline to believe that the consideration of drawback is applicable to the subject at all. It may be necessary to wait for a more favourable opinion before a change can be made; but it cannot be made now. I do not in the least degree grudge parting with the revenue, and I have adverted to the question now in order that it may be well understood in India that we are really desirous of making progress. But I am not prepared, as at present advised, to face the question of drawback, beset as it is with difficulty formidable relatively to the Revenue; while, in my opinion, there is no sound reason for making an exception in this case. Another subject of change last year, on which I need not dwell, was a rectification of a small differential charge made upon foreign spirits. It was demonstrated that that charge was in excess, and would operate as a protective duty. It required re-adjustment, and the re-adjustment was made. It was estimated to produce about £180,000 a-year, and it has produced, as far as I can judge, about that amount. A more important change was made in relation to the Legacy and Probate Duty. It did not dispose of the whole of the Legacy and Probate Duty, but it circumscribed and simplified that subject.

It got rid of most of the collateral points relating to it; but it left for the consideration of the House the very grave and serious question which, no doubt, will some day come under consideration—namely, what is known as the "consanguinity scale," which makes the State distribute the tax upon succession and legacies according to the degree of proximity to the testator—whether that system of differentia is a sound system, or whether it is the business of the State to take an equal tax and leave it to the testators themselves to regulate their own proceedings under their own wills, and distribute their property with the full knowledge of what the law requires of them? But the change made last year failed to produce the whole revenue that was expected from it. It was estimated to produce £390,000; it has produced only £305,000. The Committee is aware that these duties are extremely variable; and, although it seems paradoxical to say it, they are greatly affected by the accident of seasons. One year there may be enormous fortunes falling in, and in another year there may be comparatively small sums. Indeed, the Revenue Department, when I called upon them to explain why we had not got the whole return that we expected, gave me a variety of causes, among them being the extremely mild character of the season, in consequence of which the grim monster, Death, had had but an indifferent harvest, and the Probate and Legacy Duty suffered in proportion. There was another cause—namely, this, that there was some rush to pay Probate Duty last year before the change came into effect. With regard to the changes introduced into the law, I can report very favourably indeed. According to the old practice, as the Committee knows, estates were admitted to probate without any deduction for debts. The duty was levied at once without that deduction. After the debts had all been paid and settled by a difficult process, which, no doubt, yielded abundant pickings to the Legal Profession, the duty, as far as regarded the debts, was returned. That system was a bad one, and is now entirely got rid of. The debts are deducted at once, without introducing any confusion into the operation of the law. I can give a curious instance of the effect of this. Not long ago a gentleman died, with an estate of £900,000; but he was not so rich as he seemed, because his debts were £900,000. Under the old law, £21,250 would have been paid and held for a certain time by an ingenious title in respect of that estate. As it was, nothing was paid whatever, and the parties were saved from a great deal of expense, as well as from the burden of a large and heavy payment. Another important change, which I endeavoured to explain fully at the time, was the change by which we not only imposed a low duty upon small estates, but undertook to manage the whole transaction by the officers of the Revenue, upon the payment of 30*s*. Every person having to deal with an estate under £300 in value may now put the matter in the hands of a Revenue officer, and receive the whole proceeds of the estate without any further charge whatever. It was a very common thing for persons in that predicament to have to pay £10, £20, £30, and even more, for the necessary expenses connected with the settlement of the estate; and I think I am justified in saying that the change we have introduced has been found to be a very great boon indeed. There is another small matter which tells the other way, inasmuch as I am afraid the gains will be insignificant; but they will be undoubtedly just. We abolish absolutely the absurdity of the law in exempting legacies under £20, from which there has grown up a practice of making a multitude of bequests of 19 guineas. These bequests, be it known to all and sundry whom it may concern, will not pass in future without paying duty. One of these bequests was left by a man whose estate reached several hundred thousand pounds to one of the wealthiest men in the country. There was no reason why that man should not be called upon to submit to the ordinary deduction without making a wry face. There is another point in regard to which some apprehension was not unnaturally felt. The Committee will remember there was some fear that by lightening the Legacy Duty, by taking off 1 per cent in case of direct descent, and making a corresponding increase in the Probate Duty, embarrassment would be caused to executors owing to the earlier payment of the Probate Duty. I am assured that no difficulty whatever has been experienced upon that subject, and that the working of the measure has been in all respects satisfactory. But a larger question, and one which deserves consideration, partly as being of much importance to a very extended trade, and partly as of great social and moral interest, was the change in the Beer Duty. I will first state how the proceeds of that change stand, only premising that, as regards all the difficulties which at one time used to be considered insuperable with respect to the levying of a Beer Duty, they have entirely vanished. Great credit, in my opinion, is due to the skilful Department which conducts the business on the part of the State; but the very highest credit is also due to the members of the trade, who, so far from opposing themselves through a blind adherence to past traditions to an exceedingly important and drastic change, entered into the spirit of it, and gave every assistance to the officers of the Revenue. The consequence is that the Beer Duty is universally levied with certainty and with facility, and, I believe, with general satisfaction to the trade, so far as the mere levying of the duty is concerned. Let me say a word on the subject of the amount. The Estimate which I gave last year for the Beer Duty was £8,800,000, and the Committee will be good enough to bear in mind that this is the first complete year in which we have had to deal with the Beer Duty. The year 1880-1 was a mixed year, and, therefore, is not available for purposes of comparison, because it consisted of half Malt Tax and half Beer Duty. This is a year of Beer Duty, and of nothing but Beer Duty. I mentioned that the levying of the tax had been perfectly satisfactory. I ought to have said, also—for it is a matter which may, undoubtedly, be looked at from different points of view—that the change has worked favourably and well in regard to the practice of private brewing. It has not extinguished the practice. The number of licences taken out is very large; no less than £46,000 has been received from those licences, the enormous majority of which are taken at only 6*s.* a-piece, so that the Committee will see what a large number of persons avail themselves of the facilities afforded for private brewing. I was certainly wrong in estimating the Revenue which I anticipated would be derived from the change. We estimated, as I have said, the total produce of the Beer Duty for the year at £8,800,000. That Estimate was taken rather high, in partial deference to the estimates made by gentlemen connected with the trade. They felt so great a confidence in the view they presented as to the mode in which we had tried to extend the law for the benefit of the Exchequer, and the weight due to their knowledge and experience was so considerable, that a small addition was made to the Estimate merely out of deference to them, there being some uncertainty as to the results of the change. The Estimate had been taken at £8,800,000; the actual yield has been £8,580,000.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Does that include the licence?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Gladstone): Yes; the licence, which amounted to £46,000, is included, and the actual yield is £220,000 short of the Estimate. The Estimate of the Revenue Department would have been very close indeed, but for the circumstances which I have mentioned. The Committee will be anxious to compare the proceeds of the Beer Duty with those of the old Malt Duty. If we compare the yield of the Beer Duty of the year just expired with the Malt Duty, then, indeed, we appear to have made marked progress, because the last complete year of the Malt Duty, and the last year of the finance of the late Administration, was the year 1879-80, when the product of brewing, in all its forms, malt, sugar, and licences, yielded £7,737,000, so that we appear to have gained £843,000. But that is entirely fallacious, because the barley harvest in 1879 was so bad, and the depression of trade was so great, that there is no fair standard of comparison. I have taken, therefore, for the purpose of comparison, the six preceding years of the Malt Duty; and I find that the average revenue from the Malt Duty, together with the sugar used in brewing, and the licences for the average of the six preceding years, from 1873 to 1879, was £8,672,000—that is, that the Malt Duty, upon an average of years, produced £92,000 a-year more than we have got out of the Beer Duty on the first full year of the duty. Effectively there is, in point of fact, for the time, a small diminution. Now, we do not allege that that diminution is in any degree due to having pitched the Beer Duty too low, in comparison with what the Malt Duty had been; but I will advert to that question in a moment or two. We look for an explanation to other circumstances, some of them circumstances of great interest. But I must meet the allegation which is made on the other side. It is still stated with confidence by the other side—namely, by the great brewers of the country, who represent and speak for the entire trade—that we have pitched the Beer Duty too high, and that we have received fully 2*s.* a-quarter more in the shape of Beer Duty upon the quarter of barley used in brewing than we received formerly from the Malt Duty. Happily it is always a very great advantage when there is no serious dispute upon the fact. Upon the whole, we do not deny that statement. We plead guilty to the soft impeachment so far—that, to an amount, at any rate, closely approaching to 2*s.*, we received that profit; but we contend that we are entitled to that profit, and upon that subject there is a friendly argument being carried on in the best possible humour between the members of the trade and ourselves. We point out, what is a known fact, that, under the Malt Duty, the peculiar method in which the duty was levied—and this is an allegation admitted on both sides—gave the brewer a certain advantage, and enabled him to contract his debt with perfect honour, and without the slightest reproach to him, but simply from the mode in which the law had been worked; and it enabled him to pay a duty somewhat less than the duty was, on the face of it, intended to be—that is to say, in consequence of the quantity of malt which he made out of a given quantity of barley, and of the mode in which the duty was levied, which was mainly on the barley, and not on the malt. I take it that the advantage which he got in that way was about 8*d.* in a quarter, and that is a moderate estimate of the advantage which he gained, and which we contend—although it is no reproach to him that he has enjoyed it—Parliament was entitled, and even bound in duty, to withdraw. Of course, as long as the Malt Duty existed, the maltster, who had to pay the duty, was compelled to take a profit upon the duty, just as he was compelled to take a profit on the short price that he paid for malt. The abolition of the Malt Duty relieved the trade of the charge of 10*d.* a-quarter, and that accounts for 1*s.* 6*d.* out of the 2*s.* that are in contest between us. Besides that, we always say that as we were relieving the trade from the compulsory regulations of the old law, which instructed every maltster, and which compelled every maltster, to build his malt kilns, and to shape the details of his premises in a particular way—not allowing him to choose what was best for his trade, but compelling him to raise his buildings according to what was deemed necessary for our security in levying the duty—we say that an advantage is derived from the abolition of these restrictions, and of other restrictions which were imposed by the law for the purpose of Excise. Those restrictions, now that they are gone, are estimated very lightly; but it is a matter of historical interest to go back to the period when the maltsters had to make good their case, not for a protective duty, but for an equivalent duty, and a compensating duty against foreign malt; and in those days, now perhaps forgotten, they steadily maintained, and were supposed to have proved to the satisfaction of the Government, that the tax imposed by these restrictions of Excise was a burden upon them to the extent of 1*s.* 9½*d.* a-quarter. That 1*s.* 9½*d.* has now almost wholly—I believe I might say has wholly—disappeared. One of the differences to which I have previously referred has been a gain, which we distinctly say we are entitled to. I do not know what effect time may have had in disposing our friends—if I may be permitted to call them so, and I do not know why they should not be our friends—to recede from the claim which they made to this difference of nearly 2*s.* a-quarter in the Beer Duty, as compared with the Malt Duty. The other subject is a subject of a very wide and general interest, and the detail of it is, I should say, really a very curious detail. Obviously, as I have admitted, we get nearly 2*s.* a-quarter in the Beer Duty, as compared with the old Malt Duty; and as I have also shown that, notwithstanding the increase of population, our receipt from Beer Duty is less by £90,000 than the average receipt from the old Malt Duty in the years between 1873 and 1879, I represent the state of facts in which there is some collapse somewhere. Is that collapse due to any alteration in the habits and practices of the people? According to the Board of Inland Revenue and their officers, whom I consider to be good authorities on the subject, they do not exclude that supposition; but they do not look to it as the main cause. They say that although employment in the country is general, yet wages have not yet reached the full average level, and, undoubtedly, have not reached anything like the level which they reached in the years of prosperity between 1873 and 1879, although they fell at the close of that period. They also observe—and I have no doubt there is something in this —that last year in the cider counties there was a very great abundance of fruit, and a very large consumption of cider. Then comes another fact—the great increase of coffee-houses and clubs, which lead to the supposition that the more temperate habits of the people are the cause of this deficiency in the Revenue. I think the House will deem it quite worth their while to spend a few minutes in endeavouring to get as accurate information as we can upon this subject, and to put ourselves in a position to estimate fairly the influences which are at work. We have a group of simultaneous facts which, taken together, are curious, and which do not all run quite in the same direction. In the first place, there is a very decided decline of the drink revenues proper. I hope my hon. Friend the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) approves of that term "drink revenues." It is something disparaging, and that, I am sure, will be agreeable to his feelings. I have got here a statement of the revenue derived from spirits, wine, malt, and beer, with the attendant Licence Duties and so forth, at three separate periods. I have taken 1867-8, which was before the great rise of prices; 1874-5, when that rise of prices and wages was still, on the whole, in operation; and 1881-2, the last financial year. The entire revenue from these sources in 1867-8 was £23,001,000. In 1874-5 the revenue had sprung to £31,029,000. In 1881-2 it had gone back to £28,444,000. The most curious circumstance in this is the history of the Wine Duties. The wine revenue advanced from the time of the important change in the duties in 1860 in a very steady manner for a great number of years, and in 1874-5 it was £1,719,000; so that with our duties on wine, varying from 1*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* a-gallon, we were deriving about the same revenue as we had been accustomed to receive with a uniform duty of 5*s.* 10*d.* a-gallon. But ever since that time the duty upon wine has been receding in a much greater proportion than other revenues from alcoholic liquors. The total of these revenues fell from £31,029,000 to about £28,500,000, or, roundly, they fell by about one-eighth; but the duty on wine fell from £1,719,000 to £1,366,000, or by more than one-fifth. However, there is the fact that there is a great diminution, notwithstanding the large increase of population between 1867 and 1881—an increase in the population which could not be less than 4,000,000 people. The gross revenue from these sources, which had risen to £31,029,000 in 1874, fell by more than £2,500,000, with an increase of population between 1874-5 and 1881-2 of considerably over 2,000,000 people. It is also rather curious to take the proportion in which we have been dependent on this source of the Revenue of the country; and I have compared the liquor taxation of the country, as I would call it, with the non-liquor taxation—meaning by the non-liquor taxation all the Tax Revenue of the country except the Income Tax, which I do not include on account of its frequent variation; but I put on one side the taxation derived from alcoholic liquors, and on the other side the taxes derived from all other sources except the Income Tax. Taking the percentage on that basis, they stand as follows. In the six years from 1859 to 1865 we levied 37½ per cent of our taxation from alcoholic drinks, and 62 per cent from non-alcoholic drinks. In the three years from 1866 to 1868 we levied 42 per cent from alcoholic drinks, and 57½ per cent from all other sources. In the five years from 1869 to 1873 we levied 46½ per cent from alcoholic drinks—the Committee will, perhaps, observe that the percentage is continually mounting—and 53½ per cent from all other sources. From 1874-5 to 1879-80 we levied 51 per cent of our whole taxation, except Income Tax, from alcoholic drinks, and 49 per cent from all other sources. That is a very curious state of facts. Since the last period I have named there has been some re-action. I have carried the comparison up to 1879-80; but during the last three years re-action has begun, and the alcoholic revenue has gone down to 46½ per cent, and the non-alcoholic revenue has risen to 53½ per cent, showing a real and serious diminution in the consumption of alcohol. Then you will say—"If that diminution is going on, which you have shown to be so considerable, and if the main cause of it is to be found in those useful and valuable institutions"—to be met with, I believe, in most of our great towns and in many country places, and known all over the country as coffee and cocoa houses—"we ought to see a large increase of Revenue from the other sources." But, Sir, that increase we do not find. It is a very curious fact, and therefore I mention it to the Committee. The Committee will perceive the effect of this upon tea; but I will not include that now, because tea is not much used in these public institutions. The revenue derived in 1867-8, jointly—I will not give all the details—from chicory, cocoa, and coffee, was £523,000. The revenue derived from the same sources in 1874-5 had fallen to £310,000 But, in the first place, the movement adverse to alcoholic liquors had not then commenced; and, in the second place, a large reduction had been made in the Coffee Duty, which, in 1867, yielded £390,000—it was reduced in 1872 from 3*d.* to 1½*d.* per lb.—and which, in 1874, only yielded £207,000. It is worthy of remark that, whereas this great movement, adverse to alcohol and so eminently favourable to coffee and cocoa, has been at work since 1874-5, it has not produced the slightest rally in the revenue from coffee; but, on the contrary, during the last seven years, there has been a further diminution in the coffee revenue. In 1874 the Coffee Duty was £207,000; in 1881 it was only £189,000; and although the Chicory Duty slightly increased, it only increased by £8,000, and did not make up the whole difference. The Cocoa Duty increased from £40,000 to £46,000; but the joint yield of these three articles, which in 1874 was £310,000, was only £306,000 in 1881. When we turn to tea the case is indeed different. My own opinion is that not a very great deal of tea is consumed in the tea houses; yet its domestic use is advancing at such a rate that there undoubtedly is a powerful champion able to encounter alcoholic drink in a fair field, and contest the ground in fair fight. The revenue from tea, which in 1867 was £3,350,000, had risen in 1874 to £3,878,000, and in 1881 to £4,280,000. The increase of the population during that period of 14 years was no less than £4,900,000; but there is no corresponding augmentation in the revenue from coffee and chicory. I am bound to say that there is a peculiar state of the law to which, I think, we ought to ask the House to apply a remedy, and I shall lay a Resolution on the Table of the House this very evening with that view. At present, every description of admixture with coffee is permitted; and we have long proceeded on the principle that the admixture of chicory with coffee was not adulteration—that it was an admixture so rooted in the estimation of many countries, that many people—those of France and Belgium for instance—would not drink their coffee without it. But of late a practice has grown up of producing all kinds of substitutes, under the name of coffee—roots and berries—and that I cannot but think must account for the strange and singular state of the figures I have laid before the Committee. We shall not attempt to interfere with the admixture of chicory with coffee; but we propose that it should not be allowed to introduce other miscellaneous admixtures with coffee. There is one other circumstance in connection with this state of facts and this great diminution in alcoholic drinks which I am anxious to lay before the Committee; for certainly I do not hesitate to say that I think the Committee will agree with me that we can trace the operation of this diminution in the use of alcoholic drinks precisely where we should wish to trace it—that is, in the augmented savings of the people. Now, Sir, I will show what those savings are so far as they come under the cognizance of Her Majesty's Government. Of course, what does come under the direct cognizance of the Government is, I hope, a very small portion of those savings; but, at the same time, for the purpose of comparison, that small portion is perfectly effective. I look first to the Old Savings Banks, and I find these have fluctuated a good deal. In 1846 the deposits amounted to £31,750,000; in 1861 they had risen to £41,500,000; in 1867, perhaps owing to the competition of the Post Office Savings Banks, which paid a considerably lower rate of interest, they had fallen to £36,500,000. Since that time they have been advancing not rapidly, but to this extent. In 1874 the deposits were £41,500,000; and in 1881 they were £44,175,000, showing an annual increment of about £350,000. The Post Office Savings Banks, as the Committee is aware, were founded in 1861. They have advanced, on the whole, with very great regularity. Even the most unfavourable state of circumstances amongst the labouring classes has never done more than reduce—not inconsiderably, but still not vitally—not the amount of deposits, but the increment upon the yearly amount of deposits. The ordinary increment in the Post Office Savings Banks' deposits has been from £1,600,000 to £1,800,000. The lowest amount for any year in the first decade of their existence was £1,533,000, and the highest was £1,926,000. The lowest year in the second decade was 1879, when there was great distress and want of employment, and even in that year the deposits amounted to £1,600,000. In the highest of the prosperity years—1872—the savings rose to £2,293,000; but there is no doubt that the wages of the labouring classes are much lower at this moment than they were in that year. And yet, although wages are now lower than in 1872, the deposits made in the Post Office Savings Banks have risen even higher than they were then, and I take them thus. The deposits made there, and remaining there, are now £2,449,000, or nearly £2,500,000. Besides that, we have invested for depositors £750,000; so that the whole sum placed in our hands by the depositors—although a portion has passed into the Funds—in the year 1881-2, with a great diminution of means on the part of the labouring population, has risen to £3,189,000. I think this shows that, whatever other effects this diminution of the duty on spirits is producing, it is clearly associated with the gradual extension of more saving habits amongst the people. I pass now from these subjects altogether; and I have only to state, in a very few words, what it has now become customary to lay before the Committee—namely, the aggregate operations upon the National Debt in the course of the year; and I do so now, because if they look at the figures that should be presented in a Parliamentary Return they might possibly fail to grasp the exact state of the case. The Debt was returned on the 31st of March, 1881, at £768,703,000. But there was an item existing at that time which had never been valued or reduced to figures—that was the deficiency in the funds of the Savings Banks, which we are bound, notwithstanding, to make good. Since the 31st of March, 1881, that deficiency has been ascertained, and an Annuity adequate to gradually diminishing it has been created. We now, therefore, value that Annuity as part of the Debt, just like any other Annuity; and, of course, we must add it to the Debt existing on the 31st of March, 1881, for the purpose of comparison with the amount of the Debt on the 31st of March, 1882. The value of that Annuity is £1,622,000. Adding that sum to the Debt as it stood in March, 1881, the total effective Debt was £770,325,000. The total on the 31st of March, 1882, was £763,166,000, so that the reduction of Debt in the year when the liquidation took place is £7,159,000. [Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Is that Debt of all kinds?] That is Debt of all kinds. There still remains a small subject which has not been dealt with, but which will have to be dealt with this year or next—namely, the small deficiency on the Friendly Societies' Account. I need not, however, refer to that in detail. I may say, also, that last year I proposed to make a conversion of Capital Debt into Annuities for the purpose of preparing for the year 1885, when a large portion of Annuities would lapse. I intend again to bring in that Bill during the present Session, if the state of Public Business should be favourable to it. But it is not a matter of extreme urgency, and it might be introduced next year without any essential difference. Therefore, I shall proceed with it this Session only if the state of affairs renders it advisable to introduce the Bill. I come now to the year 1882-3, which is no longer retrospective, but prospective, and relates to the practical portion of the subject with which we have to deal. The Committee will not, I think, expect me to offer them any very brilliant or alluring prospect, after what I have already said. I am now going, as is usual, to estimate the Expenditure for the year 1882-3. The total Charge of the Debt, including Interest on Local Loans and Charges on the Consolidated Fund, will be £31,415,000. The Charge for the Army is £15,458,000; Indian Home Charges amount to £1,100,000; and the Charges on account of the Navy to £10,484,000. We shall again ask the House to vote a Grant to India, as last year, which will entail a further Charge of £500,000. The expenses of the Civil Service will be £16,503,000—I am now going on the Estimates which are already in the possession of the House—the Customs and Inland Revenue charges of collection will be £2,901,000; which, with £5,889,000 for the Post Office, Telegraph, and Packet Services, makes a total of £84,258,000. But I am sorry to say that does not entirely close the account, because there are three or four items remaining, of which I must mention three of a serious character. The Committee will understand that in Ireland, owing to the circumstances of the last two or three years, the extra duties cast upon the Irish Constabulary have been extremely heavy. I cannot refer to this subject without stating my belief that the experience of that period has tended to raise even the high character of that Force. I am aware there are opinions entertained by some on the subject of having another description of Constabulary Force in Ireland; but into those opinions I do not now enter. As to the conduct of that Force, its fidelity and efficiency upon the footing of its present organization, I believe it is impossible to commend it too highly. However, Sir, it is a fact, according to the examination which we have made, that with the great amount of extra duty entailed upon them, the extra allowances have been decidedly insufficient; and it will, therefore, be an obligation on us to ask Parliament, besides the sum named in the Constabulary Estimates, which are already on the Table of the House, to vote a further sum in order to make good the deficiencies in those allowances. I do not now say in what form that will be voted; but the amount has been pretty closely investigated by the representatives of the Irish Government, together with able representatives of the Treasury, and they have agreed that it must be a sum of about £180,000. This sum it will be necessary to ask Parliament to accord. Then, Sir, we have, unfortunately, to ask for a Vote of £100,000 in connection with the Prisons Act of a few years ago. I believe that when this Act was passed it was intended that the cost of conveying prisoners should be charged upon the counties; but, unhappily, it appears, according to the view of the Courts of Justice, that the Act does not give effect to that intention; and the consequence is we are called upon to pay the sum of arrears for the three years which have elapsed since the Act came into operation. Of course, there may be a question, which I do not enter into, whether the original intention of Parliament ought not to be fulfilled? Still, we have these arrears to deal with, and it will be our duty to ask Parliament, in the course of the present year, for the sum I have specified, representing the three years' arrears for the conveyance of prisoners. Well, Sir, the third subject of serious difficulty to which I have referred is one that will not sound over-musically in the ears of the Committee. It is the Vote for the Civil Government of Cyprus. The Civil Government of Cyprus has never been settled. A large sum was taken for this purpose last year—I think more than £90,000—but the season has been an extremely bad one, and the Committee will be aware that in Cyprus, just as it used to be in Corfu, if there comes a bad olive year, the Revenue of the year was ruined. Consequently, the deficiency of this year in Cyprus is even greater than usual. We have thought it our duty to have the matter carefully examined, and to provide for squaring the account, more especially as my noble Friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies has been engaged in organizing a scheme of government for Cyprus, which will introduce local influences into the Government, and give it something like regularity and efficiency. We shall be obliged to ask the House to vote, during the present Session, £90,000 for that purpose. Out of that sum £12,000 is due to the former year; but between £70,000 and £80,000 is the charge which we find actually existing. I think about £30,000 of that sum is due to the circumstance I have named—that is to say, the peculiarly unfavourable character of the season. The Committee will naturally ask whether they are to be called upon for a corresponding sum year after year. Well, Sir, my noble Friend has made the closest investigation of this subject in his power, and has ordered what, so far as he can judge, is a most stringent system of economy and retrenchment in the administration of affairs in Cyprus, and what he hopes to do—I am not going beyond our real expectation of the effect—is next year to get the Vote down to £40,000. That may not be pleasant; but it is my duty to tell an unvarnished tale, and let the Committee know how the case stands. Therefore, together with minor charges, this makes an increase of £380,000, and raises the total estimated Expenditure to £84,630,000. I think it is an essential part of my duty briefly to compare this, as well as I can, with the Expenditure of last year. As I have said, £84,630,000 is the total Charge before us. The Expenditure of last year, according to the Estimates, was £86,190,000; so there is an apparent reduction of charge to the extent of £1,560,000. But a large proportion of that reduction is only apparent, because the Military and Naval Estimates of this year are presented in a form in which credit is at once taken for extra receipts, instead of having them presented without that reduction, and bringing the extra receipts to account on the other side. The disturbance which is thus introduced into the Account represents a sum of £809,000, and the real reduction in the Estimates is, in consequence, reduced to £750,000. But the relief from War Charges has been much larger than that. The War Charges are still very considerable. We have still £1,460,000 on account of the five years' Annuity for the Vote of £6,000,000. We have £500,000 for the Afghan Vote, and I think about £120,000 this year on account of the Indian Loan. Still, the year is relieved in respect of War Charges, upon the whole, to the extent of £2,250,000, or, more exactly, £2,276,000, against which I am only able to state a reduction upon the Estimates of £751,000; and, therefore, I must tell the Committee what becomes of the difference of £1,500,000 between these two sums. Some part of that represents permanent increase, some part of it represents normal increase; but undoubtedly there are portions of it which I am not able to place under one description or the other. I could not give the Committee a minutely accurate statement; it would be idle to attempt it; but I think I can, with general clearness and accuracy, state the main facts. The augmentation as connected with the Government of Ireland this year will be no less than £430,000. The Constabulary Estimate is £139,000; the Constabulary further Estimate, £180,000; and Resident Magistrates, £12,000. The Land Court, established in Ireland, which we have offered to landlords and tenants, not free of all expense—for I am afraid that legal expense in connection with it cannot be annihilated—but almost entirely free of expense, so far as the Exchequer is concerned, imposes on the taxpayers of the Three Countries the heavy charge for the year of £93,000, which brings up the total of the Irish Votes for this year to the sum I have already stated of £430,000. There is an increase of about £90,000 on the Non-Effective Votes for the Army and Navy, which may be contemplated by the Committee without great dissatisfaction, because, as they are aware, it belongs essentially to the transition period between the old system of general pensions in the Service and the new system based on Reserves. We are, at present, in the unfortunate position of having to pay all the charges connected with the New Reserve system, and of having also approached the maximum connected with the old system of pensions for long service. I believe, in the course of two years, that process will be reversed, and a very considerable although gradual relief will be experienced. The Charge for the Postal and Telegraph Services has largely increased. I will not enter into the causes of that increase; but I think I ought to state, in justice to all parties, that great care appears to have been taken by the late Government in restraining the extension of the Establishment. The pressure since we came into Office has reached a point which is nearly irresistible; and although, I hope, the Post Office will go on increasing, yet the percentage of cost for collection of revenue, I am afraid, will show some increase also. There is an increase of £207,000 in the Post Office Charge for this year; there is the sum to which I have referred for the conveyance of prisoners; and there is a Charge, which may be contemplated with unmixed satisfaction, of £85,000 in the increased payments for the liquidation of the National Debt, of which you have had the fruit in the statement I have made of a reduction of nearly £7,000,000 of Debt in the course of two years. That accounts for £900,000 out of a sum of £1,500,000, which I have represented as the increase to be accounted for. Effectively, the great bulk of the remainder of that increase is Navy Charge, and is repersented by demands with which the Committee is familiar. There are the changes of armament, which cause an augmentation of £250,000 in the Vote for Guns. There is another sum of £100,000 in the Vote for Shipbuilding; and, whatever the amount for shipbuilding may be, I must say that we look forward with considerable confidence to economy in matters connected with building, and to the securing of greater results for our money, in consequence of the arrangements which have been sanctioned by the First Lord of the Admiralty for placing a gentleman of the highest skill and character, and well acquainted with the practical details of the Service, on the Board of Admiralty. I will not enter into the remainder of the augmentations; but they amount to £500,000. I hope I have laid clearly before the Committee the reasons why this £1,500,000 is required. If I am asked whether the Expenditure is deemed satisfactory, I am afraid my notions are too old-fashioned to allow me to view it with as much complacency as that with which it is viewed by others. I wish, however, to state the case impartially, and to point out that a considerable portion of the increase will not, I hope, be permanent. It is not connected with Offices of a permanent character, and more than half of it is either in itself good and normal, or of a character purely temporary; but I do not see in the country that great desire for the restriction of expenditure which characterized this country and all Parties 40 or 50 years ago. It is an evil, I think, that public vigilance on this subject should be diminished, and that the attitude of the House of Commons should have been so sensibly changed. I confess I have great doubts—I have not arrived at any conclusion on the subject—as to whether the system under which our Estimates are now framed upon the exclusive responsibility of the Government, and without any responsibility on the part of the House, is a good system. It is a very important subject for consideration. For my own part, although I have not arrived at any absolute conclusion, I am very dissatisfied with the working of the system, especially during the last 20 or 30 years. Sir, there are three principles, greater than all others, on which, in my opinion, all good finance should be based. The first of them is that there should always be a certainty that whatever the charge may be it can be paid. That, I believe, is of vital importance. The second is that, in times of peace and prosperity, the people of the country should reduce their Debt; and the third point is that they should reduce their Expenditure. With regard to the first point, we are at present fulfilling that condition; with regard to the second, we ought to do more in the direction indicated than we have actually done; but at the same time we are doing a good deal more than was usually done in a long series of years. I do not refer to recent years in particular, but to what has been done on the average during the last 25 years. With regard to the diminution of Expenditure, I sorrowfully admit that the contagion and sympathy of foreign countries necessarily affects us; and I should arrive at very different conclusions indeed, according to the standard of comparison which I might take. If I am to look to American ideas and institutions, and the extraordinary vigour, determination, and forethought, which the people of America show as a Democracy in providing for the future by reducing their Debt, and in resolutely enduring the most painful taxation — I do not speak now of Protective Duties—in order to set free their hands and relieve those who come after them, I say it is impossible to praise them too highly, and that a comparison with them would not redound greatly to our credit. Perhaps, having said that, and not wishing to take a too saturnine view of the matter, instead of looking westward we may look eastward, and consider what has happened in other countries of Europe. Even though we may somewhat bend to the storm, and may, to a certain extent, follow this fashion of large Expenditure, yet certainly we may derive the materials of comparative congratulation when we see the course which other great countries follow.

There is one country in particular which cannot be named in this House without great respect and sympathy; first, on account of its eminence; and, secondly, on account of the close friendship and associations in which she stands with us. I allude to France. I do not believe that country will ever involve itself in any great financial difficulties, because such is the skill, industry, and thrift of her people, that the moment she becomes clearly aware of her difficulty she will surmount it. At the same time, if I take a sketch of the history of France and England during the last half century, we may see that the causes which have brought about a large increase in our own Expenditure have been causes that have not exclusively operated in this country. We have not doubled our gross Expenditure; but it has nearly doubled since the Peace of 1815. Our Tax Expenditure has also largely increased, although I am happy to say it has not nearly doubled. But the increase in the Expenditure of France has been greater and more rapid than our own; and I will put this before the Committee in very few and simple figures. Between 1814 and 1829 the Expenditure of France was £40,000,000 a-year, and she made no addition to her Debt. Between 1830 and 1847 the Expenditure of France rose to £51,000,000 a-year, and there was an average annual deficit of £2,250,000. I do not take the years from 1848 to 1851, because of the then unsatisfactory state of the country; but from 1852 to 1870, under the Empire, the average annual deficit had diminished, and I believe it was something between £2,000,000 and £1,500,000. But the Expenditure had enormously increased; and it is only fair to say that, in my judgment, it was the enlightened policy of an approach to Free Trade that enabled France to bear with willingness the enormous increase of Expenditure then imposed on her. The average Expenditure of France, which under the previous *régime* was £51,000,000, under the Empire reached £83,000,000. But a Budget has been presented to the French Chamber for the year 1883—as the Committee is aware, the French Budgets are presented in anticipation—which, I believe, shows an Expenditure of £120,000,000 sterling. Our Expenditure, therefore, becomes insignificant when we compare it with the portentous scale it has reached in a neighbouring country which is not more wealthy than our own. Now I pass to the Revenue of the year, and my task will be completed. The Tax Revenue of the year amounts to £69,850,000, and the non-Tax Revenue to £14,595,000, or a total of £84,445,000. The Tax Revenue is made up as follows:—Customs, £19,300,000; Excise, £27,230,000; Stamps, £11,145; Land Tax, £1,035,000; Income Tax, £9,400,000. The non-Tax Revenue is made up of the Receipts from Post Office, Telegraphs, Crown Lands, Interest on Advances, and Miscellaneous, and amounts altogether to £14,595,000, making the total Revenue £84,445,000. But as there are certain items of Expenditure which are not yet before the House, so there are some items of Revenue which it has not been in our power to bring to account, but which are so closely in prospect and which stand on such a footing that it is my duty to state them to the House, and to take credit for them, as I have already done, in setting out the general finances of the year. There are two payments from South Africa, both of which I have already reckoned, although I did not mention them to the House when I spoke of the comparative relief from War Charges which the coming year will enjoy. There is a sum of £150,000, which the responsible Government of the Cape will propose on the Estimates for Cape Colony in liquidation of their liability in respect to the cost of the Transvaal War—undoubtedly a small and most moderate Estimate, but an Estimate which will readily be voted by the Cape Parliament. Then there is a sum of £250,000 which has been virtually raised in Natal on account of the Zulu War; and there is a sum of £90,000 which will come to the Exchequer in connection with Cyprus, but with regard to which, lest I should obtain, upon false pretences, cheers from some quarters in which there has recently been some dissatisfaction, I must state that it does not seem to be anything in the nature of a Cyprus receipt. We hold certain sums of money on account of Cyprus for the Porte. The Porte owes us and the French the payment of the dividends on the Guaranteed Turkish Loan of 1855. It has not been in the power of the Porte to supply all the money from her own resources; and, consequently, it falls to her to pay that money in the shape of deductions or stoppages from the Revenues of Cyprus. We are collectors on behalf of our friends across the Channel not less than for ourselves; and of this £90,000 one-half will pass through the British Exchequer and go across to the Exchequer of France. However, there is a sum of £490,000 available for the balances of the year, which makes the grand total of Revenue for the year £84,935,000 as against a grand total of Expenditure of £84,630,000. There is, therefore, a surplus of £305,000. That is a very small and modest surplus; but it is a surplus with which, under the circumstances, we might be content to move onwards, provided only that it would be subjected to no deductions. But the House will recollect—and the hon. Member for the County of Oxford (Mr. Harcourt) will see that I have not forgotten him, and that I have not been unmindful of the pledge given at the commencement of the Session. The hon. Member then proposed to move a Resolution, in guarded and qualified terms, that some relief should be given to the ratepapers of this country in respect to the charge which has been transferred to them through the abolition of turnpikes and the consequent augmentation of the highway rate. I then engaged on the part of the Government, but without pledging myself as to details, to propose something in conformity with the spirit of his Resolution. The hon. Gentleman will have seen that I have not yet presented any proposal in redemption of that pledge. The surplus of £305,000 is a surplus that will not bear diminution. At the time when I gave that pledge undoubtedly it was in my hope—perhaps it was too sanguine a hope—that we should be able to deal with the matter in a distinctive way and as part of a considerable settlement. I no longer am able to cherish that expectation. The prospect which we then thought was good of being able to carry through the House a Bill for the establishment of County Boards, and appending to it an important financial re-adjustment, has become quite hopeless, and we no longer expect to be able to introduce that measure. But I engaged myself to the hon. Member to endeavour, if possible, to detach this subject from any general scheme of legislation, and there remained open to us as a mode of honourably redeeming that pledge—and at the same time doing nothing to perplex future operations—it remained open to us to resort to some plan which, while partial in itself, and provisional in its general character, would be such as to fit in with any more enlarged scheme which might be considered hereafter when local government and financial re-adjustment should come to receive the definitive consideration of the House. Therefore, what we have thought is, not that this is an occasion on which to enter on the Motion of the hon. Gentleman, or to contract any new engagement, but we have felt it to be our duty to ask the House to place us in funds so far that we may, at the proper time, when my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson) can deal with the subject, be enabled to give a fair interpretation to the promise which was then passed across the Table of the House. We think it necessary for that purpose, for this year, to ask the House to give us a sum of £250,000 to go in relief of the rates in reference to highways; and after considering the various modes in which that money may be raised, we think that, on the whole, considering what is the nature of the grievance, and how it has arisen, and how, in the main, it turns on the very large use of the roads by those who do not contribute to their cost, the best course we can take is to ask the House to authorize a moderate addition to the duty upon carriages. The Licence Duty on carriages is a matter which has been dealt with very tenderly by Parliament. I do not now speak of hired carriages; but, after all, it is a grievance—and there can be no doubt about the facts—that the roads are used and worn by carriages. I am proposing this as a temporary operation. If it were a settlement of the entire question, it might be right to make a larger proposal; it might be right to consider the present total exemption of all wheeled vehicles, except what are called carriages, from taxes of any kind. I do not at all exclude that from prospective consideration, although it is not free from difficulty; but for the present we feel certain that when that question comes to be considered, it will have to be considered in conjunction with some augmentation of the present very moderate Licence Duty on carriages. The rates of Carriage Duties down to 1854, when I had the honour of proposing a change, were these:—Every four-wheeled carriage paid a minimum duty of £6; and in proportion as persons owned more than one carriage, the charge rose till it reached the case of a person with nine carriages, and he was liable to pay £9 1*s.* 6*d.* upon each carriage. It is true that that was qualified, to a considerable extent, by a composition; but the basis of that composition was an augmentation of 10 per cent on the minimum duty. The Committee will therefore see how very high the duty was; yet, at the same time, when in 1839 Lord Northbrook, then Mr. Baring, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, made an addition all round to the Assessed Taxes, it was found that there was hardly any perceptible effect produced so far as the Assessed Taxes were concerned. An addition of 5 per cent on consumable commodities was then made, but of 10 per cent on the Assessed Taxes, and that had no perceptible effect. So stood the duty till 1854, and then, on my proposal, the rates were reduced as follows:—Every four-wheeled carriage with two horses paid £3 10*s.*; every four-wheeled carriage with one horse paid £2; and carriages with two wheels and two horses paid £2, or if they had only one horse they paid 15*s.* and 10*s.* The system was rather anomalous, and when Lord Sherbrooke, then Mr. Lowe, was Chancellor of the Exchequer, in 1869, he further reduced the duties. He reduced them to £2 for four-wheeled carriages, unless they were extremely light, and to 15*s.* for two-wheeled carriages. Perhaps I ought here to say a word as to hired carriages. Hired carriages in that year, or shortly afterwards, were relieved from the very heavy Licence Duty they had formerly paid. I will not say that it is desirable that on hired carriages, such as omnibuses, there should be any duty; but, at the same time, the duty I shall propose is very trifling as regards a trade of that description, and the great relief to them has not been the reduction of the rate they now pay in common with private carriages, but in the abolition of the old Licence and Mileage Duty. What we propose is that the £2 2*s.* now paid by four-wheeled carriages shall be raised to £3 3*s.*, and that the 15*s.* paid on the two-wheeled carriages, or light four-wheeled carriages, shall be raised to 21*s.* The computation made is that 150,000 carriages with four wheels, and over 4 cwt., paying £3 3*s.*, will bring in £157,500; and 300,000 carriages with two wheels or four wheels, if under 4 cwt., paying 21*s.*, will bring in £90,000, or a total increase of £247,500, for which the House is asked in order to give effect to the sentiment contained in the Motion of the hon. Gentleman opposite, and accepted by the Government. The House will at once see that the account now before us is a very simple one. We have a surplus of £305,000, which we regard as the minimum with which we ought to enter on the operations of the year. The £247,000 which we propose to raise will bring that up to £552,000, which places us in funds to consider, when the proper time comes, any proposal which my right hon. Friend may be able to make, and which it will be his duty to make for the purpose of fulfilling the engagement into which we entered at the beginning of the Session. I have now only to refer in one word to a very easy and simple question of detail. The House will see that this humble Financial Statement raises but a single point of novelty. The usual Resolution for the renewal of the Income Tax and the Tea Duty will be moved, and there will be, as I have said, a Resolution relating to the adulteration and spurious representations of coffee. The Carriage Duty will also require a Resolution; but the House is aware that these Resolutions for licences are not like the old Resolutions on Customs and Excise, which took effect immediately on being voted. They do not take effect until the Act of Parliament of which they form a part shall have become the law of the land. I would, therefore, submit to the House what I think will be the most convenient course to pursue—namely, that we should be allowed to proceed with the Resolutions and with the preliminary stages of the Bill at once, or from day to day, and that such a day as shall be convenient shall be fixed for the discussion, either on the second reading or on the Motion to go into Committee. That is a matter upon which I shall be very happy to know what will best suit the convenience of the House; but I think there should be no difficulty in bringing the measure before the House in a definite shape, because it is advantageous, especially as to the Income Tax, that there should be no longer delay than is absolutely necessary. I hope I have made clear to the House, without any attempt at varnishing, or keeping in the shade, or suppressing anything in the Statement it has been my duty to make. I, for my part, am certainly most grateful for the kind and unbroken attention of the House; and I am sure the House will deal with the subject in that spirit of gravity and considerateness which all the important considerations, political, social, and moral, connected with it, and branching out of it, undoubtedly demand.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"(1.) That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, there shall be charged, collected, and paid for the year which commenced on the sixth day of April, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-two, in respect of all Property, Profits, and Gains mentioned or described as chargeable in the Act of the sixteenth and seventeenth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-four, the following Duties of Income Tax (that is to say):

For every Twenty Shillings of the annual value or amount of Property, Profits, and Gains chargeable under Schedules (A), (C), (D), or (E) of the said Act, the Duty of Five Pence;

And For every Twenty Shillings of the annual value of the occupation of Lands, Tenements, Hereditaments, and Heritages chargeable under Schedule (B) of the said Act,—

In England, the Duty of Two Pence Halfpenny;

In Scotland and Ireland respectively, the Duty of One Penny Three Farthings;

Subject to the provisions contained in section one hundred and sixty-three of the Act of the fifth and sixth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter thirty-five, for the exemption of persons whose income is less than One Hundred and Fifty Pounds, and in section eight of "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1876," for the relief of persons whose income is less than Four Hundred Pounds."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MR. GLADSTONE: I may mention two particulars which may be of interest to those persons whom they affect. We do not propose that this increase in the Carriage Duty shall affect any vehicle for hire of which the fares are fixed under the authority of any Imperial or Local Act; and, further, we do not propose that the increase shall affect any carriages habitually and solely used by coachmakers to be lent to their customers during repairs; and the mode in which that provision will take effect will be that they will have to claim a repayment of duty.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I think it has not been useful, certainly not in late years, to enter upon any serious discussion of the Budget at the moment of its being presented, and although there are one or two points in connection with, and arising from, the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, upon which I shall be glad, at the proper time, to offer some observations, I do not think there would be any advantage in departing from the usual course. I cannot help feeling that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has made his interesting Statement at, I fear, some personal inconvenience to himself, though we must feel much pleased at seeing that he has been able to resume his place and go through the interesting speech to which we have been listening, and I hope without any serious injury. I only rise, therefore, to say that the course he proposes for the discussion of the measure appears to me, and to my friends around me, to be the most convenient for the House.

MR. WILLS said, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had intimated, some two months ago, that no alteration was, on this occasion, to be looked for in the duties affecting tobacco, and, therefore, he had not to-night expected any statement upon that subject; but the decision at which the right hon. Gentleman had arrived had been received with so much disappointment throughout the United Kingdom, especially by the working classes—and the subject was one of such vast fiscal importance, affecting, as it did, about one-ninth of the total Revenue of the country—that he ventured to ask the indulgence of the House while he made a few observations in reference to the duties on that article. Between the years 1840 and 1877—during all the vicissitudes of bad harvests and bad trade — there were only five years in which the duties on tobacco exhibited anything like a decline. Throughout the whole of that period the manufactured tobacco supplied to the public was exceedingly good. In 1878 the financial embarrassments of the late Government compelled the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon

(Sir Stafford Northcote) to look about for some means of increasing his Revenue, and in that year he added the sum of 4*d.* on the pound, thus raising the duty from 3*s.* 2*d.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* The right hon. Gentleman stated at the time that his necessity was but a temporary one; but the House knew how easy it was to put on an additional tax on the plea of temporary necessity, and how long a period frequently elapsed before it was possible to repeal that addition. Fourpence on the pound of tobacco seemed to be an exceedingly simple arrangement, and only meant ¼*d.* on the ounce; but that was quite enough to disorganize the trade, which produced a Revenue last year of something like £8,750,000. He desired to show the House briefly how it affected the consumer and the Revenue. Of the entire amount received from the duty on tobacco, £6,500,000 were contributed by the working classes of the country, who purchased their tobacco by the ounce, or even by the half-ounce. During 30 years the uniform price had been 3*d.* per ounce. A farthing was theoretically a current coin of the Realm; but it was not a very practical coin, and, therefore, the question had been between making the price 3¼*d.* the ounce, or adhering to the old price of 3*d.* It was obvious that when an advance in the duty took place it was utterly impossible to supply to the consumer the same quality as heretofore; in fact, the value of the article supplied was reduced to the extent of 4*d.* a pound. Allowing for variations in the price of the raw material, with a duty of 3*s.* 2*d.*, there was never any difficulty in supplying tobacco suitable for the public taste. The years 1878, 1879, and 1880 were noted for their very large imports, and for the very low prices, which proved, in many cases, almost ruinous to the planters in the United States; but which enabled the English manufacturers partially to meet the additional duty imposed upon them by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote). But those who looked ahead and understood the subject were well aware that one bad crop would make the trade almost impossible under the new duty. They had witnessed the effects of the bad crop of 1880. Stocks were reduced, prices were forced up—in many cases from 10 to even 20 per cent—and manufacturers whose capital was not large were failing; and, in his opinion, with the prospect of a bad crop during the present year, a still larger number would have to succumb to the difficulty. The result of poor crops would be that, in a very short time, when stocks where exhausted, it would not be possible for the British consumer to buy for 3*d.* an ounce an article which was at all smokable; he would have to pay a higher price, and, as a consequence, the consumption would decrease. As to the effect upon the Revenue, for many years before 1878 the yearly increase in the consumption was 1,250,000 lbs. weight, resulting in an increase of the Revenue of £180,000. From the experience of former years they would very naturally have expected that this increase would have continued; but immediately the late Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed the additional duty the increase disappeared altogether, and during the two years 1878-9 the consumption was nearly 1,000,000 lbs. weight less in the two years than that of 1877 for the same period. The present scarcity was acting in other ways. He had the opportunity of pointing out, the other day, to the Chairman of Inland Revenue that the number of persons who took out licences to retail tobacco had very largely decreased. The Returns made up to the 31st of March showed that 1,137 fewer licences had been issued this year than in the preceding year, representing a loss to the Revenue, on this head alone, of £409. The probability was that the quality supplied under the present duty would become worse and worse. In any case, the Revenue must suffer, and should another short crop be reaped, the loss would be reckoned, not by thousands, but by millions. He desired to place before the Committee two or three simple figures, which were furnished by the Returns of the United States Government. In 1879 the United States Government reduced the tax from 24 cents to 16 cents, or, in other words, 4*d.* per pound weight. Up to the 30th of June, 1879, their Revenue from tobacco was $40,000,000, and in 1881, notwithstanding the reduction of duty, the Revenue from the same source amounted to $50,000,000. In 1879 the quantity of tobacco used in the United States amounted to 206,000,000 lbs. weight;

but in 1880 it had risen to 233,000,000 lbs. weight, showing an increase of 27,000,000 lbs. weight. These were important facts; they were too important to be overlooked or disregarded. For Revenue purposes no article could be more fairly or more properly taxed than tobacco; but the limit of taxation should be one calculated to expand, and not to contract, either the trade or the Revenue. He asked the Committee whether, in its opinion, the facts which he had been permitted to place before them did not show that the limits he had defined had been already considerably overstepped?

MR. CHAPLIN said, the right hon. Gentleman had, in the course of his observations, reminded the Committee that this was the first complete year in which they could experience the effects of the repeal of the Malt Duty. He (Mr. Chaplin) would take the opportunity of observing that it enabled them also to consider what had been the effects other than those of a purely fiscal character. The House would remember that in the year 1880 the repeal of the Malt Tax was proposed by the right hon. Gentleman as a great boon to the farmers. He remembered that the right hon. Gentleman stated at the time that such was the condition of the agricultural interest that it was the special duty of any Government, no matter the Party to which it belonged, to consider the case of the farmers of the country. He (Mr. Chaplin) was not in the least ashamed to acknowledge that he cordially approved of the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, and that he accepted it with gratitude, and in the full belief that it would confer the benefit on the agricultural community that he had no doubt was intended. He had always held it was an unjust restriction upon the cultivators of the soil, especially upon those in the great barley-growing districts, that they should not be allowed to use or dispose of the produce of their farms in the way most profitable to them. The right hon. Gentleman, in 1880, expressed some doubt as to whether the repeal of the tax would have any considerable effect in inducing a larger consumption of malt as food for cattle. From the information he possessed he had reason to believe that in that respect the right hon. Gentleman was mistaken. There was no doubt that since the repeal of the Malt Tax malt had in all parts of the country come rapidly into use as food for stock, and on that ground he had no doubt the expectations of the most sanguine Gentleman had been greatly exceeded. He was afraid, however, the benefits received in that direction had not by any means compensated for the injuries the farmers had received from the repeal of the tax on other grounds. The repeal of the tax benefited the farmer in so much as it enabled them to use malt freely as food for cattle. It had, however, another effect, and that was that, by the admission of a great variety of substitutes for malt in the manufacture of beer, the price of barley had been very considerably depreciated. Under ordinary circumstances, a depreciation of the price of barley would probably have been treated by right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench as a matter of comparatively small importance; but he could not believe the Government would regard with indifference this result of a measure which was introduced by themselves with the special object, as the House understood, and as he believed the Government acknowledged, of conferring a benefit upon the agricultural interest of England. What he ventured to propose was this, and he was sanguine enough to believe the right hon. Gentleman would be disposed to entertain the proposition which it was intended to make on behalf of the agricultural class—what he would propose would be this—that in future they should not prohibit the use of rice or maize, or other substitutes for malt, in the manufacture of beer; but it should be made obligatory upon the persons using such substitutes to declare and publish the fact. He had been reliably informed that the beer manufactured out of such articles was of an inferior and unwholesome quality; an injury was inflicted upon the public at large; and, therefore, if beer was made from such articles, let it be stated. If the public chose to drink beer made from rice and maize, and the like, it was their business, and not his; but he was confident that if it was generally known that beer was made from articles of this description, the British public would soon exhibit a preference for beer made from malt and hops. If the Committee adopted his suggestion, they would discourage the public from making use of a beverage of an inferior and unwholesome character, and they would create a larger demand for barley, and in that way they would convert the repeal of the tax, which was intended to be a boon to the farmers, from an injury into a real benefit to the agricultural interest. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take the question into his consideration, and that he would see his way to introduce into his Bill some clause which would have the effect he had described. While the adoption of his proposition could inflict no injustice upon anyone, it would confer a considerable boon upon the distressed agriculturists; and if the Government would not take the matter in hand he should be obliged to do so himself.

Mr. WATNEY agreed with the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the whole brewing trade were paying 2*s.* per quarter more under the Beer Duty than under the old Malt Tax and Brewing Licence Duty; but, while that was the case, many of the larger brewers were paying 3*s.* a-quarter more than they had previously done; and he wished to call the attention of the Committee to the fact that, when the question was under discussion in 1880, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in asking the House to adopt his Beer Duty, stated that he only wanted something like a fair equivalent with a turn of the scale in favour of the Government. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said he had given brewers relief from vexatious restrictions which existed under the Malt Tax; but those vexatious restrictions might have been removed without doing away with the Malt Tax. Still, for removing these restrictions, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in 1880, said the trade must pay 1*s.* per quarter; and, as the Government agreed they were now getting 2*s.* extra per quarter, he hoped that at some future time the right hon. Gentleman would give the brewers back the extra 1*s.* a-quarter he had exacted from them. The right hon. Gentleman had said the revenue from the Beer Duty did not come up to his anticipations. He (Mr. Watney) did not know whether he ought to be glad or not; but that was in consequence of the depression of trade. The beer trade, in times of depression, suffered like all other trades. Within the last four years the total consumption of malt had decreased 10 per cent. It must not, however, be supposed that the brewers did not pay as much per quarter. The truth was that brewing had been depressed just as had been the case with the general trade of the country. He hoped that at no distant date the Chancellor of the Exchequer would take a more liberal view of the trade, and remit the extra 1*s.* he was now receiving from them.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had reviewed, in a very interesting manner, the general policy of his Budgets of the last two years; but there was one subject which formed part of the Budget of 1880 to which the right hon. Gentleman had not alluded, and with regard to which he would like to address a few observations to the Committee—he meant the increase in the spirit licences which the right hon. Gentleman then proposed. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that evening he had no revenue to give away. He was not about to ask the right hon. Gentleman for any remission of taxation; but he did wish to draw his attention for a minute or two to the subject of that increase, and to the results of it. When the increase of taxation upon spirit licences was introduced in 1880, he ventured to call the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the pressure, and, as it seemed to him, under the circumstances, the unjust pressure, which that taxation caused, especially about the middle of the scale. At the present time, if a man occupied a house rated at £50 a-year, he paid for his licence 50 per cent; if his house was rated at £100, he paid 30 per cent; if his house was rated at £400, he paid 10 per cent; and if his house was rated at £1,000 a-year, he paid 6 per cent. Now, the Committee would see that was not a very just scale of charge. In 1880 there was a feeling that the sum which the Chancellor of the Exchequer estimated to obtain from such a source should be so obtained. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in 1880, estimated to get £305,000 from that change of taxation. Now, in the year 1880-1 he received £432,730 from the increase on spirit licences; and in the year 1881-2 he received within £12,000 of the same amount; so that during these two years the Chancellor of the Exchequer had obtained from spirit licences as much as £120,000 a-year more than the estimate he made in 1880. What was the reason why the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed that increased charge upon spirit licences? He justified himself by calling attention to the Report of the Lords' Committee upon Intemperance, which had recommended an increase in the charge for spirit licences. It was, however, notorious that that Committee left out of consideration one circumstance, which was well known to every Member of the House of Commons, and especially to those who, like himself, represented a large town. It was true there had virtually been no increase of licensed houses in the United Kingdom. In the year 1880-1 the increase of spirit licences in England and Wales was under 220; therefore, there had been pratically no increase, and the monopoly of existing licences had been for a long series of years preserved. It was on the ground that the present houses possessed that monopoly, and that there was practically no increase in the number of licensed houses, that the right hon. Gentleman proposed the additional charge. But it must be known to hon. Members that licensed houses were subject to the competition of clubs, especially in the large boroughs. In the borough of Salford, which he had the honour to represent, there was a considerable number of political and other clubs. He looked with favour upon many of those institutions, because he believed they had been, and were, doing for the working classes what clubs for the higher classes of the community had done for the more wealthy and favoured classes. Just as the clubs in Pall Mall destroyed the trade of many public-houses of the olden time, so the political clubs which existed for the advantage of the working men, and which were doing good work in the way of social improvement, had largely diminished the trade of licensed houses. That was one reason, and, to his mind, a very strong reason, which he submitted, in 1880, against the heavy increase in spirit licences, especially upon houses rated at from £50 to £150 a-year. To-night the right hon. Gentleman, in what in this part of the House would be considered the most satisfactory portion of his Statement, told them that owing to the altered habits of the people there had been a great decline in the drink revenue, and that, in the right hon. Gentleman's own words, "there has been a real and serious decrease in the consumption of intoxicating drink." That statement was exactly in accordance with his (Mr. Arnold's) own observation amongst the large population from which he came. He believed it was perfectly true, and to him it was a matter of great satisfaction, that there was a sensible decrease in the consumption of intoxicating drink. The fact, however, to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had borne testimony strengthened very considerably the claim of the holders of spirit licences. No society or body of persons had asked him to make the observations he now offered to the Committee; he was simply moved to make them from his own observation of what he considered to be the improvement that was going on amongst the large populations of the towns and the difficulties under which the smaller classes of licensed houses were suffering from the increase of taxation. And considering that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had received, and was receiving, at least £120,000 a-year more than the sum he calculated upon from this source, he (Mr. Arnold) did hope that, not on this occasion perhaps, but on another occasion when he had Revenue to give away, he would bear in mind the claims which this class of people—especially those in houses rated at from £50 to £150 a-year—had on his consideration. There was only one other subject upon which he desired to say a word, and that was the largely - increased Vote to be asked from Parliament in aid of Cyprus. As he intended to oppose that Vote—and he now gave Notice of that intention—he would not offer many remarks on this occasion. He would only say that last year, when the Colonial Office presented a prosperity Budget, and seemed particularly satisfied in regard to their policy concerning Cyprus, he had ventured to say—of course, making allowance for the fact that the present Under Secretary for the Colonies was at that time extremely new to his Office, and for the fact that the Government was not responsible for our present connection with the Island—that the figures would not turn out to realize the expectations placed before the House. He should be failing in his duty if, in regard to the Charge for Cyprus, he did not oppose the Vote. They were told it was Lord Kimberley's hope that he might be able to reduce the Vote by £40,000 a-year; but what did that mean? He had no doubt it was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer anticipated that in future years he might obtain the assent of the Porte to the deduction from the tribute which we were liable to pay in respect of Cyprus of the amount which was due under the Guarantee of this country in regard to the Loan of 1855. But that would not be reducing the cost of Cyprus to this country by £40,000 a-year, because this country was entitled to receive from the Porte the payment of the guaranteed interest. The whole condition and management of the Island of Cyprus seemed to him to be highly unsatisfactory, and he hoped that when he fulfilled his promise to move the rejection of the Vote he should receive the support of the House.

Sir BALDWYN LEIGHTON was understood to say he rose for the purpose of putting a Question to the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, but, in his absence, the President of the Local Government Board, no doubt, would answer. On that (the Opposition) side of the House the point of the grant in aid of Highway rates was not quite clear. They understood that a sum of about £250,000 was to be applied to this purpose, and he was not going now to criticize the amount nor the mode of raising it. As he understood it, it was a provisional Vote of small amount, and, in the mode of collecting, it did not fall upon the traffic which caused the wear and tear. But in what way was it proposed to dispense it—according to mileage of turnpike road, or of main road, or of cost, or how? Would not the simplest way of applying it be to hand it over to the county authorities, saying, "There, that is the sum we give you as a mileage grant?" He did not know whether that was the way in which the Government proposed to do it. There were two or three other subjects in which he was interested, which would, no doubt, be amply discussed when they were reached. He greatly regretted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not seen his way to extending the limit of house assessment in respect of private-house licences, particularly in the case of farm-houses. If he had done so the advantages would have been greatly appreciated, whilst the loss to the Exchequer would have been infinitesimal. These people paid more under the Beer Tax than they did under the Malt Tax, and he hoped that when the Committee came to this subject they would fully discuss it. He did not know the right hon. Gentleman would be able to see his way to making the change he proposed this year; but probably some other year he would be in a position to propose it. There were, no doubt, many other subjects about which they would hear more, and about which questions would be asked. For instance, they were told that a large amount was required for Post Office and Telegraph Office buildings, and he must say it seemed hard that this charge should be paid in one year. It seemed to him that it should rather have been a debt spread over three or four years, especially as the increased revenue from this source was £200,000 this last year. If the Postmaster General had been present he might have explained the matter.

Mr. DODDS said, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had referred to the very important changes introduced by him last year in relation to the Probate and Legacy Duties, and had given the Committee particulars of some of those changes. Having, on several previous occasions, brought the whole of those changes under the consideration of the House, it was extremely gratifying to him (Mr. Dodds) personally to find that the right hon. Gentleman reported so very favourably as to the whole of them. He would, however, remind the Committee that a year had not elapsed since those changes were adopted, and that for only a short period had they been in active operation in Somerset House; and it was, therefore, all the more satisfactory to receive so favourable a report as to their operation. When these changes were better understood throughout the country they would, he had no doubt, be still more favourably received, and prove satisfactory alike to the Government and to the public. He (Mr. Dodds) had looked forward very anxiously for that Financial Statement, and had indulged the earnest hope that the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to take a further step very much in advance of that taken last year in the direction of reforming the death duties. The right hon. Gentleman had himself stated last year that he was only able to deal with the fringe of the subject on that occasion, and that considerable elbow-room would be required to enable the House to deal comprehensively with the remaining anomalies. The right hon. Gentleman had last year referred especially to three anomalies—three gross anomalies he termed them—in connection with these death duties. The first was the total exemption of property held in mortmain; secondly, the great difference in the charges upon settled and unsettled personalty; and, thirdly, the mode of charging the devolution of inheritance upon real property. He (Mr. Dodds) had indulged the sanguine hope that some one at least of these gross anomalies would have been dealt with on the present occasion. He contended that the death duty was strictly a charge upon the capital left by a deceased person, and that it should be charged at a uniform rate upon all persons, irrespective of consanguinity, and upon every description of property. Consanguinity, he contended, should for that purpose be disregarded, and, as the right hon. Gentleman had stated, the question would have to be considered and disposed of by the House. In connection with this matter, he wished to remind the Committee of one or two gross anomalies in connection with the charge upon real property. It was alleged that real property was unduly burdened, and that relief from local taxation was urgently required; but he (Mr. Dodds) begged to point out that real property was entirely free from any tax of an analogous character to the Probate Duty charged upon personalty; whilst the Succession Duties charged upon real property, which he had always understood were intended to be about equivalent in amount to the charge imposed upon personalty in the form of Legacy Duty, was very much smaller in proportion to the value of the real estate charged than the Legacy Duty as now levied upon personalty. In a recent case which had come under his (Mr. Dodds's) own cognizance, a small reversionary interest in personalty had been, from circumstances, no doubt, of an exceptional and peculiar character, charged in the form of Probate and Legacy Duties very many times in excess of the amount that would have been charged upon a similar amount of real property. Had the right hon. Gentleman seen his way to assimilate the death duties on real property to similar duties now charged upon personal property, he would have been in a position to afford adequate relief to the local taxpayer by contributions from the Consolidated Fund for a variety of purposes; and he ventured to think that had that course been adopted, the right hon. Gentleman would have been able to redeem his promise to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. E. W. Harcourt), by making his proposed contribution of £250,000 per annum towards the repairing of main roads and highways, without resorting to any other taxation, or increasing the duty charged upon carriages. However much he (Mr. Dodds) regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had not been able to deal with the subject on the present occasion, he most earnestly indulged the hope that the right hon. Gentleman might continue to hold the Office of Chancellor of the Exchequer until the state of Business in that House enabled him to deal exhaustively with these death duties. He felt sure, if such was the case, he would sweep away the remaining anomalies, and especially the gross anomalies to which he himself adverted last year.

MR. MOSS was sure the brewers would be glad to hear the high compliment the right hon. Gentleman had paid them, and, in their name, he thanked the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what he had said. He had expressed his acknowledgments to them for the manner in which they had assisted the officers of the Government in the collection of the Beer Tax, and he (Mr. Moss) would, on their part, take this opportunity of thanking the officers of the Excise for the able and courteous manner in which they had performed their part of the duty. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that the Beer Tax had not realized the amount he had anticipated. Well, one could scarcely be surprised at that, because, up to this moment, they had not been told how much of the duty had been thrown away by permitting private persons to brew without taking note of the quantity they consumed. It could be shown, he thought, that the private licences, amounting to £46,000, represented from 150,000 to 200,000 quarters of malt. The gain to the Exchequer, through substituting a Beer for a Malt

Duty, had been something like £800,000, but that had not come from the pockets of the brewers. The brewers were merely the collectors of the tax—they collected it from those who consumed the beer. The consumers of the beer were the wage-earning class, and it was from their pockets that this £800,000 came. This sum took the place of an Income Tax of 1*d.* in the pound on the wage-earning class. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in introducing his Bill for the change of the Malt Duty into a Beer Duty, said that the result of the change would leave a simple balance —just a turn—in favour of the Exchequer. He now said that he had obtained an additional duty of 2*s.* per quarter. He (Mr. Moss) said that he held in his hand a statement of the actual duty paid by a large maltster, showing that, during a period of five years, he had actually paid 20*s.* 5*d.* per quarter, so that, as the duty now charged was equal to 24*s.* 2*d.* per quarter, that was an increase of 3*s.* 9*d.* per quarter. It had been said that taking the duty off malt would bring about a change which had been very much sought after by the agricultural interests of the country. Well, it was true the agriculturists were always anxious for relief in this matter, not that they wished the change to be from the Malt to the Beer Duty, but they desired that the burden on their trade should be lightened and placed somewhere else, to give them an opportunity of conducting their business successfully. The agriculturists had been deceived into the belief that the effect of the change would be to lead to the consumption of a greater amount of home-grown barley, of a superior and medium quality, whereas it had simply led to a larger consumption of low-class foreign-grown barley. It was a matter of no consequence to the brewer what he used. He might as well use foreign barley, or a worse class of barley, as he now paid on the result of the operation, and not on the quality of the material. Of course, the pale ale brewers used the best barley; but the lower class was used in enormous quantities by ordinary brewers who now paid duty on result. And foreign barleys had not yet been introduced into the country quite to the extent he believed they would be. There could be no doubt that, in the future, very large quantities would be imported. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had congratulated the country upon the advance of temperance. If they would turn to the Blue Book concontaining the result of the labours of the Committee which sat in that House, to consider the subject of Temperance, some time ago, they would see it stated in evidence by one of the principal London brewers, that so far from the London brewers desiring the spread of intemperance, it was the greatest obstacle to the increase of their trade; and that there were no greater advocates of temperance than the brewers of the United Kingdom. He (Mr. Moss) fully endorsed the view of this gentleman, and congratulated the country on the spread of temperance. He trusted the Chancellor of the Exchequer would do all that lay in his power to cause it to spread further. It benefited the country, and he was sure the brewers would be found as strong advocates of that which advanced the interests of the country as anyone outside their particular trade. It was not to be expected that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have been able to make a change in the Beer Duty this year, looking at the state of the Revenue; still he thought the duty had been heavier than the right hon. Gentleman could have anticipated. As time went on, and we had good seasons, and the quality of the barley improved, it would be found that the charge of duty per quarter would be much larger than when seasons and the quality of the barley were bad. In conclusion, as he had said before, the increased taxation, in consequence of the change which had been made in the duty, fell not upon the brewers, but upon the consumers.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he would not detain the Committee more than two or three moments, his object being to support, as far as possible, the contention of the hon. Member for Coventry (Mr. Wills) in regard to the Tobacco Duties. He had more than once endeavoured to bring this subject before the House, but had not been successful; and now that he had an opportunity he would remind the Chancellor of the Exchequer how hardly these duties pressed on the working classes, and how desirable it was that they should be lightened. The first step towards lightening them, he thought, ought to be the abolition of the additional duty imposed on tobacco in 1878 by the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote). The result of the addition to the tax in that year was very slightly to increase the Revenue, but to cause a much more inferior article to be supplied to the working classes. It was perfectly plain that the article must be worse considering that the duty had been raised, although not to a very large extent, without the price to the consumer having been enhanced. Up to the year 1878 the Revenue had increased by large jumps. In 1871 it increased £174,000 over the preceding year, in 1872 the increase was £209,000, in 1873 £223,000, and so on, until in 1877 the increase was £243,000 over the preceding year. The increase in the duty was £388,000 in 1878, owing to the additional ½*d.* imposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The actual importation of tobacco diminished. In the following year the duty increased slightly, and there was a similar decrease of imports; so that at present, whilst we have an advance of £47,000 in the duty on last year, the consumption of tobacco was about 500,000lbs. less than it was in 1877, the year before the new duty was imposed. It was not generally known how far the working classes suffered from these enormous duties on tobacco. For every 3*d.* the working man spent in tobacco about 2*d.* went to the Revenue. When the Tobacco Duty was increased in 1878, it was the custom of the tobacconists to sell tobacco to the working classes at the rate of 3*d.* an oz., which made 48 pence, or 4*s.* per lb. How did the tobacconists obtain their profit? They had to pay 3*s.* 2*d.* to the Revenue, they paid about 6*d.* for the tobacco, and their profit was 4*d.*, that being increased 10 per cent by moisture added to the tobacco. After 1878 it was found that the working classes would not stand an advance on the price of their tobacco, and a simple process had to be resorted to. Ten per cent of water was added to the tobacco, thus enabling the increased duty to be paid, and keeping the price of the tobacco at its original amount. He hoped that the noble Lord (Lord Frederick Cavendish), who was listening for the Chancellor of the Exchequer, would reflect on the great hardship to the working classes of this extra 4*d.* on tobacco, which, while it did not add much to the Revenue, deteriorated so seriously that which was almost the only luxury of these people. On another point he wished to ask Her Majesty's Government whether they had come to any arrangement with the Turkish Government for the remission of the Revenue of Cyprus, which we had impounded on behalf of France? Unless Turkey agreed to it the transaction was one of doubtful character, and scarcely consistent with the undertaking upon which we took over the government of Cyprus. We took it on the understanding that we were to pay over to the Porte so much a year; but we did not take power to impound money belonging to Turkey. We might have a right to impound revenues on account of what was owing to ourselves; but it was rather remarkable that we should act as the assignees of France, unless Turkey had agreed that we should do so.

MR. R. N. FOWLER said, he was sure the Committee had listened with great interest to the very lucid statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He had taken his Estimates very judiciously, and the Committee must feel that he had acted wisely. At the same time, he (Mr. Fowler) was anxious to say this—and in 12 months' time hon. Members would know whether he was right or not—that he believed, and hoped, that the right hon. Gentleman's Estimate of the Revenue of the country would be very much exceeded by the actual receipts. It was a remarkable thing that during the period to which reference had been made—say, from 1872 to 1878 or 1879—while it was notorious that the trade of the country was not in a prosperous condition, the Revenue kept up much better than could have been expected. Well, now everyone was agreed that the trade of the country was reviving; nevertheless, they did not see those evidences of it in the Revenue of the country which they might have expected. His explanation of it was this—that either when trade declined or revived the last thing to be affected was the Revenue. They knew that one great item of Revenue was Excise, and particularly those duties which the right hon. Gentleman had called "Drink duties." The circumstances, he took it, were these. When the working classes got good wages a good deal of it went in drink. It was unfortunate; but it was, nevertheless, the fact. They might all lament it; but it was a fact which the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Members of the House had to bear in mind. On the other hand, when times were bad the working classes became economical, and retrenched their consumption of drink. They did not begin again to drink largely when times improved and their wages increased. Therefore, the right hon. Gentleman might possibly find his Estimates exceeded during the coming year. He threw this out, because he thought it well that it should be remembered that this question of Revenue and Revenue facilities was guided by given laws. He thought the Prime Minister would come down next year and tell the House that the Estimates of Revenue had been very much exceeded. He thought the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly right in taking cautious Estimates; but neither he nor the noble Lord could claim next year that it was owing to their good management that the Estimates had been exceeded, because he thought it was a thing the House might legitimately look forward to. He thoroughly agreed with the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman as to the great importance, under all circumstances, of having a Surplus. He only wished they could do more in the way of making a Surplus for the purpose of reducing the National Debt. The right hon. Gentleman had drawn a picture of what had been done in America and in the different countries of Europe, particularly France; and it was gratifying to see that he adhered to the policy of always having a Surplus; and it was to be hoped that the Estimates —barring accidents, such as wars and famines, and events which were not anticipated—would produce more than the right hon. Gentleman expected. He should like to make a remark with regard to the Wine Duties. It was true they were not going to deal with them this year; but they had been referred to by the right hon. Gentleman in his speech. During a visit he had recently made to the Cape, he had found a very strong feeling existing there to the effect that the manner in which the Wine Duties were levied was very unfair towards the wine-growers of the Colony. It was declared that the alcoholic test was such that it prevented them from sending their wines to Europe. He made this remark and called the attention of the noble Lord to the subject because, whenever the Government determined upon dealing with the question of the Wine Duties—and there was reason to suppose that it was under their consideration—and there was a great change in the taxation of the country, the views of the Cape Colonists must not be lost sight of. He hoped something would be done to enable this important Colony to send their wines into this country. The only change introduced by the Budget—and it was an important one—was with regard to the duty on carriages. For his own part, he would rather see a duty on wheels than on carriages. He did not represent an agricultural constituency, therefore he must apologize to the House for alluding to the subject; but it certainly seemed to him that the roads in the country districts were cut up, not by carriages, but by waggons. In the parish in which he lived in the country the roads were very much cut up by the passage of heavy, powerful stone-waggons. He and others like him had to pay for this—had to pay for the damage done to the roads by those who were carrying on an important business in the conveyance of stone. No doubt, the Government could not this Session devote attention to more subjects than they had dealt with—the right hon. Gentleman was unable, in consequence of having only a small Surplus, to make more change than that which was necessary in consequence of the promise he had held out to the hon. Member for Oxfordshire. He (Mr. R. N. Fowler) trusted the Government would elaborate the idea thrown out by the right hon. Gentleman, and that in the future they would be able to see their way to setting a duty upon wheels rather than upon carriages. No one could deny that the statement in which the right hon. Gentleman had introduced his Budget was a most lucid one. It was, of course, natural for Gentlemen whose interests had been referred to by the right hon. Gentleman in his speech, but not dealt with in his Budget, to take this opportunity of speaking of them; but the only new proposal in the Budget—that with regard to carriages —was one which he did not expect would lead to much discussion. The Budget was not a very ambitious one, and, no doubt, it would receive the general support of the House.

Mr. BIDDELL said, that when the present Government came into Office the country was led to expect great relief from local taxation; but he could not say at present that their expectations had been realized. Although they gratefully accepted the instalments they had received, they looked forward to a great deal more—although he, of course, admitted that the state of the Revenue did not allow of their having more at present. As to the right hon. Gentleman's proposal affecting coffee, no doubt it was a very good thing to protect the public from the adulteration of that article; but he failed to see why the same consideration should not be extended to the public in regard to beer. They had always thought that genuine beer should be made of malt and hops. They found it made of all manner of things, as there was no protection against adulteration. The Government, in protecting coffee, had given them good reason to hope that the protection of beer would follow. The arguments of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) on that point were strong. It was hard on the brewer who sold the genuine article made of malt and hops, that other brewers who manufactured a spurious article should not be compelled to declare its true character to the purchaser. As to the relief given in the case of highways, he did not think the right hon. Gentleman had altogether understood the complaints of the farming community. If highways were opened, those who used to pay hundreds and thousands a-year in passing the turnpikes—brewers and the like—would pay nothing. People of this kind had a great deal of very heavy traffic on the roads. It was not the light traffic that wore the roads, but the heavy traffic—such as brewers' drays, which were constantly on the road heavily laden. He should have liked to have seen some scheme prepared which would compel traffic of this sort to contribute to the maintenance of the roads. There was a point he had noticed the other day in a Question he had put to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take this opportunity of explaining. He had pointed out—and the right hon. Gentleman had admitted the accuracy of his figures—that the farming constituency in Mid Lothian paid less income tax than people similarly situated in England. Some explanation should be given of the inequality. He failed to see that anything could be said in defence of the existing principle, and he should look to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the necessary relief in the matter. The Scotch farmers were quite as well able to pay the income tax as the English farmers. The latter had, during recent years, been paying on an income they had never received; and it was only fair that the people of both countries should be treated alike.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"(2.) That, on and after the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-three, in lieu of the Duties imposed upon Carriages by the Act of the thirty-second and thirty-third years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter fourteen, save as hereinafter provided with respect to Hackney Carriages, there shall be granted and paid to Her Majesty, Her heirs and successors, in and throughout Great Britain, the Duties following (that is to say):

For every Carriage—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
If such Carriage shall have four or more wheels, and shall be of the weight of four hundred weight and upwards . . .	3	3	0
If such Carriage shall have less than four wheels, or, having four or more wheels, shall be of a less weight than four hundred weight	1	1	0

Provided, That Excise Licences for a Carriage deemed to be a Hackney Carriage, by virtue of 'The Town Police Clauses Act, 1847' or 'The General Police and Improvement (Scotland) Act, 1862,' and a Hackney Carriage, as defined by 'The Metropolitan Stage Carriage Act, 1869,' shall continue to be charged with the existing Duties."

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I wish to have this matter made quite clear. The Resolution will only apply to carriage licences taken out after the 1st of January next?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: The right hon. Gentleman has quite correctly understood the intention of the Resolution.

Resolution *agreed to.*

(3.) *Resolved*, That the Duty of Excise on vegetable matter grown in the United Kingdom applicable to the uses of Chicory or Coffee (other than Chicory) shall cease to be payable, and the sale or exposure for sale of any such vegetable matter in imitation of, or mixed with, Chicory or Coffee shall be rendered illegal.

(4.) *Resolved*, That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now charged on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-two, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-three, on importation into Great Britain or Ireland (that is to say): on

		£	s.	d.
Tea . . .	the lb.	0	0	6

(5.) *Resolved*, That the Duties of Customs on Vegetable Matter applicable to the uses of Chicory or Coffee (other than Chicory) shall cease to be payable, and the Importation as Merchandise of any such Vegetable Matter mixed with Coffee or Chicory shall be prohibited.

(6.) *Resolved*, That it is expedient to amend the Law relating to the Inland Revenue and the Customs.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock;

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday*.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES) BILL.—[BILL 21.]

(*Mr. Attorney General, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Chamberlain, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Solicitor General.*)

SECOND READING. [FIRST NIGHT.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, the Bill was one the importance of which could not be too much exaggerated. He regretted, however, that the Attorney General had not, after further consideration, introduced more alterations into the Bill, but had presented it again in much the same shape which it assumed when it was originally brought in last Session. He entirely approved of that House taking steps to put a stop to the bribery of which they had recently had such startling revelations in the Report of the Commissioners. The Act of 1854 did a good deal at first in the way of checking bribery and corruption; but the ingenuity of lawyers and of others concerned in elections subsequently enabled them to evade many of its extremely beneficial provisions. Therefore, he thought the hon. and learned Gentleman was perfectly right in bringing in another Bill to do away with the scandal which undoubtedly existed. He rose for the purpose of saying that if hon. Gentlemen on his side of the House would be guided by his advice, and that of those who sat with him, they would assent to the second reading of the Bill, in order to take a step in the right direction and stop bribery. He thought the bribery which went on was a disgrace to the age; and anything that he could do to put a stop to it he would do to assist the hon. and learned Gentleman. Having said this, he should best discharge his duty by pointing out, in no captious spirit, what he considered to be serious defects in the measure. He quite concurred in the propriety of the provision which made treating an offence on the part, not of the candidate only, but of all persons who resorted to it. Nor had he any objection to that part of the Bill relating to corrupt practices, except that, in his opinion, the penalties enacted were far too severe. Indeed, he feared that by their severity the Government would defeat the very object they had in view. Where a candidate was guilty of corrupt practices in any shape—whether of bribery, treating, undue influence, or of intimidation—no punishment could be too severe for him; but the case was different with regard to acts done by agents and other persons, over whom the candidate had practically little or no control. When they came to the 4th section, where they were dealing with a candidate who had been guilty by his agents, what was the penalty they were going to impose upon him? He should never be capable of again sitting in the House of Commons for such a county or borough, and if elected such election should be void. That was a terrible penalty. The candidate might have no knowledge whatever, morally or practically, of the corruption. He might be a man who had represented the place for many years, and who had an excellent character. He thought it would be going a great deal too far to impose such a severe penalty as that. He thought that the tendency of the present age in all Criminal Law was rather to diminish than to increase the penalty. He did not want to lessen the liability of the candidate, or his agent, as it at present stood; but he was strongly against increasing it as proposed. The other candidate might be as guilty, and yet get off scot-free. He thought that undue severity would defeat its own object. Treachery might be introduced into the opposite camp; and he did not see how a man could possibly be safe against treachery. When they came to the question of illegal practices, they were introducing quite a new element into the Law of Elections. These illegal practices, although they rendered persons liable to a penalty—and, very properly, a heavy penalty—had not the same effect as corrupt practices, so far as the seat was concerned. There was a great deal which he would like to see stopped very much. It would be well to do away absolutely and entirely with paid canvassers. There was the question of conveyance of voters to the polls. He was prepared to discuss that when he came to it. Then there was the question of placards; but he did not know how, in the case of a constituency like Westminster, a man was to bring his views before the electors, except by placard, in certain cases. But, under this Bill, if a man paid for the posting of placards, he would come under the penalties. The next head related to election expenses. He approved of the attempt which the Attorney General had made to limit the expense of an election, because there was no doubt that if they allowed extravagant expenditure, somehow or other it ended in bribery or corruption, or that something was wrong. He had always appreciated the great difficulty of the House with regard to that question. It was impossible to lay down a hard-and-fast line on the subject of expenditure. The General Election in 1868 did not take place until December. What was the result? During the whole of the Recess, from the time that Parliament was prorogued to December, electioneering work went on. He addressed the people of Lancaster; but his friends came, he thought, to a very wise determination. They had one meeting immediately after Parliament broke up, and they agreed not to speak for three months. But he did not think everybody else took that course; and the expenses went on increasing during the whole of the three months. In 1874 the Election was wanted as soon as possible. It could not be said that the Elections of 1868 and 1874 were conducted with the same expenditure. He wanted to know whether all the expenditure, from the time of a Dissolution till the time of Election, which might be some months afterwards, was to be allowed? There was, of course, a very great difference on the question of election expenditure between the case of a large straggling county and that of a small borough. In fact, the circumstances of the two were as different as they could possibly be. He wanted to call the attention of the hon. and learned Gentleman to the definition in Clause 55 of the time at which the expenses were to begin. He could not make out from the Bill the time when the expenditure was to begin. That time should be made absolutely clear. There never had been a rule that a candidate must not spend beyond a certain sum. But the moment they laid down a scale beyond which a candidate might not go, it was absolutely necessary that they should state in the Bill itself at what time the expenditure was to begin and when it was to end. The Bill provided that no payment or deposit was to be made by a candidate except through an election agent; but the election agent was not to be appointed until just before the election. A person might be a candidate months or years before an election took place. As to the question of expenses he was referred to the Schedules. As he read it, all the expenditure which might legally take place was contained in the Schedules—that was to say, the expenses you incurred under the 1st Schedule must be included in the 2nd. The 1st Schedule showed how many persons you might employ; and as he read the 2nd Schedule, it showed how much money you might spend. The Bill provided that there should be only one election agent. He himself would not like to pay for more than one. But take the case of a large county. How could one agent have control over what was going on in different parts of the county unless he was allowed to appoint throughout the county some persons whom he could trust? The Bill should provide that the agent should be entitled to appoint a sub-agent for each polling district, in order that his instructions might be carried out. The Bill provided that the agent might not vote; but if you employed your own solicitor to act as agent, why he could not vote he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) could not understand. The Bill would prevent you from employing as agent those who were most conversant with the subject simply because they were voters. He could not help thinking that the Schedules were drawn up by some person who had had nothing to do with large boroughs or counties. With regard to the clerks and messengers that might be employed, he contended that, under the Bill, very great inequalities would arise; so that while in Westminster, for instance, 40 clerks and the same number of messengers would be employed, in East Surrey only nine clerks and nine messengers; and in Herefordshire, with a constituency of 10,000 electors, there would be 34 clerks and 34 messengers. [The right hon. Gentleman made several other comparisons between the number of clerks and messengers to be allowed in boroughs and in counties to enforce his objection to the provision of the Bill on the subject.] Again, the election agent had to make a return of expenses within 40 days from the day of election, according to the very proper provisions of this Bill. But what would be the consequence? A newly-elected Member might not sit or vote until that return had been made under penalty of £100 for every occasion on which he sat or voted; and the result would surely be that no Member would take his seat within a period of 40 days from his election, unless he felt absolutely certain that his agent had complied with the law. He submitted that in the case of a new Minister taking Office after a General Election, this part of the Act would have an absurd and unintended effect. With the provisions of the Bill by which an agent was compelled to make up his accounts within a certain time, he cordially agreed; and he held with the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite that the concealment of election expenses was a serious offence. But while there was in the Bill much that he approved, there were matters of detail, such as the 25th clause, to which he entertained a decided objection. That clause provided—

> "That any elector letting a committee-room for the purposes of an election, or beneficially interested in the proceeds of such letting, is prohibited from voting at the election."

There was a great snare in that clause, because, in many cases, no meeting rooms could be hired for the purposes of elections, except public halls, which were usually the property of Companies; and surely it could not be intended by the framers of the Bill that the shareholders in such Companies should be disqualified for voting if meetings were held in the buildings owned by them. These and similar details showed the imperfections of the Bill, but, were, after all, minor matters. The measure had a far more considerable defect, to which he felt bound to call attention. The authors of the Bill proposed to inflict penalties hitherto unheard of, which, he hoped, would not be allowed to be enacted in their present shape; and the worst of it all was that the Bill, while diminishing the control of a candidate over his agent, left the political character and Parliamentary prospects of the candidate to the decision of a single Judge. To such a principle he absolutely and entirely demurred. He was sure the House would never pass that. Other offences were dealt with by Courts, from which appeals were allowed; but the class of malpractices against which the Bill was directed were left to the decision of a Judge who sat without a jury, and from whose decision there was no appeal. He would give all the help he could to the passing of the Bill through Parliament; but, as at present framed, two effects would happen. It was a great snare for the innocent candidate; while the man who contested a seat, and did not happen to get it, might get off scot-free, unless a Public Prosecutor was introduced. He was very much afraid it would lead to political clubs, not in burghs, not in counties, but organizations elsewhere who had their own particular crotchets—anti-vaccinators and anti-vivisectionists—who would send down their agents to particular towns at election times. They would greatly increase the strength of those political agencies which some people were wicked enough to call Caucus, and the elections would not be conducted by the best men. They would also leave the candidate much more helpless than at present, unless they put some safeguards in this direction.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER pointed out that the chief expenses at elections were those of advertising, supplying committee-rooms, and of agents. In London, for instance, it was necessary to advertise in the daily papers, and such a paper as *The Times* could not, of course, publish an election address on the same terms as those of *The Little Pedlington News*. He did not see how an election could take place in a large constituency if this Bill were passed into law. In the City the rent of committee-rooms, as his hon. Friend—a late opponent—the Member for Tewkesbury (Mr. Martin) would bear him out, was enormous. In the City of London, which returned four Members, with a University vote, and had a constituency of 22,000, the cost allowed under the Bill would be £2,940, or £980 for each candidate. He wished to know, in the event of a bye-election, which was almost as costly as a General Election, whether this £980 was all that the candidate in the great constituency of the City of London would be allowed to incur? It was proposed in this measure to prohibit the use of rooms in public-houses as committee-rooms. Although he approved of this provision, it was a step which was calculated to increase the expenses of an election, as publicans granted the use of their premises at a cheaper rate than that at which they could be obtained from any other tradesman. Another cause of expense was the employment of agents. In the City there were 19 polling districts, and where there were a large number of districts an election could not be conducted without considerable expense. The defects of the Bill seemed to him to be those parts of it which dealt with the points at which he had glanced. He should be as glad as any hon. Member on the opposite side of the House to see an end put to those improper and illegal practices at some elections, which, wherever they prevailed, caused disgrace. At the same time, he recognized the fact that it was a great mistake to go in advance of public opinion in this matter. Certain questionable acts public opinion did not brand as corrupt, and to punish persons who committed them would be to enlist the sympathy of the House in their behalf. He hoped the House would seriously consider the provisions of the Bill, and when they got into Committee would materially alter and modify them. The hon. Member concluded by moving—

"That, considering no corruption has been proved to exist in the larger town constituencies, or in any county constituency, it is inexpedient to adopt such uniform restrictions and punishments as will render the fair conduct of an election in a great constituency perilous and penal."

MR. WARTON, who seconded the Amendment, criticized the drafting of the Schedule of the Bill. There were, he said, some proposals in the Bill which, in his opinion, were quite impracticable. How was it possible, for instance, to pay the expenses of public meetings with such a sum as £20, or to defray the charge of postage and telegrams with £10 per 1,000? He felt quite sure that, in the large constituencies particularly, the Bill would prove useless.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "considering no corruption has been proved to exist in the larger town constituencies, or in any county constituency, it is inexpedient to adopt such uniform restrictions and punishments as will render the fair conduct of an election in a great constituency perilous and penal,"—(*Mr. Robert Fowler*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. HINDE PALMER approved of the spirit in which the proposed second reading of the Bill had been met by the right hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Assheton Cross). He regarded the Bill as a great and useful attempt to remove a scandal that had for too long a period existed among the electoral body, bearing on its face an evident sense of political immorality. He believed the Bill would be open to considerable criticism when it got into Committee; but he could hardly believe the worthy Alderman hoped to carry his Amendment, which did not go to the root of the mischief. He had always thought the right principle was to lay down a distinct law, setting forth what were to be illegal and corrupt practices, and then prohibit anything like an indulgence, directly or indirectly, in those corrupt and illegal practices. The difficulty he felt in the Bill was to be found in the Schedule, which established a maximum for the expenses of all elections, according to a graduated scale. He feared it was impossible to do this. At the same time, other parts of the Bill—as, for instance, the 6th section—struck a blow at many things in detail which rendered expenses in frequent cases enormous. Again, he had an objection to that part which dealt with the solemn declaration to be made by the candidate, and filed with the election agent's account. In addition to the affidavit so provided by the Bill, he would propose that the candidate, on taking his seat, should present to the Clerk of the House a duplicate of such declaration, verifying a true statement as to the total amount of expenses. He believed that a provision to that effect would work very satisfactorily. He hoped his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General would take into conderation the suggestions which had been made from both sides of the House.

Captain AYLMER regarded the Bill as unworkable, owing to the attempt of its authors to apply it to constituencies wholly diverse in their character. For example, the maximum expenditure allowed for constituencies of 20,000 was £920; but a candidate who contested Westminster, observing a reasonable calculation for the employments allowed for in the Bill, would incur an expenditure of £1,377, while in East Surrey his expenses would not exceed £769. In other matters of detail the Bill appeared equally impracticable. For instance, a man who gave a dinner to two or three friends six months before the election would, if he were known to be a candidate, be disqualified. It seemed unfair, also, that disqualification should result from the mere act of an agent for so great a length of time as the Bill provided; and that the same number of agents, messengers, and clerks should be provided for constituencies extending over large and small areas. He was not particularly interested in protecting the Licensed Victualler; but he thought that in this Bill he was extremely hardly treated. He would give one instance. Clause 37 stated that—

> "The holder of a licence for the sale by retail of any intoxicating liquor (whether for consumption on or off the premises), who permits any act which constitutes bribery, treating, or undue influence within the meaning of the Corrupt Practices Prevention Acts as amended by this Act, to take place upon his licensed premises, shall be guilty of bribery, treating, or undue influence, as the case may be."

How could he possibly prevent these acts in some cases? If the words "knowingly permits" had been inserted it would have been right; but only the word "permits" was contained in the clause. In short, the Bill was full of pitfalls for candidate, agent, and voter, and made them liable to severe punishment. It would be unworkable owing to its stringency. He thought the wisest course the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General could adopt would be to refer the Bill to a Select Committee, with orders to report to the House in three or four weeks; and it might get through this Session, after being carefully amended in Committee.

Mr. CARBUTT considered that no Bill would meet the wants of this country unless it had a clause in it to the effect that public-houses should be closed on the day of election. He had intended to move that as an Amendment, but was informed that if he were successful it would have the effect of throwing out the Attorney General's Bill, and, as that was not his wish, he did not intend to move his Amendment; still, he hoped the Attorney General would consent to a clause to that effect being inserted in the Bill in Committee. Last year he had a Bill for the purpose, and a Wednesday's Sitting was set apart for it. They did not go to a division; but he believed they would have carried it if they had. This year he wished to re-introduce the same measure; but the Motion was blocked by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), who stated that his reason for doing so was because he preferred pure beer to pure elections. It was the belief of many persons that if they closed public-houses on election days, elections would be conducted in comfort and there would be much less bribery, because it was when people got "fuddled" with beer they committed acts of bribery and corruption, for which they were punished. He had again gone through the evidence which bore upon the point, and it appeared to be conclusive as to the demoralizing effects resulting from the practice of giving away refreshments from public-houses during elections. The closing of public-houses at Newport had a marked effect in putting a stop to the riot and disorder which formerly prevailed there.

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE said, he wished to call attention to a few points which had not been touched upon by the previous speakers; and, in doing so, he was sure his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General would acquit him of all hostile intention towards the Bill. In his opinion, the immediate duty of the House of Commons was to apply some remedy to the mischiefs which were growing to an enormous extent at elections. He only envied the hon. and learned Gentleman his great opportunity for applying some real remedy to this present state of things. He was afraid, however, that the House was attaching more importance to that part of the Bill which referred to the amount of election expenses, than to that part of it which dealt with corrupt and illegal practices. The Bill ought, in fact, to be called, not the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Bill, but the Parliamentary Elections (Limitation of Expenses) Bill, for that was much the more prominent portion of the Bill, and the House was likely to lose sight of the main and most important portion of the measure, which was the suppression of corrupt practices. He did not wish, on the present occasion, to say anything upon the closing of public-houses on the day of election; but when that proposal was made he should certainly oppose it. He thought the Bill, as it stood, was unfair to the Licensed Victuallers, who would be affected by that proposition, and did not see any defence for two sections of it in particular—namely, the 8th and the 38th, which affected licensed houses. He could not see why there should be a legislative prohibition against the holding of committee-rooms at public-houses. He sat for a constituency among whom, at the election, there were no committee-rooms held at public-houses; but he had also been concerned in two other elections, in which committee-rooms were held at public-houses, and his experience had been that there was no connection between the work of the committee-room and the business carried on in the public-house in which the committee-room was held. ["Oh, oh!"] Well, he could only say that had been his experience; and the House should bear in mind that there were many places in which it was impossible to obtain committee-rooms except at public-houses. He was entirely disinterested, as far as his constituency was concerned; but he did not see any reason for imposing a special disqualification upon a particular trade, when it had not been rendered necessary by anything which had occurred in the course of election proceedings. But there was a still more indefensible proceeding proposed in the Bill. The 38th section provided that—

> "Where a holder of a license for the sale by retail of any intoxicating liquor on any premises (whether the license be for consumption on or off the premises) is found guilty of any corrupt practice, either on conviction or by the report of an election court, such holder shall, in addition to any other punishment or incapacity, and if in the case of a report by an election court he has obtained a certificate of indemnity notwithstanding that certificate, be liable to forfeit his license and to be disqualified for a period not exceeding three years from holding a license for the sale of intoxicating liquors on those premises."

That was making a special penalty for one trade; but let them see what the penalty was for those who were found guilty. In Section 30 there was a provision to which the attention of the House had not been called, and which, in his opinion, ought certainly to be struck out of the Bill. It was to the effect that one Judge should have the power of giving judgment on an Election Petition. The position of a Judge was already invidious enough; but this would be throwing on him a burden too heavy. Section 32 made an entire change in the duties which the Judges had to perform, and the altered position of the Judges deserved the serious attention of the House. He believed that that provision would unduly enlarge the duty of the Judge. Again, in the 12th section of the Bill, there was an unjust distinction instituted between those who were charged with illegal and those who were charged with corrupt practices. Those who were accused of illegal practices might demand to have their cases tried before the ordinary tribunal of Judge and Jury; while those charged with corrupt practices had no option given to them whatever, but might, without having any legal advice, be then and there summarily convicted, and on conviction fined a sum not exceeding £100, and be declared incapable for five years of voting, or of being put upon any registry in the United Kingdom. That was a power too large to give to any tribunal whatever, and certainly too large to be given to a single Judge. Again, the 42nd section provided that—

> "Where an indictment for any offence under the Corrupt Practices Prevention Acts or this Act is removed into the High Court by a writ of certiorari issued at the instance of the Attorney General, and the Attorney General suggests on the part of the Crown that it is expedient for the purposes of justice that the indictment should be tried in the Central Criminal Court, the order that such indictment shall be so tried shall be made as of course by the High Court."

A case occurred within the last few months in which the Attorney General made an application to the High Court to change the venue in a case like that; but the Court declined to do so, as no ground had been shown to induce it to think that the case could not be fairly tried within the local jurisdiction. The proposal, however, here was that the Attorney General, who must always be more or less a political partizan, should *suo motu* remove the trial of a case from one Court to another. The 36th clause contained a remarkable provision. It was to this effect—that if, within six months after an election, the Director of Public Prosecutions, or any number of the residents in any borough or county, not fewer than 10, should apply to the High Court, stating they had evidence to show that a considerable portion of the electors had been guilty of corrupt practices, the Court might then appoint a barrister, being one of Her Majesty's Counsel, as a Special Commissioner to inquire into the matter, and on proof, fine or imprison the persons so charged. If the applicants failed to substantiate their allegation, they should then pay the costs of the procedure. It was hardly likely, however, that electors would put themselves in such peril, when they could, without incurring any risk in regard to costs, go to the ordinary tribunals of the country. The expression "a considerable number" was too vague, and the power given to the Special Commissioner, whom he hoped to see swept from the Bill, was too large. A speedy and effectual means of putting an end to corrupt practices was that suggested by Lord Beaconsfield in proposing the Reform Bill in 1867. The suggestion was that after an election a certain number of electors should, upon finding a security for £250, be allowed to present a Petition to the Supreme Court, stating that they had reason to believe that corrupt practices had taken place. Thereupon two Commissioners were to go down, not to try the case as between two parties, but with power to examine witnesses and to report to the House whether corrupt practices had been resorted to or not, and their Report was to be conclusive, unless it were challenged within 30 days it was laid upon the Table. If such a scheme were adopted a speedy stop would be put to corrupt practices. The real mischief at present was that the hearing of an Election Petition was the trial of a cause between two parties. Two things were a great scandal under the present system of dealing with corrupt practices. In a good many boroughs, especially those in which the representation was divided between one Liberal and one Conservative, inquiry was avoided because of the risk of disfranchisement. There were at least a dozen boroughs in the country which, if brought to the test of an Election Inquiry, would share the fate of those corrupt constituencies with which the House would, he hoped, shortly deal. The other matter was, that when a seat was attacked, and a particular case of corrupt practices was proved, the advisers of the sitting Member confessed that the election was void. By confessing that at an early period, in most cases, though not at Gloucester, the Judges had been prevented from making a Report which would lead to the discovery of extensive corrupt practices. In many cases the prevalence of corrupt practices was suppressed by both sides. If the House would only send down within a month of an election a couple of barristers, with power to examine witnesses and call for documents, their Report would seldom be challenged. He wished to make one observation with regard to canvassers. In the Schedule of the Bill he found that one election agent might be employed who might be an elector, but who could not vote. But the clerks and messengers could not be electors. He did not see any reason for that. Now that the electoral body was so greatly increased, it would be most difficult to find men who could be depended upon and who knew the place, and yet were not voters. It would be much better to deal with the question in a straightforward way. In one cathedral city he believed that as many as 800 persons were employed on one side as canvassers or poll clerks. The straightforward course would be to provide that 40 or 24 hours before the opening of the poll the agent of each candidate should send a list of the persons he had employed for reward to the Returning Officer, and that that officer should be bound to refuse the vote of every person so employed. At present the Returning Officer could not refuse the vote of such persons, although the votes would be struck out on a scrutiny. He hoped that some of the matters he had indicated might be incorporated into the Bill. It was his desire, and that of other hon. Members on that side of the House, to assist, by every means in their power, the passage of a substantial measure for the prevention of corrupt practices.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), after expressing a hope that the House would allow the second reading of the Bill to be taken that night, said, it would, perhaps, be convenient if he were now to reply to some of the observations which had been made by the hon. Members who had taken part in the debate. He felt it his duty, in the first place, to acknowledge the fairness of the tone in which the debate had been conducted, and also of the way in which the attempt of Her Majesty's Government to deal with the question of corrupt practices had been received. Above all, he must express his gratification at the courtesy which had been shown by the right hon. Gentlemen the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross), and the value of the criticisms which the right hon. Gentleman had applied to the clauses of the Bill. He could assure the House that no Member who had taken any interest in the subject could be more sensible than he (the Attorney General) was of the difficulty of dealing with the matter. To adopt a general measure dealing with the interests of different constituencies, entirely distinct in size, differing in the density of their population, and varying in their circumstances, would be, under the most favourable circumstances, no easy task. He was sure that neither the experience nor the ability of any one Member would enable him to carry such a measure; and, therefore, every suggestion and every amendment which hon. Members representing different constituencies with different interests might wish to make would be at least accepted for the purpose of being fairly considered, and would not be objected to simply because it was an amendment of the Bill. There was, no doubt, very much in the Bill which was deserving of discussion and consideration; and if, after consideration and discussion by the House, it should be found that any clause either required alteration or should be struck out of the Bill altogether, hon. Members would find him at least ready to accept to the extent of fully considering any suggestion they might make. He trusted that, having said so much, the House would now allow him to make one or two general observations. The Bill proceeded upon two distinct lines, and had two distinct objects in view. As his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Plymouth (Mr. Edward Clarke) had said, one object was to lessen the expenses of elections, and the other was to deal vigorously, and he hoped successfully, with corrupt practices. He believed that the Bill satisfactorily dealt with the growing evil of unnecessary expenditure at elections, and that it would do a great deal in the direction of putting an end to corrupt practices. His objection to the great expenditure which it was now necessary to incur proceeded from three distinct grounds. In the first place, this large expenditure deprived the House of the services of many men who would be useful in the House; secondly, it threw an unnecessary burden upon those who were there; and, thirdly, the expenditure itself led to corrupt practices. It was almost impossible to draw a line between the expenditure that was lavish and extravagant in a great degree, and that which involved the commission of corrupt practices. One kind of expenditure led to another; and by paying a man highly and extravagantly for services rendered at elections, and by that means making it a source of great profit to him, they enlisted the services of a class of men whose minds naturally had a tendency towards corrupt practices. If they could enlist the services of volunteers, instead of these paid agents, they would get rid of the class who now set an example of corruption, and were the means of corrupting others; while, at the same time, they would obtain a much juster representation. Then, thirdly, he attached considerable importance to the changing of paid agents into voluntary services; because he entertained a great hope that if they could get rid of the influence of wealth, if they could diminish the chances of the success of a rich man as against a poor man, if they could enlist the services of volunteers, who would be actuated less by the hope of personal advantage and gain than by the enthusiasm of their political convictions, they would obtain a much truer representation in the House of Commons, and would return to the House those who would represent the majority of the people, and not so much the wealth of the country. Dealing with the subject of the reduction of expenditure, he knew there were many who felt that it was impossible to reduce the expenditure—at least, to the extent that was attempted by the present Bill. He admitted that if they were to continue to conduct elections on the system upon which they were conducted at present, there would be great force in that idea; but the object of the Bill was to alter the system on which elections were now conducted. If they were to pursue the old system of paid agents and paid canvassers, of circulating addresses in three or four different ways; if they were to continue in the large constituencies to issue 50,000 or 60,000 circulars, and to employ small armies to carry about printed addresses and notices, he was prepared to admit that no result could be produced in diminishing the expense of elections. But it was to get rid of this system that the present Bill had been introduced. He was afraid that the provisions of the measure would not meet with universal favour; but he trusted that the experience of hon. Members would induce them to admit that the worst evil of the present large expenditure was that it did not enable the country to obtain a true expression of the political opinion of the constituencies. Some assistance in considering this question would be derived from a perusal of the Return which had been presented to the House of the Expenses incurred at the last General Election. He believed that those expenses in the last Election reached a larger sum than they had ever reached in any previous General Election. In looking over the Return, hon. Members could not help seeing that the expenditure was not a matter of necessity, but rather a matter of fashion and custom. At present, it was a matter of habit to place upon the candidate many expenses which were altogether unnecessary. He would take two cases. First, the Welsh county of Montgomery. In that county there was a constituency representing 5,291 electors, and of those 4,273 polled. The unsuccessful candidate polled 2,041 votes, and expended £13,053—that was to say, he expended the sum of about £6 5*s.* per vote. This was the published expenditure, returned by the agents of the candidate; and he altogether failed to see what necessity there could be for such an expenditure. Turning to another county—Herefordshire—the contrast was most remarkable, and it showed what the necessary expenditure really ought to be. He found that in Herefordshire the lowest of the successful candidates polled 2,726 votes, and his expenses came to £296, or 2*s.* 1*d.* per head. How was it that the hon. Member for Herefordshire (Mr. Duckham) was successful with so small an expenditure, when the candidate for Montgomeryshire was unsuccessful, notwithstanding the enormous expenditure to which he was put? The real reason was that the hon. Member for Herefordshire worked with a voluntary force. He represented the tenant farmers of the county, who set to work with willing enthusiasm. They brought their gigs and their dog-carts, and carried the voters to the poll, and they carried the election for the smallest conceivable amount of expenditure. They carried it simply by the force of public opinion. That was not the case with regard to the candidate for Montgomeryshire. He had paid agents all round him, who were not animated by enthusiasm for his cause, and who imposed black mail upon him at every stage of the contest. He had no doubt that that gentleman most reluctantly yielded to the demands made upon him, and his opponent, who was successful, also spent a very large sum indeed, showing that the excessive expenditure was simply the habit of those who conducted the election on both sides. It was quite possible to keep the expenditure within the amount provided by the Bill. In 35 of the borough constituencies, the expenditure that was returned was less than that which had been suggested by the Bill. In some cases all the candidates spent less; in some the successful candidates spent considerably less; but in 35 constituencies candidates were able to conduct their elections for an expenditure much less than that specified in the Bill. In the Metropolis itself — in Hackney and Finsbury — the successful candidates incurred expenses within the limit fixed by the Bill; and he would ask the attention of the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. R. N. Fowler) to the fact, that while the hon. Gentleman said it was impossible to contest the City of London on the scale of expenditure suggested by the Bill, it was nevertheless possible for two Members of the Government now sitting on the Bench with him (Mr. Fawcett and Mr. J. Holms) to be returned for Hackney for a sum considerably within the limit. How was it they were able to do so? It was because they appealed to voluntary support. They had no paid agencies, and no committee rooms. They told the electors that they were not going to spend money; but that, if they were returned, it would be because the electors agreed with them in political opinion, and would be prepared to return them free from all expense, except that which was strictly legitimate. How was it that one of the Members for Finsbury (Mr. W. M. Torrens) was able to win his election, and to poll more than 15,000 votes for an expenditure far below the sum mentioned in the Bill. He was a totally independent candidate, and he appealed as an old Member to the electors for their support. His success was entirely due to voluntary effort. Then, again, his right hon. Friends the Members for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright and Mr. Chamberlain) had been enabled, by means of an organization, to which reference had frequently been made—[*Cries of* "Oh!"]—an organization perfectly voluntary, and without any paid agency, to become successful candidates, and to carry their elections at a moderate expense, quite within the limit fixed by the Bill. His hon. Friend the Member for Oldham (Mr. Hibbert) had not spent one-half the sum which would be allowed under the Bill, and yet he was successful. He might go through many other constituencies of different sizes. His right hon. Friend opposite, who sat for King's Lynn (Mr. Bourke), conducted his candidature on the same principle, and was equally successful. There were many other Members in the House who had been returned the same way, and without unnecessary expense. He could mention, at least, 35 cases, which proved that, with voluntary effort, this very large expenditure was altogether unnecessary. Some hon. Members thought there would be considerable difficulty in reducing their expenditure to the figure mentioned in the Bill. But the inconvenience suggested would apply to every candidate alike. The Bill dealt with no one unfairly, but left the same and equal weapons to all parties. If they found that they had to reduce the amount of their printer's bill they would find that their opponent would also find it necessary to reduce his. They would find it essential to keep the amount expended for paid agency on both sides to the same figure; and if they found it requisite to measure the length of their weapons they might depend upon it that their opponents would be placed under a similar disadvantage. They would simply be required to collect their forces with care and caution, and to rely upon voluntary effort and the strength of their political convictions, instead of trusting, as was the case in too many instances, upon the length of the purse of one candidate or the other. It was impossible to press this point too strongly upon the attention of the House—namely, the necessity of establishing an entirely new order of things. It had become absolutely essential that the present vast and useless expenditure incurred in election contests should be got rid of, and that corrupt practices should be put an end to; but, of course, the details of the Bill would have to be considered in Committee. He desired now to refer to the criticisms which had been passed upon the Bill, and especially to those of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross). The right hon. Gentleman had pointed out one matter, which he would assure his right hon. Friend had already engaged his attention. The right hon. Gentleman had pointed out the existence of an inequality in respect of a borough constituency and a county constituency, which proceeded from one or two causes. The principle he (the Attorney General) had gone upon was to make a paid agent applicable to 500 electors in one constituency, and to a polling district in another. Now, he thought there was a reason why a county, in this respect, should be treated differently from a borough. It had occurred to him that if the House of Commons preferred to have two Schedules instead of one, the principle might be met by adhering to the principle of restraining the agencies, and by acknowledging the application of a principle of difference in the case of a borough and of a county constituency. He, therefore, hoped the proposal he had introduced into the Bill would meet the views of the House. The right hon. Gentleman had also expressed a fear lest treacherous agents might be introduced from the camp of the enemy. He had heard a similar objection raised before; but he was of opinion that a treacherous agent existed only in theory, and never in fact. He derived his experience from the evidence given in the trial of Election Petitions; and he was prepared to say that it was next to impossible for a treacherous agent to go through an election contest without being detected, and his treachery being proved. And he ceased to be an agent directly his treachery was proved. At the present moment a treacherous agent, if undetected, could cause a Member to lose his seat; and, therefore, he had the candidate at his mercy, and every man who desired to become a Member of the House of Commons must run this risk. It was, however, a risk which was more nominal than real, and was a matter which, among other things, must be left to the Judge. The right hon. Gentleman said he wanted an absolute definition of the time when a person could be said to have become a candidate. Now, he (the Attorney General) contended that that was an impossibility. They might define who was a candidate; but it was an impossibility to define when the expenses connected with an election should have commenced. Of course, the expenses must be connected with the election; but they might commence several years before a contest became probable or imminent. Expenses might be incurred long prior to the actual contest in inducing the electors to look favourably upon a particular candidate; but they would not be expenses "in and about the election." The same difficulty existed at the present moment as that which the right hon. Gentleman predicted under the provisions of the Bill. But by practice they knew what were election expenses, and what were not election expenses; and if they found that a candidate did not return what really formed part of his election expenses, then a heavy penalty was imposed upon him, which would not be imposed if the Judge came to the conclusion that they were legitimate election expenses. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to say that a distinction should be drawn in the expenses incurred in an election campaign that was long, and another that was only short. Now, personally, he (the Attorney General) thought that the campaign of 1874 was quite long enough. What advantage could there be in having a six months' campaign? What advantage could there be in prolonging an election contest, with all its difficulties and animosities, for a period of six months? The sharper and shorter the contest was the better, and there was no satisfactory result to be attained by disturbing a constituency for six or eight months by commencing the campaign at an unnecessarily early period. There might be some justice in the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman as to the maximum expenditure allowed by the Bill; but he (the Attorney General) felt that there would be considerable advantage in fixing a maximum expenditure, and that the principle could not be abandoned by the Government. It must not be forgotten that they had a very skilful class of persons to deal with when they found it necessary to engage electioneering agents, who had always been in the habit of making money out of an election. And when they said, as they did by the Bill—"You shall only employ a certain limited number of people," there was a possibility that their directions would only be nominally obeyed, because the persons who had always been in the habit of making money out of the candidates would still be on the look-out for it. He would give an instance to explain what he meant. Suppose the candidate were to say—"I will only employ one agent and one clerk or messenger;" the agent would reply—"Well, if I am bound to employ only one person to assist me, I can only say that I will only employ one clerk or one messenger; but I will enter into a contract with a printer, and will issue 5,000 circulars, paying men for distributing them." In that way the money would be spent all the same in employing voters to deliver the circulars, and the difficulty would still exist unless Parliament fixed a maximum expenditure in the Bill. Therefore, while he was willing and anxious to meet the evils that had been pointed out, and to accept any practical suggestion that might be offered for meeting those evils — especially that which related to the unequality of fixing the same maximum for constituencies differently placed—he must ask the House to support him in laying down the principle of a maximum expenditure. He made these observations in reply to the speech of his right hon. Friend the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross), who had criticized the maximum principle, and had pointed out the effects which it was likely to produce; but he was satisfied that if the Government were compelled to give up that clause the greatest benefit of the Bill would be got rid of. At the same time he hoped the House would not suppose that he suggested that there should not be a perfectly free discussion of the matter. All he desired to point out was that unless they wished to make the Bill comparatively useless in its operation the principle of a maximum expenditure must be retained. Then, again, the right hon. Gentleman had said that the penalties imposed by the Bill were too severe; and he had given as an instance, that a candidate who had all his life represented a particular constituency would, in the event of losing his seat, in consequence of the improper practices of an agent, be disqualified for ever afterwards from representing the constituency in which the offence was committed. He quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that it would be a very great hardship that a corrupt agent should be the means of inflicting great hardship upon an innocent candidate, and that the innocent candidate should have to bear the burden of his agent's malpractices. But it must not be forgetten that penalties for this offence already existed; but that they had proved ineffective, and after an absence of a year or two the same candidate had been returned, and the same agent had been guilty of similar illegal practices. The right hon. Gentleman complained that a candidate should lose his seat for the acts of another person; but the law already said that, and the reason why it was now proposed to make the penalty more severe was that while in some cases an undoubted hardship was inflicted upon an innocent candidate, in other cases a candidate who had lost his seat for corrupt practices immediately set his agents to work to regain it; and although without hope of regaining it in that particular Parliament, as soon as a new Parliament was summoned he was returned for the old constituency. The reason why it was now proposed that a candidate should be disqualified for life for sitting for a constituency which had been corrupted by his agent was because it was felt that if an agent knew that in the event of his being guilty of corrupt practices he would lose his candidate, he would be much less likely to resort to corrupt practices than he was now. The fact was that the inadequacy of the existing penalties had led to the introduction of the Bill; and this provision was to be defended, like the others, on the ground that it would make both candidates and agents more careful in future. The consciousness that the candidate would lose the seat for ever, if corrupt practices were established, would make the agent much more careful than he was now. He had very little more to say. He quite admitted that this was one of the matters of the very highest importance, and it ought to be discussed by the House without Party feeling, in the desire to arrive at the best possible conclusion. If it was considered that the penalty proposed by the Bill was too severe, it was open to the revision of the House; but he should certainly adhere to the opinion which he had expressed. There were many other minor matters dealt with in the Bill; but he hoped he had satisfied the House that the Government were anxious to change the present system of elections, and to cause them to be conducted in a more satisfactory manner in future. The hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. R. N. Fowler) spoke of the difficulty connected with the sending out of circulars. He (the Attorney General) wished to get rid of the system altogether; but it was not convenient, neither would it be proper, that he should enter into a criticism of the details of the Bill upon the Motion for the second reading. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for Lincoln (Mr. Hinde Palmer) said that a Member should be required to make a declaration, when he came to the Table to be sworn, that he had complied with the provisions of the Act. There was, however, a practical difficulty in the way of the adoption of such a provision. Forty days were allowed for the return of the election expenses; but the candidate who had been returned was allowed to take the Oath and his seat as soon as the

Return to the Writ had been made. It would, therefore, not be in the power of a Member to make such a declaration until after the 40 days had expired; and he might have been sitting and voting in the House for many days before that period arrived. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had pointed out a difficulty in regard to one particular clause, and had stated that it would require alteration. The difficulty was this—that a Member might have taken his seat, and at the last moment find that an improper expenditure had been incurred through inadvertence, which incapacitated him from legally discharging his duties as a Member. He (the Attorney General) had been under the impression that the clause had been drawn so as to meet that difficulty. It had been drawn, at any rate, with that intention, and he would see that it was framed in that sense. By the 14th clause, protection was extended to Members in all cases where the expenditure had been incurred inadvertently, or through miscalculation; and where it was plain that there had been no intention of breaking through the provisions of the Act no penalty would be incurred. Any person placed in such circumstances would be at liberty to make an application to the Judge; and a discretion was allowed to the Judge which he could exercise in giving relief to any candidate or agent who might be innocent. He should have no objection to extend the provisions of the Bill even more generously than he had attempted to frame them in behalf of persons who might have offended innocently. Suggestions had also been made of an alternative character. It had been pointed out, in the course of the debate, that there were other courses that might be taken as well as those which were provided in the Bill. The hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Edward Clarke) had referred to a suggestion made by Lord Beaconsfield in 1857 that, apart from the Election Petition, there should be power to obtain a Commission of Inquiry into the existence of corruption at previous elections. For some reason or other, a Bill upon that subject was not introduced until long after the suggestion was originally made, in 1868, when the Government of Lord Beaconsfield brought forward a Bill dealing with the question of corrupt practices at elections. By the 57th section, the view which Lord Beaconsfield had put forward was carried into effect, and provision was made that, in the event of the electors petitioning, there should be power to issue a Commission. That power had existed since 1868, and in introducing the present Bill he had considered it advisable to carry that principle still further, and to give the Election Judges and Commissions power to deal with a much wider range of questions than was at present submitted to them. There was one other point which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had referred to, and that was the proposal to allow one Judge instead of two to inquire into an Election Petition. Originally the investigation was intrusted to a single Judge; but in 1879 a change was made, and it was directed that the inquiry into Election Petitions should in future be conducted by two Judges. The principal reason for the determination to revert to a system of single Judges was that it was proposed by the present Bill to cast a great many duties upon the Election Judges in investigating corrupt practices, from which they were altogether free now. As a matter of necessity, this would tend to prolong the inquiry before the Judges; and if two Judges were insisted upon he doubted whether the judicial strength of the country would be sufficient to meet the demands upon it. It was therefore proposed that they should go back to the system which prevailed previously to 1879, and which past experience proved to have worked very well. He had not succeeded in discovering that the decisions given by two Judges had been any more satisfactory than those which were given formerly by one, and there was certainly a greater sense of responsibility in one Judge than existed in the case of two. Not only the necessity of economizing the judicial strength of the country, but also the result of past experience, justified the proposal to return to the system of trying Election Petitions by one Judge only. But here, again, although he was personally in favour of a single Judge, he had no wish to press his view too strongly, if he found that the feeling of the House was against him. He thought he had now touched upon almost every subject, except one, and that was one which had been referred to by his hon. Friend the Member for Youghal (Sir Joseph M'Kenna). His hon. Friend had spoken strongly upon the necessity of closing the public-houses on the polling day. That was a matter which certainly required very grave consideration indeed, and in respect of which there was a great deal to be said on both sides. No one who was acquainted with the way in which elections were now conducted could fail to see that there was a great deal of force in the arguments of his hon. Friend. The great mass of the corrupt practices now resorted to took place in the public-houses. Not only did treating take place in the public-houses, or in some room adjoining, or connected with it, but bribery as well; and he was certainly of opinion that if it were practicable to compel the public-houses to close on the polling-day that they would get rid of a vast amount of the corrupt practices which took place under the roof of these houses. When the argument was used that such a provision would penalize the Licensed Victuallers, he did not believe that that view would be accepted by the Licensed Victuallers themselves—at any rate, by the respectable portion of them, who wished to conduct their business reputably. He had received a deputation from the Licensed Victuallers, and they had expressed themselves most reasonably and sensibly upon the subject. There was, undoubtedly, a great deal to be said on both sides; and they had mentioned, as a matter worthy of consideration, whether, rather than be placed under restrictive legislation, which would make them incur the risk of losing their licences in the event of any breach of the Act being committed on their premises, they would not prefer to have their premises closed altogether on the polling day. But there were other considerations which affected the question. For instance, if they were to close the public-houses on the polling day were they to close them absolutely? Was there to be no opening of the door to the *bonâ fide* traveller? On the other hand, was the restriction to be applied only to borough elections, because in county elections a voter frequently had to travel seven or eight miles before he reached the polling-place, and was he to be prohibited from putting up his horse at a public-house, or from obtaining anything to eat for himself? Was it intended that the operation of public-house closing should only be partial, and not general—that it should be confined to borough constituencies, and should not include the county constituencies? Then, again, another question would arise—Was the clause to be confined to Parliamentary elections, or must they have the necessity placed before them of extending the legislation to municipal contests also? If, for instance, there was a municipal election in Birmingham, and it was confined to a single ward, were they to close the whole of the public-houses in the municipality? If that were not done, there would be no advantage in closing them in one ward and in allowing them to remain open in all the others. He wished to point out these considerations to hon. Members; but he thought he was justified in saying that if such a clause were proposed the Government would be quite ready to consider it, and the objections to it would not come from that Bench. He had only one observation more to add. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Plymouth (Mr. Edward Clarke), who had often bravely fought the battle of the Licensed Victuallers, no doubt from a feeling of gratitude towards them for their efforts on his own behalf, said that the legislation proposed by the Bill with regard to the Licensed Victuallers was exceptional legislation. He (the Attorney General) altogether dissented from that view. At the same time, he was prepared to admit that they had to deal with the Licensed Victuallers, in one sense, exceptionally, because it became their duty to deal with a particular class of corruption, which consisted of treating; and treating was only carried out at public-houses, because liquor was the article by which it was carried out. If treating took place with other commodities, restrictions would have to be placed on those who sold those commodities. They dealt with the evil of corruption wherever they had reason to believe that it existed. They dealt with it as far as the agents were concerned, and they dealt with it where members of his own Profession were concerned. It was the desire of the Government to deal with it wherever it was likely to be found. Why, then, were they bound to deal with the Licensed Victuallers and to have the appearance of dealing with them exceptionally? It was because treating took place in the Licensed Victuallers' houses. As he had already pointed out, if treating took place by giving a penny bun to the voter, it would be their duty to go to the confectioner's shop and to lay down the same restriction. But those who committed the corrupt practices never attempted to treat with anything but the liquor sold at the Licensed Victuallers' houses. There the evil was; and they went to the fountain head, and endeavoured to destroy it wherever they found it to exist. It was even to the interest of the Licensed Victualler himself that the evil should be dealt with; and the matter was very much in his own hands, because he could speedily put a stop to it if he thought proper. He was certain there was no honest man in the country, who knew what had taken place in certain constituencies, but must admit the necessity for passing a Bill to deal with the evil of corruption; and he hoped and believed that the House would see that the time had come when they must take upon themselves the duty of aiding the honest and thwarting the dishonest man. In that case, he felt sure it would not be long before the Bill which he now asked should be read a second time would pass into law.

Colonel NOLAN said, he was very much in favour of a measure for the prevention of corrupt and illegal practices at elections; but he was bound to say that some portions of the present Bill were too Draconian in their severity. The first provision to which he applied that remark was that which proposed to keep a candidate out of his constituency for ever on account of acts committed by his agent, of which he might know absolutely nothing, except in the legal meaning of the term. His agent might, for instance, have made a speech which he had not had the opportunity of repudiating. Surely, such an offence was too severely dealt with by excluding him for ever from the representation of his constituency. The next fault he found in the Bill was that it proposed to keep a candidate out of Parliament for 10 years who was found guilty of corrupt practices. The House should bear in mind that these clauses not only included bribery, but treating, amongst the corrupt practices on account of which a man would be precluded from sitting in Parliament. Bribery, of course, stood in a different position to other acts, because it was an offence which could hardly be committed without the cognizance of the candidate; but with regard to treating and other trifling acts of the kind, he defied the most careful candidate to prevent them. The Bill, therefore, in his opinion, was too severe in dealing with these matters. The same remark applied to what was called "undue influence," a term which raised a question of great importance in connection with Irish elections, because it was well known that it would be construed by the Irish Judges in a very different manner to that in which it would be construed by the Judges in England. He was confident that for every case of undue influence recorded against an English candidate there would be five or six against Irish candidates; and, therefore, for the reasons he had assigned, he was compelled to drop the defence of the portions of the Bill to which he had referred. It would seem that the Attorney General believed that, in all cases of corrupt practice, he would be dealing with a dishonest candidate and a dishonest constituency, but not a dishonest Judge. The latter, however, was not an impossibility; and he contended that some protection against the action of a dishonest Judge should be afforded by the Bill; and, for his own part, he did not know of any more effectual means of keeping Election Judges in order than by allowing the re-election of candidates. The clauses in question certainly appeared to him to require alteration, and, unless they were modified, he should feel it his duty to oppose the Bill very strongly. He would go farther, and say that Irish Members would act very unwisely if they allowed the clauses to remain in the Bill in their present form, because there was nothing whatever to prevent a Judge keeping a leader of the Irish Party out of Parliament on the plea of undue influence. It must be remembered that most of the Judges on the Irish Bench were by no means unscrupulous; and it would be a very easy matter to effect the exclusion of a candidate, because, as he had already pointed out, the term "undue influence" would be differently construed in Ireland to what it would be in England. It was, therefore, incumbent upon Irish

Members to scrutinize the clauses of a Bill which gave power to any Judge to keep a candidate out of Parliament during a period of 10 years. For his own part, he hoped the clauses would be modified by the Attorney General in the direction indicated; if not, the hon. and learned Gentleman would find that he should take a very keen interest in every line of the Bill when it went into Committee.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR trusted the Government did not propose to insist upon the second reading of the Bill at that Sitting. It was difficult to overestimate the importance of a measure that was to alter the whole system under which Members were elected to that House. But what was the occasion on which they were expected to accept the second reading of the Bill? He would not say it had taken the House by surprise, because he supposed hon. Members ought to have known that it was coming on that evening; but his own impression was that it was part of the arrangement of last week that it should be taken, not on Monday, but on Tuesday. That might have been a mistake for which he alone was to blame; but, however it might be, it was a mistake very largely shared by Members on both sides of the House, and, that being so, he thought the Government ought not to press the Motion for the second reading to a division on the present occasion. But that was not the only reason. How much time had been given to the discussion of the Bill? The second reading, he believed, was only moved at half-past 9 o'clock that evening, and hon. Members would know very well that the hours after that time were of much less value for the purpose of a debate of this kind than the hours that preceded it, and this was especially true on the day when the Prime Minister made his Financial Statement. Was it possible that the House, after listening with the closest attention to a speech by the Prime Minister of two hours in length, presenting arguments which it required the utmost stretch of the mind to follow, lucidly as the right hon. Gentleman unfolded them, should be in a condition to give the present most important Bill the attention which it required? Since the conclusion of the right hon. Gentleman's Statement, the House had been addressed by some of the foremost and ablest Members, and yet no one who had listened to them could doubt how flat their speeches fell upon the ears of hon. Members, and how feeble was the attention given to arguments even such as those of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Plymouth (Mr. Edward Clarke). They had also been addressed by his hon. and learned Friend who had charge of the Bill (the Attorney General), and even that speech had fallen upon a wearied and inattentive House. Under the circumstances, he trusted the discussion would be allowed to extend to another day, when the House would be able to approach it unfatigued by any previous question, and, doubtless, continue the favourable criticism which had up to that time been extended to the well-meaning measure under discussion. For these reasons, and in order to give the House an opportunity of further discussion, he begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he hoped the second reading would be allowed to be taken that evening. He appealed to hon. Members opposite to consider whether it was desirable to spend another day in debating matters which could be perfectly well discussed upon the clauses of the Bill in Committee. For his own part, he did not think there would be any injustice to Members of the House in asking them to continue the discussion upon the present Motion; and he was, therefore, compelled to express a hope that the hon. Member for Hertford would withdraw his Motion for the adjournment of the debate.

MR. GORST said, he could but express his astonishment at the course taken that evening by the Government with regard to this Bill, because it was within his recollection that Tuesday next was the day appointed for the express purpose of the discussion on the Motion for the second reading. Private Members had been asked to give up their rights for the purpose of taking this stage of the Bill on Tuesday, and the day was named after a debate in which the subject was thoroughly discussed. The Bill before them was of the greatest interest to hon. Members, and the discussion which had taken place was by no means proportioned to its importance. It had certainly been a very short one, and he appealed to hon. Members in all parts of the House as to whether they would not like a further opportunity of discussing subjects upon which they could bring their own personal experiences to bear. For his own part, he was sure that if the Government would consent to adjourn the debate until to-morrow morning they would have the advantage of listening to many interesting experiences from Members of the House, who had not been able to take part in the discussion; and he believed also that the hon. and learned Gentleman in charge of the Bill would receive suggestions from various parts of the House which could not but be of use when it went into Committee. His approval of the Motion of the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) was given from no feeling of hostility to the Bill, because he had already promised his active support to a measure of this kind. He thought it well that Members who desired to address the House on the principle of the Bill should not be denied the opportunity of doing so. He believed, for instance, that the observations which his right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Kent (Sir William Hart Dyke) might make would be listened to by the House with great attention; and although he did not desire to enter into his own experiences of elections, he very much wished to offer some observations upon the principles involved in the Bill. If the debate were adjourned until to-morrow he should ask permission to do this. It was hardly possible that the debate of that evening could be prolonged to any great extent, seeing that it was then half-past 12 o'clock, and bearing in mind the speech to which they had listened at the beginning of the evening. For these reasons he hoped the Government would, out of consistency with their own desire to obtain Tuesday for the discussion of the Bill, consent to the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Hertford.

Mr. CALLAN said, he had no hostile feeling towards the Bill. On the contrary, he only regretted that it was not retrospective in its character, because, if it were, it would clear the House of nearly half its Members. He agreed with the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) that the Bill would be better taken again to-morrow, because it related to Ireland as well as to England, and the columns both of English and Irish newspapers would be filled up with the debate on the Budget, and only a very small portion of space would be allotted to the debate on the present Bill. If the debate were adjourned until Tuesday the question would be better ventilated in the public Press, and the experience of many hon. Gentlemen in regard to elections would be added to the information already possessed by the House. While he held that the Bill was very much desired by the country, and was in an especial manner necessary for some English and Welsh constituencies, he considered that the principles of the measure required to be narrowly scanned. He had been struck by the altogether insufficient, and he might almost say the absurd reason given by the Attorney General for reverting to the practice of trying Election Petitions with one Judge only —a practice which had been condemned by the House so recently as in the year 1879. This was a question upon which he desired to address the House, and he accordingly appealed to the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Hartington) to consent to the adjournment of the debate, the Motion for which, he was quite sure, was made without any intention to delay the progress of the Bill, which he was as anxious as any Member of the House to see passed, amongst other reasons, because it struck at the rich parvenus who spent money corruptly in order to obtain seats in the House. Feeling that the question ought to be fully discussed and ventilated, he suggested that the debate might be adjourned with advantage until to-morrow.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, he hoped the Government would reconsider their objection to the adjournment of the debate, because he had understood that a Morning Sitting was to be taken to-morrow for the especial purpose of discussing the Bill. The hon. and learned Attorney General, having courteously invited Members who had experience in electioneering matters to suggest to him Amendments by which the Bill might be improved, he would ask him how it was possible that those Amendments could be properly considered by him unless he allowed hon. Members an opportunity of giving reasons in support of them on the second reading? As he understood that the noble Marquess in moving that the House should meet to-morrow at 2 o'clock indicated that it was for the purpose of discussing this Bill, he hoped the noble Marquess would adhere to the arrangement he then made.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Certainly it is the intention of the Government that the Morning Sitting shall be devoted to the discussion of the Municipal Corporations Bill, and there is not the slightest desire on the part of the Government to shorten the debate if it appears to be the desire of a considerable number of Members to take part in the further discussion. What we have asked the House to do is to continue this debate a short time longer—say for an hour—and if there then appears to be a still unsatisfied desire on the part of a considerable number of Members to take part in it we should not feel justified in our opposition to the adjournment of the debate. All that we have asked the House to do is not at this somewhat early hour to adjourn the debate, but to continue to a reasonable time, and then, if it seems desirable, to adjourn the debate.

MR. WARTON said, he thought the noble Marquess, in speaking of this as an early hour, had forgotten that the House was bound by his Resolution to meet at 2 o'clock. He did not think the Government would gain any advantage by continuing this debate any further this evening. The Budget speech had been able, as it always was; but it proposed very few changes, and there was no reason for discussing it further now.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: There is nothing more difficult than to decide whether a debate should close or not; but I think, on the present occasion, we should save time by agreeing to an adjournment for one or two reasons. In the first place, considering the understanding there undoubtedly was that to-morrow was the day on which there would be a continuation of this discussion, we must bear in mind that those who are now present may be ready to go to a division; but there may be other hon. Gentlemen who have expected that the debate would be further continued. I must point out also that there is a general opinion throughout the House that not only should some measure be passed this Session for the restraint of corrupt and illegal practices, but also that the Bill of the Government furnishes a basis upon which such legislation should be founded; although, on the other hand, there may be some Amendments which it would be desirable to discuss. Those may, of course, be discussed in Committee; but I always find that a discussion on a second reading gives a good opportunity for bringing forward points that have to be considered, and I think that if there is any considerable number of hon. Gentlemen who wish to bring forward such points, it must be remembered that it was the expectation of the Government, when they first proposed a Morning Sitting for to-morrow, that this Bill would not have made such progress, and it would be necessary to go on with it to-morrow; and many Members have taken it for granted that the Business for to-morrow will be the discussion of this Bill. I think some who are not present might have reason to complain that they had not an opportunity of making speeches and suggestions which they wished to offer if that is not so. But the noble Marquess fairly says that if after another hour's discussion the House wishes to adjourn the debate he would have no objection to adjourning. According to my experience of the conduct of Business, I am of opinion that we should save time by adjourning now and seeing if we could get on with other Business. At the same time, I think the House will do well if it can come to a decision on the second reading of this Bill, because I feel that it is a Bill drawn with considerable care, and one which furnishes ground for legislation of an important character; and it is in no spirit of hostility to that Bill that I make this suggestion.

MR. BUXTON said, he hoped the Government would not consent to an adjournment. Much had been heard this Session about the extraordinary waste of time and the amount of Business to be got through. No argument had yet been brought forward which might not have been equally well advanced in Committee; and it seemed to him that now was the time for taking the second reading. The hon. Member for Hertford had expressed some surprise at the opposition to the second reading, and he agreed with the hon. Member. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had given his support generally to the principles of the Bill, and the points which the right hon. Gentleman had raised referred entirely to matters which might be brought forward in Committee. Many of those points were of considerable importance, and it might be well for the Government to consider them; but they were not directed against the second reading of the Bill, and he hoped the Government would press for a division.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, the noble Marquess stated that undoubtedly a Morning Sitting was asked for for Tuesday to take this Bill, and it was on that understanding that hon. Members consented to the proposal. If the Government did not accede to the adjournment of this debate he wished to know whether, if the second reading was carried tonight—though he did not suppose it would be—the noble Marquess would agree to the House meeting at the usual hour to-morrow?

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he hoped the Government would consent to what was really inevitable—namely, to put off the further discussion on the second reading of this Bill until to-morrow. A fair discussion on the second reading really shortened and facilitated the discussion on the clauses in Committee; and in a Bill of this character, with so many clauses, it was exceedingly difficult when in Committee to discuss some of the clauses and, in the light of other clauses, keep within the limits of Order. It might continually happen in discussing the clauses that it was necessary to refer to other clauses, and in that way Members might run themselves against the Rules of Order, which were drawn somewhat tightly on some occasions. It would be impossible to discuss those clauses when there had been no preliminary discussion on the joint working of the clauses. He was certain the Government would lose no time by consenting to adjourning the debate until tomorrow. On the contrary, they would very likely lose time if they tried to force on the Committee stage of this Bill. The Irish Members took very great interest in the Bill for the repression of corrupt practices, because corrupt practices had been the main enemy of nationality in the Irish elections; and therefore it was from no objection to the Bill that they asked for further time, not only for the discussion of the clauses, but for the consideration of the general scope of the Bill, taking the clauses together. That was a matter upon which they claimed to have a right of speech; and although he entirely appreciated the great zeal which the Attorney General had shown in this matter, and though he was certain that it would be much appreciated in the borough of Taunton, yet he hoped that out of consideration for other boroughs, which, perhaps, did not take so great an interest in the prevention of corrupt and illegal practices, the Government would kindly consent to the adjournment of the present discussion.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I should like to assure the House that the Government have no desire to prevent the fullest discussion of this measure. The information which has been given to the House is rather scanty, and the desire to prolong the debate appears to be attributed to some hon. Members who are not here now. But enough has been said to convince the Government that considerable opposition will be offered to the progress of the Bill; and as we do not wish to have the appearance of desiring to limit the discussion of so important a measure, we shall offer no opposition to the adjournment of this debate. The Bill will be taken at the Morning Sitting to-morrow, and I hope it will not be necessary to occupy the whole of the Sitting with it, but that, after the second reading, we may be able to utilize the remainder of the Sitting. The second Order will be the Municipal Corporations Bill; but that is only on a formal stage, and I hope we shall be able to proceed with the third Order, which relates to the Ballot Act.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he hoped the House would assent to the suggestion of the noble Marquess that if this debate was adjourned the whole of the Sitting to-morrow would not be taken up by the same Bill. He should not have risen except to thank the Attorney General for the way in which he had received the suggestion he himself had made; and he should give his earnest support to the Bill.

Mr. W. H. SMITH asked if the Budget Resolutions would be taken to-morrow?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, it would be convenient to take them to-morrow.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

ARKLOW HARBOUR (*re-committed*) BILL.

(*Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Lord Frederick Cavendish.*)

[BILL 137.] COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 and 2 *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Charge upon baronies. Payment to Wicklow Copper Mine Company. Transfer of Harbour to Board).

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 6, to leave out the words "and other buildings."

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 4 *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Special meeting to consider as to charging town rates with expenditure in excess of estimate).

Mr. WILLIAMSON said, the Bill stipulated that if, from any unforeseen cause, the estimate was insufficient, the Government should be authorized to advance by a further loan whatever might be wanted. Clause 5 proposed that in such an emergency a special meeting of the Arklow Town Commissioners should be called to consider it. Suppose they came to the conclusion that the whole money was thrown away, and that they would not charge the rates with any further sum, what would be the condition of affairs then?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, this provision was only inserted to meet a contingency of which it was believed there was no danger. The estimates had been most carefully considered; but, from experience of all estimates, they could not be absolutely certain that no further cost could possibly be incurred. If there was such a necessity, it was intended to be met by this clause, which had been framed with every possible care.

Mr. WILLIAMSON said, he did not wish to throw any obstacle in the way of the Bill; but he was satisfied that more consideration ought to be given to the subject involved.

Mr. W. H. SMITH agreed with the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Williamson) that there was a real danger to apprehend; but he had no doubt his noble Friend (Lord Frederick Cavendish) had taken great pains to satisfy himself that the estimates were correct and sufficient. He believed that if the noble Lord had to meet the House two or three years hence he would have to propose an additional Vote, and that it would not be met by the Town Commissioners of Arklow.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, the estimates were made by their Predecessors, and the Government had taken every possible care to guard against the risk incurred by their Predecessors.

Clause *agreed to.*

Remaining clauses *agreed to.*

House *resumed.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

BANKRUPTCY LAW AMENDMENT BILL.—[Bill 87.]

(*Mr. Barran, Mr. Norwood, Mr. Edward Clarke, Mr. Monk.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. BARRAN, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he did not forget that in the very able speech which was delivered by the President of the Board of Trade during last Session upon Bankruptcy Law the right hon. Gentleman foreshadowed a Bill which was of very great national importance; and it was in no spirit of opposition to the measure of the right hon. Gentleman that he now asked the House to read this Bill a second time. The Bill was promoted by the Associated Chambers of Commerce; it was approved of by all the Chambers of Commerce in England; and he might also state that the Association of Bankers, Merchants, and Traders of the United Kingdom had passed a resolution supporting almost fully the Bill which he now moved should be read a second time. This was a question which affected the whole trading community of the Three Kingdoms, and it was one which demanded the attention of Parliament. They had been promised, from time to time, that a Bill should be introduced meeting the requirements of the Chambers of Commerce; but unfortunately the state of the Business of the House had been such as to preclude the possibility of the President of the Board of Trade introducing his Bill. Those hon. Gentlemen whose names were at the back of the Bill now under consideration were not at all anxious to in any way intercept the President of the Board of Trade. On the contrary, if the right hon. Gentleman would consent to the second reading of the Bill to-night, they would be quite disposed to postpone the Committee stage until such reasonable time as the President of the Board of Trade might wish to be allowed him for the purpose of introducing his own Bill. There were very considerable questions involved, which traders deemed of the utmost importance. They had known in the past what had been the very serious objection to too much officialism. The trading community generally were anxious to avoid undue officialism, and this Bill proposed to give to the creditors such power that they might have both the responsibility and direction in matters which affected very largely their own interests. At that late hour (1.10) he did not think it right to go into any particulars as to the merits of the Bill; but he asked the House to read the Bill a second time, in order that they, as Representatives of large commercial interests, might take up a position befitting them when the President of the Board of Trade should see fit, and have the opportunity of bringing forward the measure which he foreshadowed during the last Session of Parliament.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Barran.*)

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, he was sorry he could not assent to the proposition which had just been made by his hon. Friend the Member for Leeds (Mr. Barran); and he thought that, upon consideration, the hon. Member would feel it was hardly fair or reasonable to ask the House of Commons to commit itself to the principle of a Bill on so important a subject as the present at that late hour. The hon. Member had said that, in consequence of the lateness of the hour, he did not feel justified in trespassing upon the House; and, consequently, the House had not had the advantage of hearing any explanation of the clauses of the Bill, or of the general principle it proposed to carry into law. If they passed the second reading with the assent of the Government they would be committed to the principle of the Bill. He could not undertake to pledge the Government to the Bill. It was an extremely inadequate measure for dealing with a great subject; and if he thought the present a fair opportunity he should explain to the House that there were many objectionable features of the Bill which would tend to increase the scandals of the existing system rather than remove them. His hon. Friend talked about the importance of the creditors possessing the power to prevent anything like extensive officialism. The present Bill would tend to sustain the system under which there had been a *quasi*-official management; but there was no efficient supervision to prevent abuse. Officials of the Trade Protection Societies had, in many cases, had the management of bankrupt estates; and the control, if properly looked after, answered well. Of course, in some cases there had been great abuse. He supposed it was of no use to ask his hon. Friend to withdraw the Bill; and, therefore, it was his duty to move that the debate be adjourned. If his hon. Friend would take another, and a fitting opportunity, he should be glad that his Bill should be discussed. He hoped he would be able, at a later period of the Session, to introduce the Bill, which was promised in the Queen's Speech, for dealing with the subject. In that case he supposed it might be the pleasure of the House to refer the Bill to a Grand Committee, if the proposal for Grand Committees on Trade and Commerce should meet with the approval of the House; and he should not see any objection to the Bill of his hon. Friend, as well as any other Bill dealing with the same subject, going before the same Committee. That, however, should only be done after the House had had a full opportunity of discussing the principle of the Bill on the second reading. He would move that the debate be now adjourned.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Chamberlain.*)

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, there was an ominous tone in the right hon. Gentleman's voice when he spoke of the prospect of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Barran) getting another opportunity for discussing the Bill. The President of the Board of Trade said it would be his duty to move the adjournment of the debate; but if his hon. Friend could get another opportunity of bringing forward the Bill, possibly he might enter into the merits of the measure. He quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that this was a late hour to discuss matters of this kind; but the opportunities that private Members had of bringing in Bills was so very limited that they were glad to avail themselves of any that presented themselves. The President of the Board of Trade might have shown a little more respect to the opinions of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, and to the other commercial bodies in the country, than to dismiss in so cavalier a fashion a Bill which had their unanimous support. The right hon. Gentleman said the Bill contained many mischievous provisions, not one of which he had condescended to point out to the House. The right hon. Gentleman said the Bill would continue the present officialism, and then he said the officialism was that of the Trade Protection Society. If no other measure could be passed this year—and there was very little hope that the right hon. Gentleman himself would be able to pass any measure this year on the Law of Bankruptcy—if no other measure than this were passed, and if this measure contained but one of its clauses, it would be an enormous advance and improvement in the Bankruptcy Law of the country. If only that section of the present Act which allowed liquidation by arrangement could be repealed, it would be of great service to trade. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not persist in his Motion for Adjournment. He had said that ultimately he would be prepared to consent to this Bill being submitted to the same Select or Grand Committee as the Bill he hoped to shortly bring forward. The Bill now under consideration would, before it could be referred to a Committee, have to be read a second time. It would not be fair to adjourn this debate and allow the right hon. Gentleman to bring in his Bill, with all the advantage of the Government authority for the arrangement of matters in the House, and very probably leave the hon. Member (Mr. Barran), and the other hon. Gentlemen who were acting with him, in the position of being unable to bring their Bill on again; and, therefore, precluded from having it submitted to the same tribunal as the Government measure. He hoped a division would be taken on the question of adjournment.

MR. MONK regretted to hear the President of the Board of Trade speak in so doubtful a manner as to the probability of his being able to introduce his own Bill on this subject this Session. The right hon. Gentleman was as well aware as they were that the commercial community were looking anxiously for some move on the part of the right hon. Gentleman; and he (Mr. Monk) and others had heard very serious complaints that the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman had not been brought in before this, and circulated in the country. The Bill which had been brought in by his hon. Friend had been carefully considered by the Associated Chambers of Commerce. It was an amending Bill; it was a Bill amending the Act of 1869. His right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade intended to bring in a Bill entirely repealing that Act, and altering materially the Law of Bankruptcy; still, as that Bill was in embryo, and as they did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman would be able to introduce it at all this Session, he hoped the House would not refuse the second reading of the Bill of the hon. Member for Leeds. As the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr. Edward Clarke) had said, the Bill must be read a second time before it could be sent to a Committee. He must confess he had very serious doubts whether the Grand Committee of which his right hon. Friend had spoken would ever come to anything. At all events, the Bankruptcy Bill would not pass into law, if it had to be sent to a Grand Committee, this Session. Under the circumstances, his hon. Friend was quite entitled to go to a division.

Question put.

The House *divided* :—Ayes 34; Noes 37: Majority 3.—(Div. List, No. 71.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at half after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 25*th April*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Army Alternative Punishment * (68).

Second Reading—Referred to Select Committee—Stolen Goods (64).

Committee — Report — Metropolitan Commons Supplemental * (38); Army (Annual) (65).

Third Reading—General Police and Improvement (Scotland) * (48); Drainage (Ireland) Provisional Order * (51), and *passed.*

STOLEN GOODS BILL.—(No. 64.)

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The LORD CHANCELLOR, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it contained exactly the same provisions as the Bill which was sent to the Commons on the same subject last year; and he would move the re-appointment of, as far as possible, the same Committee next week, to which he would move that the Bill should be referred.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly; and *referred* to a Select Committee.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.—(No. 65.)

(*The Earl of Morley.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee read.

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee."—(*The Earl of Morley.*)

Viscount BURY said, it was remarkable that in a year which was distinguished more than any other for Army changes there had been no adequate opportunity afforded for discussing those changes in either House of Parliament. The exigencies of the public service in the other House of Parliament had obliged the Estimates to be taken at a very late hour, and only the most cursory opportunity had since been given for touching on the few important points that arose. It was only by putting Questions occasionally that any information could be obtained in regard to the Army, for there had been no regular debate. When the present Bill was read a second time in their Lordships' House, there was little opportunity for discussion, although there were a great number of points which ought to be considered in regard to recent legislation in the Army. He was not going to find fault with the changes that had been made, for as to a great many, a consensus of military opinion was very much in their favour; but he did complain of this—that since 1871 the Army had been in a perpetual state of change, and noble Lords had been constantly told that the Army was in "a transition state," and that "they must not expect too much." Only last night the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Morley) had repeated what had often been said before—that the Army was in a transition state, and that the full value of the changes could not be yet appreciated. It was undeniable that the main object of our great Army expenditure was to be able to put an efficient Army in the field on a few days' notice; that was the long and the short of the whole question, and so long as they stopped short of that they had not got that for which they paid £15,500,000 a-year. Well, were they in that position now? The noble and gallant Earl who spoke last night (the Earl of Longford) went so far as to say that there was not a regiment in the Service in an efficient condition. He (Viscount Bury) would not go that length; but he must say they were not in a position which had been so long promised. They were not, in the case of a small war, able to put an Army Corps into the field. In the event of a large war, there were legislative provisions which they could put into operation to enable them to raise a Force; but in regard to a small war, they were very little better off than they were in 1877. They were still in a transition state, and would have, in case of necessity, to resort to the system which had been denounced by the late Adjutant General Sir Charles Ellice as the most pernicious system which had ever been invented by the ingenuity of man—namely, to call upon men to volunteer from one regiment to another, and thus to leave the already attenuated home regiments still further emasculated. The noble Earl opposite would, no doubt, say that a great deal had been done since Mr. Childers and he had been in Office, and he (Viscount Bury) was not going to deny it. He believed they had improved the condition of the Army; but he would go so far as to say, without fear of contradiction, that there was not one officer in 100—nay, not one officer in the whole Army—who thoroughly understood the position in which the Army stood at the present moment, so much confusion having been created by different Acts of Parliament, Royal Warrants, General Orders, and other Regulations. Those details were only known to those within the War Office, and he doubted if they were known to half-a-dozen even in that Department. They had now a new Army, for the old had entirely disappeared. The system, too, of Indian reliefs had been so altered that they had now a local Army in India, and the system of promotion had been altered so as to fit in with the short service. He did not wish to put a definite Resolution which would produce a debate; but he wished to explain to his noble Friend the difficulties under which those who took an interest in the Army laboured. The public also took an interest in the Army; but that interest would be increased if they could follow, in an intelligible manner, the changes which had been made during the last 10 years. He wished, therefore, to ask his noble Friend (the Earl of Morley) whether it would not be possible to issue a Memorandum, showing the various changes which had been made since Lord Cardwell introduced the short service system, and showing the effect of all the Acts of Parliament bearing on the Army, all the recommendations of Committees and Commissions, and the suggestions which had been made in their Office in reference to the Army, in order to show, at a glance, the actual condition of the Army? No doubt, many Ministerial speeches had been made on the subject of Army reform; but they necessarily lacked the value of an official Paper such as he suggested.

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, he was sure their Lordships would not find fault with his noble Friend (Viscount Bury) for taking that opportunity of bringing those matters before the House. He quite agreed with his noble Friend as to the desirability of making the changes which had been, and which were being made in the Army intelligible alike to officers and to the public. As to the importance of being able on brief notice to place a small Army in the field, there could be no doubt about it, and the object of the War Office had been to place the battalions not at the strength they would be at in time of war, but at a higher strength, which would give a margin, allowing untrained or unfit men to be left at home, and yet having a full-strength battalion fit for foreign service. It had been the wish of the Government to bring about such a state of things as that; and if they had not as yet succeeded it would be admitted that the battalions had been much improved in strength, and that generally they were in a state of transition. They had been so since 1871, and it was inevitable that it should be so until the short service system, and the changes of organization which resulted from its adoption, had come thoroughly into effect. Steps which had recently been taken had been in the direction pointed out by the Predecessors of the present Government, and with a natural and necessary result of what had been initiated by Lord Cardwell, and lately developed by Lord Cranbrook and Colonel Stanley. At the present time the Government were endeavouring to carry out a most important change, which would give them a certain number of battalions ready to go abroad at short notice. Lord Cardwell's system, it was said, was based on the assumption that when one battalion was abroad another would be at home; but it also embraced the supposition that the battalions at the top of the Roster should be of a certain strength; but for various reasons—and he (the Earl of Morley) did not blame one Government more than another—the conditions on which the noble Lord had based his calculation, no doubt, had not been rigidly adhered to. The War Office saw the importance of keeping the battalions comprised in the First Army Corps always fit for service. But those battalions could not be brought up to their new establishments and rendered efficient by a stroke of the pen. To increase their strength it was necessary to pour recruits into them—that was the only course which could be pursued; and consequently at the present time, no doubt, the proportion of young soldiers in the high-strength battalions at home was greater than was desirable, and their condition could not be regarded as quite satisfactory. That difficulty had been aggravated by the fact that the changes of organization had necessitated alterations in the Roster, bringing weaker battalions suddenly higher up on the Roster. It could only be remedied by time. Soldiers serving in the First Army Corps would not be sent to the Reserve before completing seven years' service, and by degrees the battalions would harden into efficiency; and when the temporary circumstances referred to, which necessitated rapid recruiting, had passed away, he hoped and believed that the object which all parties wished to attain would be gained—namely, they would have a number of battalions sufficient to constitute a small Army for sudden emergencies, or for small Colonial wars, fit to take the field at very short notice. As to there having been no discussion on the condition of the Army, the noble Viscount rather exaggerated the state of the case. Almost all the great changes that had been carried out of late years had been ably discussed and ably criticized, and if they had not, it was not the fault of the Government who had carried them into effect. He thought that, from the discussions which had taken place with regard to recent reforms, they met with the approval of the public generally, and it was only fair that time should be given for the development of the changes which they had already effected. How far it would be possible to carry out the suggestion of his noble Friend, by drawing up a Memorandum showing all the changes that had been introduced since 1871, and collating them with the recommendations of the various Committees and Commissions which had sat upon the subject, he could not at present say; but he would take an opportunity of talking over the subject with him, and would see what could be done.

Motion *agreed to*.

House in Committee accordingly.

EARL FORTESCUE pointed out that last Session he had given Notice of a Motion for a Return as to the impressment of means of transport for soldiers in Ireland, under certain ancient statutory powers empowering the Executive in Ireland to authorize the impressment of horses and animals of all kinds, together with vehicles and boats of all descriptions, for the service of Her Majesty, under an order of emergency, enabling any field officer to impress any of these at a reasonable price. To his surprise, last year he (Earl Fortescue) was requested to abstain from so moving by the noble Under Secretary of State for War (the Earl of Morley), by the direction of the Secretary of State (Mr. Childers), who considered it undesirable for the Public Service to introduce the Motion at that time. It seemed to him that the moral effect produced by the spectacle of a car owner being allowed successfully to refuse the use of cars to troops, without recourse being instantly had to the powers conferred by statute upon the Executive to enable the officers to impress them, could not fail to have the worst influence, by encouraging the spirit of defiance to the law, and bringing contempt upon the Executive in the minds of people of all classes. He read with shame and indignation accounts of soldiers and constabulary, weary and way-worn, marching along the road, while jeering Land Leaguers drove beside them in cars which had been refused to them. He wished to ask whether, during the past year, since he gave Notice of his Motion, the powers of the Government in that respect had been exercised at all? Turning to another subject, he would like to have some information about the localization scheme, as to how it was likely to work in Ireland. Owing to the influence it exercised in encouraging recruiting, it, no doubt, answered admirably in loyal districts—that was, he was glad to say, throughout all England, Wales, and Scotland; but it might not be as safely applied to the county of Tipperary in Ireland. He desired to cast no imputation whatever on the regiment in question, long recruited from different parts of Ireland, which, ever since the time of William III. had been conspicuous for its loyalty. He hoped, however, that the Government would not, for the sake of symmetry and uniformity, commit the rash act of exclusively recruiting for an Irish regiment in a district far from well affected to the English Crown and to the maintenance of law and order.

Lord ORANMORE and BROWNE said, he fully concurred with what had been said by the noble Earl opposite (Earl Fortescue). When the new system of recruiting particular regiments from particular districts only was introduced, he had stated that in parts of Ireland it would result in forming a rebel army. He questioned, in the present disturbed state of Ireland, when they saw the people so disaffected as they were at present, whether it would not be a most unfortunate thing that recruiting should be carried on in districts in which there was no concealment of the disaffection that existed. He wished to call attention to another thing, and that was to the fact that soldiers were being sent about in Ireland in twos and threes to give protection to those who were in danger, and there was much fear of their being altogether demoralized. If it was said that only the old and steady men were taken for this service, and not raw recruits, it was quite clear that the steady men were just those who were required with their regiments to set the recruits a good example. Policemen were also sent with the soldiers; and he wished to know who would command a party consisting of two policemen and two soldiers? Such occurrences could not tend to increase the discipline of the Army or of the Police.

House *resumed.*

Bill *reported* without amendment; and to be read 3ª on *Thursday* next.

HIGHWAY RATES.

OBSERVATIONS. · QUESTION.

Earl DE LA WARR said, that, in putting the Question to Her Majesty's Government of which he had given Notice, he might, perhaps, be allowed to refer for one moment to a statement made by the Prime Minister in "another place," from which it might be gathered that the only advantage which ratepayers were likely to gain from the long-expected amendment of the Highway Acts would be the appropriation of a certain sum, amounting to about £247,000, to the purposes of highways, to be raised by increasing the tax upon private carriages. The boon would be not a very considerable one, especially as a large proportion of the increased tax would be paid by the owners of property who were already the overburdened class; while hired carriages, which, as had been admitted by the Prime Minister, used the roads, were exempted. In like manner, also, brewers' drays and other heavy vehicles engaged in trade would escape contribution in any shape towards the maintenance of highways. He might, therefore, be allowed to ask whether the proposed subvention was to be applied to all highways, or only to what were designated as main roads; whether highway districts were to be left in their present unsatisfactory state, many of which had been dissolved, or were in process of dissolution, in consequence of the prevailing dissatisfaction with regard to them; or whether the Act of 1878 was to remain in force without any Amendment? If Her Majesty's Government proposed to do no more than grant the subvention of a portion of the Carriage Tax, he believed it would be more satisfactory to the country if the Highway Act of 1878 were repealed, and the management of highways were to return to what it was before the passing of that Act, until the Government were able to deal more effectually with the question. He would conclude by asking the Question of which he had given Notice—namely, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to introduce any measure this Session on the subject of highways?

Earl GRANVILLE, in reply, said, he would call attention to the fact that the noble Earl (Earl De La Warr) had put down his Question before the Financial Statement of Government had been made; and, therefore, before he could possibly have known what would be said by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in "another place." He believed it would be necessary for a measure to be introduced in "another place" to give effect to the intentions of his right hon. Friend, and then the noble Earl would be enabled to see what those intentions were.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881.—WORKING OF THE ACT.

PRESENTATION OF PETITION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF LONGFORD, according to Notice, *presented* a Petition from owners of land and others living in Ireland, containing the three following points:—

"1. Your Petitioners humbly pray, that the principles adopted by the Land Commissioners in the assessment of fair rents may as soon as possible be made public.

"2. Your Petitioners respectfully submit that while the operation of the Land Act of 1881 is necessarily of an arbitrary character, the inconvenience arising from such inherent defect would be minimized by a declaration of the principles adopted in its administration.

"3. That the speedy and ultimate result of such a declaration would be great acceleration in the application of the Act, lessening the number of appeals, multiplying the cases settled out of court,"

and said, that the matter had, to a certain extent, been dealt with during the discussion of a kindred subject on the previous evening, for many of the observations made to their Lordships then would apply extremely well to that Petition. If the subject were not so serious, there was something almost partaking of the nature of a comedy in the notion that after an Act had occupied three months of discussion during last Session, and had been several months in operation, it should now be thought necessary to consider upon what principles it ought to be administered; but the present Petitioners, of whom he himself was one, found it absolutely necessary to ask for some information upon the subject, though he was afraid they would ask in vain. The Petitioners included landed proprietors who had cases before the Land Courts, and landed proprietors who were likely to find themselves in the position of those who had charges upon lands and were anxious about their security, and also outsiders, who were astonished at the new system of conveyancing and the novel proceedings sanctioned by the Land Act. They had closely examined the Act, but were utterly unable to discover upon what principle it was supposed to work. They had followed the decisions of the Land Court, and were equally unable to discover a principle. The legal points were, indeed, principally almost entirely disposed of by the Superior Commissioners; but the instances were so rare in which the Superior Commissioners had interfered with the judicial rents fixed by the Assistant Commissioners, that practically, so far as regards the fixing of rent, the Assistant Commissioners were the ruling powers. The names of the Assistant Commissioners were not inserted in the Act; but he (the Earl of Longford) was satisfied that if their names had been before Parliament at the time the Act was under discussion, Parliament would have hesitated placing in such hands the extensive powers they now exercised. They might, perhaps, have been competent to deal with small properties, or cases of extravagant rents; but their jurisdiction extended over properties of large value. The reasons for some of their decisions were of an extraordinary kind. In one case the rent was reduced on account of the good character of the tenant. In a case in the county of Roscommon, the rent was reduced because the tenant was honest and industrious. It seemed rather a caricature on Irish life that when an instance was found of a tenant being honest and industrious his rent should be at once reduced. Probably, it was because they thought an honest and industrious man in that condition of Ireland so rare a thing that it justified them in giving him a slice of somebody else's estate. One Sub-Commissioner had, indeed, stated that he acted throughout on a consistent principle, but he kept the secret to himself; and he (the Earl of Longford) was not aware that any other Court made such a confession as that. He admitted that, as a general rule, the proceedings of the Land Court were conducted with patience and good order, though there were exceptions where the people had been warmed up by the approach of their liberators, and then the decisions of the Court were racy of the soil. If Parliament had acceded to the view that a general reduction of rent was desirable, they would have submitted to its decision; but the Government and Parliament did the reverse. They said the rents were not generally extravagant, and that, on the whole, no general reduction of rents would be effected by the Act. That, however, had not been found to be the case; for wherever the property in Ireland was situated, whether it was rich pasture or mountain moorland, it had all been brought into the Land Court, and the result was uniformly the same—a reduction of rent, notwithstanding the plainest proofs that it was already of the fairest possible character. Again, if the Government had said they thought it desirable to have a re-valuation of property, that would have been an intelligible principle, from which they could gather what the mind of Parliament was; but they had no guide whatever. The Petitioners did not come denouncing the Land Act; but they expressed the wish to facilitate the working of the Act by coming to arrangements out of Court, provided they could understand that such arrangements were necessary. Their Petition was that, as Parliament had imposed that Act of Parliament upon them, they should explain to them what the Act was, and on what principle it was to be administered. That was a request which no one could regard as unreasonable; and he trusted that, from some quarter or other, they would have some explanation given them that would prove satisfactory. He should have been very glad to have urged further arguments in their behalf; but he had been really forestalled by the discussion which had taken place on the subject last night.

Petition for a speedy declaration of the principles adopted in the administration of the Act by the Land Commissioners in Ireland; of Owners of Land and others living in Ireland, or interested in its welfare; read.

Lord DUNSANY said, that, in his opinion, nothing could be more reasonable than for the land proprietors, or ex-land proprietors of Ireland, as they might be more properly called, to ask to be informed on what tenure they held the small shred of ownership, as regarded their property in land, that remained to them. He, for one, would like to know on what principle the Land Act was being administered? He had not the slightest notion, at the present moment, to whom the land belonged. It used to be called "real property;" but, in his opinion, it constituted at present about the most unreal investment that could be found. What was to be the new title for it? Lord Dufferin had written that in no other country but Ireland did such a state of things exist as that a landlord, who had let his land on reasonable conditions to-day, did not know to whom it would pass to-morrow. No one could doubt that the Act had proved a failure; and he did not know that it would be more consolatory, if it had succeeded, instead of having failed, since success might have led to further experiments in bribing the many with the property of the few, and then the present miserable state of Ireland would have been still more deplorable. Last year they had conceded the three F's, and now they had received in return for them the three R's—roguery, robbery, and rapine. But the policy by which those three R's were secured to Ireland had not even the recommendation of success. If it was necessary that the Irish landlords should be robbed, it was only reasonable they should know the principle upon which they were to be so.

Lord CARLINGFORD said, that the speech which they had just heard, with every word of which he entirely disagreed, and the panic of which he hoped would soon pass away from men's minds, though he could not undertake to say whether or not it would pass away from the mind of the noble Lord opposite (Lord Dunsany)—that speech was just nine months too late. It ought to have been delivered before the Land Act of 1881 passed their Lordships' House, and he would not discuss it at the present time. But he wished to say one word with respect to the Petition presented by the noble Earl (the Earl of Longford). It was, in fact, a Petition to Parliament for further legislation; it was a Petition which requested Parliament to amend and alter the Land Act of last year in a most important respect—namely, with regard to the definition of fair rent. The question whether any principles for the ascertainment of fair rent should be laid down by the Legislature was considered by both Houses of Parliament last year; and it was deliberately decided by Parliament that beyond the terms of the 8th section of the Act no attempt should be made to lay down any such principles. He might point out to the noble Earl that the Government had not given any recommendation to the Land Commission as to the adoption or renouncement of any principles. If the Land Commission were to be invited to declare the principles upon which they proceeded, they would probably point to the Act of Parliament, and would say that they were doing their best under the terms of the Act to ascertain in each case, in a way very closely analogous to a Court of Arbitration, what was a fair rent, either by inspection by the Sub-Commissioners, or by the employment of valuators, in addition to the evidence on both sides. They would also say, no doubt, that whenever any important case of law arose, that case was decided by the Courts of Appeal, and that all the inferior Land Courts were absolutely bound by such decision. If, however, they were invited to go beyond some such statement as that, and to declare what they considered to be the principle for ascertaining a fair rent, they would point out that Parliament itself had absolutely refused to lay down such a principle; and they would say that until Parliament had further legislated and amended the Act of 1881, they could hardly be expected to do what Parliament had not done.

Petition *ordered* to lie upon the Table.

CRIMINAL LAW—THE CONDEMNED CONVICT LAMSON.

QUESTION. MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

The Earl of MILLTOWN, in rising to ask the Government the Question of which he had given Notice with respect to the Lamson case, said, after a long and patient trial, George Henry Lamson was convicted of a most deliberate and cruel murder on a helpless, crippled boy; and the learned Judge who passed upon him the extreme sentence of the law expressed his full concurrence with the verdict and his deep abhorrence of the crime. The prisoner had the good fortune to be defended most fully and ably by some of the most eminent counsel at the Criminal Bar, and they, no doubt, after full consideration and consultation with the prisoner's friends, resolved not to raise the plea of insanity, probably thinking it hopeless; and the sole question left to the jury was whether Percy John was murdered by George Henry Lamson, the result being that the jury declared their firm conviction that he was. After the trial, as was now always the case on such occasions, an attempt was made by the friends of the condemned man to obtain from the Secretary of State for the Home Department a remission of the extreme penalty of the law on the ground of the prisoner's insanity; but that functionary, in the face of the recent trial and sentence by the learned Judge, most properly declined to interfere. Such was the state of affairs with regard to this matter, until some two or three days before the date fixed for the execution of the sentence, when the country was astounded by the intelligence that the Secretary of State, at the request of the President of the United States, conveyed through the noble Earl at the Foreign Office (Earl Granville), had determined to postpone the execution of the sentence for 10 days, in order to obtain some further evidence from America with regard to the prisoner's insanity. Although perfectly satisfied with the justice and propriety of the verdict, the Secretary of State had allowed a foreign Government to interfere in this absolutely English question with the due course of the Criminal Law. That had been done at the instance of a Government which prided itself upon its Monroe doctrine, and would refuse to permit the smallest interference on the part of any European Government, not only with its own internal affairs, but with anything affecting the two vast Continents of North and South America. He (the Earl of Milltown) was far from wishing to say anything offensive to the citizens—for the most part their kinsmen—of that great Transatlantic Republic, for which he felt the greatest respect and the most unbounded admiration. No other country more strenuously resented such interference than the United States; and he could not help thinking that if, during the trial of Guiteau, the Government of this or any other country had requested that a trial which had become, in his (the Earl of Milltown's) opinion, and in the opinion of many other persons as well, a positive scandal to civilization, should be conducted with some regard to decency, they would have been most properly met by the Government of the United States telling them to mind their own business. It was true that our Government never thought either of remonstrating or interfering in the slightest degree in that trial; and, therefore, such was the answer which he ventured to submit should have been given by the noble Earl opposite, though in the courteous language of diplomacy, to the President of the United States. But even supposing that this American evidence as to the insanity of Lamson was of the strongest possible description, it could, he submitted, in no way affect the issue tried at the Old Bailey. Whether he or his ancestors had or had not shown symptoms of insanity, America could not affect the question whether, at the time he committed the murder, he was responsible for his own acts. Reference was made by the Judge, in the trial of Maclean for the atrocious crime of shooting at the Queen, to the principles laid down in M'Naughten's trial, that it was the duty of the jury to say whether the person charged was insane at the time of the offence; and the test was whether he could then distinguish right from wrong; and he (the Earl of Milltown) thought it equally applied to this case. There was another dilemma. If the Secretary of State were to set aside the verdict of the jury and the opinion of the learned Judge, was he to send the murderer forth into the world, or was he to mitigate his sentence to penal servitude? As to confining him as a criminal lunatic, he did not believe that a man whom a jury had found guilty of murder, and who had not been acquitted on the ground of insanity, could be so confined. Besides that, the proceedings in this case were positively cruel, and the last respite reminded him of nothing so much as of a cat playing with a mouse. He hoped the Government would not yield to the arrogant and presumptuous interference of the United States, which was inconsistent with the dignity of this country, and would, if submitted to, create a dangerous precedent for them and their successors. He would, in conclusion, ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether there is any existing precedent of a Foreign Government having interfered to arrest a judgment pronounced on a British subject by an English court of justice for a crime committed in England of which he had been found guilty by a regularly constituted jury; and, if not, whether the Secretary of State will inform the House what are the reasons which have induced Her Majesty's Government to accede to such an interference on the part of the President of the United States in the case of the convict Lamson? and would also move for copies of all the correspondence that has taken place with the United States Government on the subject.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for copies of all the correspondence that has taken place with the United States Government on the subject of the postponement of the execution of the sentence passed upon the convict Lamson."—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

Viscount MIDLETON said, he did not desire to enter into the details of the question before the House, but wished to call attention to a state of things which made a single individual—though that individual was a Secretary of State—the sole quarter whence remissions of sentence in cases of such magnitude proceeded. He would ask whether what had happened did not form the strongest possible argument in favour of a Court of Appeal, before which such cases should be judicially decided? He hoped the Government would be induced by the facts of the case either to institute some inquiry into the present system, or to introduce some measure for the establishment of an Appeal Court in such cases as that of Lamson.

Earl GRANVILLE: My Lords, I do not think I am called upon to answer the Question which has been put to me by the noble Viscount who spoke last (Viscount Midleton). It most certainly raises a very important issue; but, for myself, I would say that I have very great doubt whether it would be easy to find a practical and good substitute for the present arrangement. With regard to the Motion of the noble Earl (the Earl of Milltown), I have no objection to it as it stands; but, under the circumstances, it possibly might be more regular that I should postpone any discussion of the question until the Papers are in your Lordships' hands. But, considering the courtesy the noble Earl has already shown me, I would ask your Lordships to be allowed to give a very short answer to the Question he has put to me. The first part of the Question is, whether there is any existing precedent of a Foreign Government having interfered to arrest a judgment pronounced on a British subject by an English court of justice for a crime committed in Eng-

and of which he had been found guilty by a regularly constituted jury? The second is contingent upon my answer—namely, that, if there is no precedent, whether I will state the reasons for the course that has been followed? I remember the late Lord John Russell once telling me that which often happened in Parliament—that you gave the best possible reasons for a thing without producing any effect; but if you could say that a thing had been done in the time of Queen Elizabeth, the thing was settled. With regard to precedents, all I have to say is, that it is a thing of very constant occurrence that foreign Governments should interfere with regard to persons under the sentence of a Judicial Court; and if I may find a precedent of not only what a foreign Government has done, but of what we have done in foreign countries, I take as a type what happened, as I daresay the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) recollects, in 1877, when the German Ambassador made an appeal in behalf of two Germans, one of whom was sentenced to imprisonment for unlawfully wounding——

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: It was in Lord Derby's time that this occurred, not in mine.

EARL GRANVILLE: The other was sentenced to penal servitude for forgery. The noble Lord who then presided at the Foreign Office did not show the slightest resentment at the interference, though Sir R. Assheton Cross decided, after a full investigation of the circumstances, that there were no grounds for the revision of the sentences. And I think that is really the thing that makes the whole difference. Were it assumed, in the slightest degree, that that was an interference, on the part either of the United States or of Germany, with the action of our Municipal Law, I think there are no words too strong to express our resentment at such interference. In this case before your Lordships, I feel there is no assumption of that sort. Formerly, in this country, after a criminal had been condemned to death the execution took place almost immediately. In later times a considerable period was allowed to elapse, for the express purpose of enabling the Secretary of State to consider any circumstances which might appear from their nature to be desirable to lay before the Sovereign with regard to the exercise of the Prerogative of Mercy. Now, this term of a fortnight is generally amply sufficient for circumstances confined to this country; but in cases where a person has been in Canada, or in India, or in one of our large Colonies, and there are circumstances connected with those places, a greater time has been given; and I own I think the Secretary of State for the Home Department would have taken a grave responsibility on himself if he had entirely refused to consider information which the American Secretary of State guaranteed to be of a *bonâ fide* and important character, and on which he had been advised by the highest legal authority of the country. In reference to what has fallen from the noble Earl, as to the cruelty of the proceedings, I think the argument has been pushed a little too far. If I were sentenced to be hanged to-morrow, and this alternative had been offered to me, I do not think I should have quarrelled with it on the score of humanity. I am glad to have had the opportunity of stating, in the most clear manner, that we should resent, as affecting the dignity of this country, any interference on the part of a foreign Government with the course of English law. But here we have merely the fact of information given and stated on high authority to be of an important character; and I should hardly like myself to refuse to foreign Governments the same power with reference to their subjects in this country which we have frequently claimed on behalf of our own subjects abroad.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, that, in his opinion, his noble Friend behind him (the Earl of Milltown) was justified in bringing this subject before the consideration of the House. The manner in which the Secretary of State for the Home Department had exercised his powers in respect to the Prerogative of Mercy was not a matter usually discussed in that House; but the Question of the noble Earl raised considerations affecting our national independence. At the same time, he did not think it was possible to form any judgment till the Papers were before their Lordships which the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville) had promised. It was impossible to lay down a rule that we would not listen to the suggestions of any foreign Government in regard to criminal sentences, especially in the case of a man born, as Lamson was, on American soil. We could not do so without laying down a rule with respect to other Governments which we did not observe ourselves. There were many cases showing that this country was not sparing in its efforts in that direction, and sometimes we were a great plague to foreign Governments in our interferences on behalf of British subjects. On the other hand, it was perfectly conceivable that the American Government might have interfered in an improper manner, and might make claims which could not be entertained on the ground of their inadequacy. But, as he had already observed, it was impossible to form any judgment on that point till they had the Papers before them. Perhaps some prejudices had been raised upon that matter, and a greater sensitiveness generated by two circumstances. One was the mere synchronism with certain cases of American interference on behalf of other persons detained in another part of Her Majesty's Dominions, with respect to whom there would be much to say when the question came before their Lordships. But, besides, there was the objection to the punishment of death largely prevalent in some countries, and especially in America; and there was a fear that if such interference were to become a precedent, it might be used, not for purposes which ought to be present to the mind of a Secretary of State, but for the purpose of forwarding the particular notion that the punishment of death ought not to be inflicted. Of course, if there was any interference on the part of foreign Governments, such as that of suggesting to this country the kind of punishment by which we ought to visit particular offences, it would very properly be resented as unsuited to the dignity and independence of the country. As, however, the case appeared at present, and subject to any considerations that might arise out of the Papers to be presented, he did not see that there was any ground for censuring the action of the Home Secretary.

The LORD CHANCELLOR said, that the subject of a Court of Criminal Appeal was a very important one; and it would, no doubt, receive from Parliament the consideration which its importance deserved, whenever it might be brought forward. But the noble Viscount (Viscount Midleton) was mistaken in supposing that an improvement in such cases as this would necessarily be effected by the establishment of a Court of Criminal Appeal. It must be manifest that delay and suspense would be among the inevitable consequences—delay probably greater than had taken place in the present instance. It was also a mistake to suppose that by such a Court you would get rid of the Prerogative of Mercy in the Crown, and the duty of the responsible Minister to advise the Crown as to the exercise of that Prerogative. It was part of the duty of the Secretary of State to advise the Crown as to the exercise of that Prerogative upon grounds which no Court of Appeal, or, indeed, Court of Law whatever, could entertain —namely, upon the view which he might take of the moral importance of circumstances which were not, and could not be in any sense, legal evidence. On the other hand, to establish a Court to deal with matters which never could form the subject-matter of legal evidence would be contrary to all sound principles of legislation. If a Court of Criminal Appeal were established, it must proceed upon legal evidence, and upon that alone.

Motion *agreed to.*

Resolved, That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for copies of all the correspondence that has taken place with the United States Government on the subject of the postponement of the execution of the sentence passed upon the convict Lamson.

STATE OF IRELAND—THREATENING LETTERS.

OBSERVATIONS. QUESTION.

The Earl of GALLOWAY, in rising to ask the Question of which he had given Notice, said, he was quite well enough aware that it was not customary for a Member of their Lordships' House to take notice of an expression used in debate in the other House of Parliament; but he thought that when a sentiment which he might describe as of a novel and unprecedented character, such as that given effect to by the Prime Minister in the other House some short time since, was made, he should be pardoned if he brought it under the notice of their Lordships. It so happened that a few days after their Lordships' House had adjourned for the Easter Recess, he was in a somewhat remote part of Scotland, where he read the speech of the Prime Minister, and the thought struck him at once that the speech would be also read throughout the length and breadth of Ireland, and that it must necessarily have the most disastrous effect. It seemed to him there were two points specially deserving of attention in this paragraph of the Prime Minister's speech. The first was, whether it was consistent with propriety that anyone, however exalted his position, should venture to criticize the words of a learned Judge in the administration of the law; and the second was, whether the sentiment given effect to was one of itself of propriety? He felt much inclined to advert to such observations as justification of what the Prime Minister termed "land-hunger," or, again, the special line of demarcation between "social" and "political" revolution; but on this occasion he would limit himself to those parts of the speech incorporated in his Question. He certainly had hitherto been under the impression that it was the first duty of the First Minister of the Crown to uphold the dignity of the law. He was further under the impression that it was also the duty of the First Minister of the Crown to uphold the authority of the administrators of the law; and, further, he thought it was the duty of the Prime Minister, no less than of every other subject of the Realm, to accept—he might almost say with sanctity—every word which fell from the lips of a learned Judge on the Bench. It was on that account that he had ventured to put this Question to the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, as the highest functionary in that learned Profession of which he was himself such a distinguished ornament. In allusion to his Question, he was not going to say that every murder or attempted murder in Ireland during the last 18 months had been preceded by a threatening letter. Indeed, his (the Earl of Galloway's) own brother-in-law, who had the management of the Irish property of a noble Member of their Lordships' House, had several months ago received a threatening letter; but he was thankful to say that, at present, his life had not been taken, nor, as far as he was aware, had it been attempted. But their Lordships were aware that more than one murder had been actually perpetrated as well as attempted in Ireland, which had been preceded by a threatening letter. Therefore, he thought it was a matter of the most serious importance for anyone in the position of the First Minister of the Crown to venture to give expression to such a sentiment as that to which he had now referred. He did not wish to say anything unnecessarily harsh as regarded Mr. Gladstone; but, at the same time, he ventured to express it as his firm belief that if anyone else, in the whole civilized part of the globe, had ventured to utter such a sentiment he would have been stigmatized by the whole of the public Press as the very reverse of a human being. He would make no further comment than that it was high time to stop such reprehensible language. He must, however, be permitted to point out that the statement was directly contrary to the fact; for, by two recent Statutes—namely, 24 & 25 *Vict.* c. 97, s. 50, amended by 27 & 28 *Vict.* c. 47, s. 2—"Sending letters, threatening to burn or destroy houses, or kill, maim, or wound cattle," &c., was stated to be felony, punishable by penal servitude "not exceeding ten, and not less than five years." And, again, 24 & 25 *Vict.* c. 100, s. 16, amended by 27 & 28 *Vict.* c. 47, s. 2—"Sending letters, threatening to murder, felony, punishable by penal servitude not exceeding ten, and not less than five years." It was a curious thing that at the time these Statutes were passed—namely, in 1861 and 1864—the Prime Minister occupied the same position as he did now—that of Chancellor of the Exchequer—and, therefore, he might be quite accurately described as a co-author of the very Statutes which he had now denounced. He felt that he owed some apology to the noble and learned Lord for having framed the Question so as to suggest that he thought it possible his Lordship could have any sympathy whatever with this, which he (the Earl of Galloway) considered a most hideous sentiment uttered by the Prime Minister. It would hardly be necessary for the noble and learned Lord to disavow that; but he hoped his Lordship would be able to inform the House that Mr. Gladstone had already expressed the deepest contrition for the expression; and had further explained that it was only one more of those innumerable instances of that helter-skelter, reckless as well as vilifying volubility, which so poisoned the air of Mid Lothian in the month of December, 1879, and again in the month of March, 1880, the natural—nay, the inevitable fruits of which, he regretted to think, they were now reaping in the present distracted and semi-barbarous state of Ireland. In conclusion, he begged, in the terms of his Notice, to ask the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, Whether he is prepared to endorse the sentiment reported in the public journals to have been expressed by the Prime Minister on the eve of the Easter Recess in regard to the state of Ireland; viz., that "threatening letters" . . . "falling into the category of serious crimes" (and again) . . . "falling into the class of serious criminal offences" . . . "is an overstatement on the part of the judge"; who, in the person of Chief Justice Morris, had been quoted to have made a statement of such general import in a court of justice?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, the noble Earl (the Earl of Galloway) commenced his speech by admitting that it is not very usual in this House to enter upon questions as to what may have been said in the other House of Parliament by particular Members of that House; but I am afraid that, with the example of last night and of to-night before you, your Lordships will be of opinion that that practice is in danger of becoming more usual than it has heretofore been. I cannot think that it is a very convenient practice to put to a Minister in this House Questions as to what has been reported in the newspapers to have been said by another Minister in the other House; and if anything could make that practice more inconvenient, it would be to put a Question in the form proposed by the noble Earl upon the Paper, and then to follow it up by a discursive speech, in which reference is made to the Mid Lothian Campaign, and to the great facilities of oratory which is possessed by the Prime Minister, and a great many other matters, as to which no Notice had been given. The noble Earl said he would not allude to other parts of the same speech, because he had not given any Notice of asking a Question upon them; but, while disclaiming that intention, he had, in fact, done more than allude to them. With regard to the Question addressed to me by the noble Earl, I am not prepared to inform the House that the Prime Minister has expressed the deepest contrition for anything which he has said, neither am I prepared to endorse the statement of the noble Earl that the Prime Minister has ever given utterance, or intended to do so, to anything that can be described as most hideous, to use the words of the noble Earl. In truth, the noble Earl has, I think, misunderstood what the Prime Minister really said. Last night a misconstruction was put upon the words of the Prime Minister; but to-night his language has been still more seriously misinterpreted. I entirely agree that, by the two Acts of Parliament to which the noble Earl has referred, the offence of sending letters threatening to commit murder, arson, or other grave offences are not only made crimes, but are made crimes of a very serious character; and these crimes and offences, in the present disturbed state of Ireland, should be treated as being very serious, and liable to be visited, according to the difference in particular cases, with serious punishment. Therefore, I have no hesitation in saying that no exception can be taken to any words of the learned Judge, in which he may have spoken of threatening letters as falling into the category of serious crimes, and I do not believe that Mr. Gladstone ever intended to take any such exception. I will take the liberty of explaining what I believe he really intended by what he said on this subject. As a matter of fact, most unhappily, offences falling within this category have become very numerous of late, and they differ very much among themselves in point of gravity. Some—a small proportion—are doubtless connected with heinous offences, either actually perpetrated, or of which the perpetration is really meditated by the writers; but the great majority are not, in truth, of that character; and although the circumstances of Ireland make it necessary to legislate against all such offences as a class, yet when we are referring to them, not for the purpose of administering the Criminal Law, but with the object of classifying the statistics of Irish crime in discussions before Parliament, it becomes of importance to distinguish between them and outrages against life and property of a heinous character.

Accordingly, when in this House and in the House of Commons, in order to arrive at a correct view of the comparative state of Ireland at different periods, the statistics of crime in that country are referred to, it has always been found necessary to separate this class of offences from the more heinous offences of actual outrage and violence against person and property, and not to bring them all into one class; because the value of those statistics for Parliamentary purposes would be greatly vitiated if the whole number of cases in which threatening letters had been sent were included, without any discrimination, under the head of heinous offences. Although the law properly treats the sending of threatening letters as a serious offence, it is not to be put upon a par with actual outrage, such as murder, attempt to murder, shooting into a dwelling-house, and destruction of property. Mr. Gladstone, when he used the words attributed to him, was speaking from that point of view; and it was in a comparative, and not in a positive sense, that he took exception to what had fallen from some other Members of the other House of Parliament, who had not made that distinction between the most serious criminal offences and the other class, numerically very much greater, but a large proportion of which was not of so important or serious a character. Mr. Gladstone did not take upon himself to criticize the language of the learned Judge, neither did he go out of his way for that purpose; but, as I understand the matter, a Member of the other House, in referring to the expressions of the learned Judge, interpreted them in a manner which Mr. Gladstone, rightly or wrongly, considered to be an over-statement. I do not believe that Mr. Gladstone had any intention whatever to show the slightest disrespect to the learned Judge or to criticize his statement. I do not believe that Mr. Gladstone had seen the whole context of the language used by the learned Judge; but he was commenting upon the speech of another Member of the House of Commons, who had pressed into his service the expressions which were used by the learned Judge. I am perfectly satisfied that Mr. Gladstone never intended to express any opinion which could encourage any person to suppose that he regarded this class of offences as anything less than serious, although, in estimating the present state of Ireland, he did not think that they should be brought into the same class, or regarded as being of the same character, as the most heinous crimes.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I sympathize with the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack at the constant imposition upon him of the task of having to explain the meaning of the words of the Prime Minister. I feel the gravity of that task, and how gladly the noble and learned Lord would escape from it. Mr. Gladstone's language has this happy peculiarity that, while it is capable of inciting to acts of violence in Ireland and of arousing the most dangerous passions and feelings of the people of that country, it is also capable, under the subtle handling of the noble and learned Lord, of bearing a comparatively innocent construction. I must, however, take exception to the ruling of the noble and learned Lord when he says that we should take no notice of the language used in the other House. Since I have been in this House I have always understood that to deal with language used by Members of the other House was irregular, with this exception—if the Member of Parliament was a Minister of the Crown. If it were not so, we should be debarred from asking notice politically of many of the most important statements that are made, and from passing our judgment upon the action, and upon the grounds stated for that action, by the occupants of the most important Departments of the State. The noble and learned Lord, I think, strained his well-known power in attempting to establish that Mr. Gladstone had not spoken lightly of this particular class of offences. What Mr. Gladstone said was this—and I wish to repeat it in the presence of those who have heard the noble and learned Lord's statement. The Prime Minister said—

> "I think it is an over-statement on the part of the hon. and learned Member, or on the part of the Judge whose language and sentiments he has adopted, to describe threatening letters as falling into the class of serious criminal offences."

Now, what are threatening letters in the present disturbed state of Ireland? They are the machinery by which all the present occult government of Ireland is maintained—they are the instruments by which all the decrees of the Land League, of the Fenians, and of the Riband conspirators of Ireland are enforced upon the reluctant farmers. What test will you adopt to estimate the seriousness of a criminal offence? Do you not ask whether it interferes with the liberty and safety of individuals, with their peace of mind, and brings about the prostration of their industries? It is the threatening letters which maintain a state of panic in the country, which prevent men from pursuing their ordinary avocations in peace and security, and which give terrible width and effect to the crimes which are perpetrated by order of these secret organizations. It is through these threatening letters that the criminals who control the action of persons and destroy the liberty of a large class in Ireland are able to act in the districts which are dominated by their criminal action. Considered in the light of their effects upon the tranquillity of the country and the liberty of individuals, these threats to murder are most serious criminal offences; and it will have no salutary effect in Ireland that those who commit them, and that those who are the subject of them, should know that they should be lightly spoken of by the Prime Minister, and defended from the Woolsack by the noble and learned Lord the Lord Chancellor of England.

Earl GRANVILLE: My Lords, there is not the slightest occasion for me to defend Mr. Gladstone; but I must congratulate the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) upon the opportunities he finds, and which he sometimes creates, of making personal attacks upon Mr. Gladstone, and of attributing the worst possible motives to ordinary expressions of opinion when uttered by my right hon. Friend. I will not go over the whole ground again, which has been so ably covered by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack; but this remark I may be permitted to make, that it has been the constant habit, in giving accounts of the state of Ireland, carefully to separate threatening letters—which there is not the slightest doubt are mischievous and illegal—from the more serious crimes of murder and destruction of property. I have not one word more to add to what the noble and learned Lord said; but that is what he did say.

ARMY ALTERNATIVE PUNISHMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill for alternative punishments under the Army Discipline and Regulation Act, 1881—Was *presented* by The Lord Denman; read 1ª. (No. 68.)

House adjourned at half past Six o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 25th April, 1882.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—Ways and Means—*considered in Committee—Resolutions* [April 24] *reported.*

Private Bill (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Dundee Lighting *.

Public Bills — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Customs and Inland Revenue * [140].

Second Reading—Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) * [130]; Local Government Provisional Order (Highways) * [129]; Local Government Provisional Orders * [131]; Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) [21] [*Second Night*], *adjourned debate further adjourned.*

Committee—Judgments (Inferior Courts) * [44]—r.p.; Places of Worship Sites [97]—r.p.

Report—Roads Provisional Order (Edinburgh) * [93-139].

QUESTIONS.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—APPOINTMENTS OF COUNTY AND SUB-INSPECTORS AT LONDONDERRY.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that when in 1872 the Royal Irish Constabulary were introduced into the city of Londonderry in place of the old local police, the rule was laid down that of the two officers to be stationed there, namely, the county inspector and the sub-inspector, one was to be a Catholic and the other a Protestant; whether for some time this condition was observed, but for the last five years it has been departed from and both the officers have been Protestants; whether the position of sub-inspector in Derry is worth some £50 or £60 a-year more than that of an ordinary one; and, whether he will state the reasons for not observing the rule made in 1872?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, the Inspector General informed him that he was not aware of any such rule as that referred to in the Question. For some years subsequent to 1872 one of the officers stationed in Derry was a Roman Catholic. In 1876 a vacancy occurred, which was filled up by the appointment of a Protestant. That was the only change which had been made since 1872. The salary and allowances of the Sub-Inspector stationed in Derry were precisely the same as those received by Sub-Inspectors elsewhere. It was true that he received a small additional remuneration for the discharge of duties in connection with the inspection of weights and measures; but it did not come out of the Constabulary Votes, and did not amount to £50.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — MR. M. P. KENNY AND MR. CANTWELL.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. M. P. Kenny and Mr. Cantwell, of Castlecomer, were arrested on the same day, the 4th November last, and upon the same charge; whether Mr. Cantwell was released upon the 26th of February; and, whether he will state the reasons for the continued imprisonment, under these circumstances, of Mr. Kenny?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that these men were arrested on the same day under similar warrants. Mr. Cantwell was released on the 26th of February; but they did not consider they could yet prudently release Mr. Kenny.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—RELEASE OF PERSONS DETAINED UNDER THE ACT.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that six persons were arrested in Charleville, in October last, under the Coercion Act, on the same grounds of suspicion; and, whether it is true that three of those prisoners have been discharged from prison within the last month; and, if so, was it because those three men were returned Americans they were discharged, while the other three, who always lived in the district, are still detained in prison?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, it was not true that any prisoners had been released on the grounds stated in the Question; that Patrick O'Brien, Edward Synan, and Denis O'Conor had been released, but it was news to him that the two first-named were Americans; Denis O'Conor certainly was one. The Resident Magistrate had expressed the opinion that there was no necessity to detain O'Brien any longer. Synan was released because his wife was in a delicate state of health, her mother had recently died, and his friends offered to guarantee his good behaviour, and he was only too glad to expedite the return of O'Conor to America.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN asked if there was any offence charged against the three remaining prisoners which was not charged against the three who had been liberated?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, the question the Executive had to consider before liberating the other prisoners was—would the district be made worse by their release?

CRIMINAL LAW—THE MAGISTRACY—FLOGGING.

Mr. P. A. TAYLOR asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is true, as stated in the "Newcastle Daily Chronicle" of the 22nd instant, that, at the Newcastle Police Court, Patrick Murray, a boy of 13, was, on the 21st instant, sentenced to receive twelve stripes of the birch for having stolen four scarfs, value one shilling and sixpence, from the door of a shop, the committing magistrate, Alderman Milvain, observing that the lad had been twice whipped before, and it was evident that he had not been whipped severely enough, or he would not have come back, and he therefore ordered the police to lay on the strokes till the blood should come from the boy's back; and, if the statement be true, if he will recommend the removal of Alderman Milvain from the Bench?

Mr. HIBBERT, in reply, said, that the matter had been under the consideration of the Home Secretary for some time. He received a letter from Mr. Alderman Milvain stating that the report in *The Newcastle Daily Chronicle* was substantially correct; that the police reported the boy to be the associate of boys of bad character, some older and some younger than himself; that in October, 1881, he had been convicted of larceny from a dwelling, and sentenced to receive 12 stripes; that in November, 1881, he was convicted of larceny from a shop, and was again sentenced to receive 12 stripes; and that it was on the third conviction—the subject of the Question—that the language was used. The Alderman went on to say that an officer superintended the whipping; and he reported that, although the boy was more severely whipped than on previous occasions, no blood was drawn. In reply, the Home Secretary expressed his regret that the Alderman had used language which had shocked public feeling; said he was glad to learn that the sentence had not been carried out with the severity which had been enjoined; and expressed the opinion that punishments of this kind could not be employed with safety, unless they were administered with moderation and with regard to humanity, especially in the case of children of tender years. Believing that these words would not be without effect upon the Alderman, and that the strong public opinion which had been expressed in reference to this case would have a salutary influence, the Home Secretary did not deem it necessary to adopt the course suggested by the Question.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — RELIEF OF DISTRESS—SWINFORD UNION.

MR. O'CONNOR POWER asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If, considering the exceptional state of the Swinford Poor Law Union, as evidenced in the reports of the Local Government Board Inspector, Major Spaight, and the inability of the impoverished tenant-farmers who incurred liabilities to the guardians during the distress of 1880 to meet their obligations, the Government will consider the advisability of introducing a short Bill for their relief, and also for the relief of distressed tenant farmers similarly circumstanced in other unions?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, the hon. Member was, doubtless, aware that Swinford Union was scheduled under the Act of last year. The advances made by the Guardians to farmers and others were ordered to be collected in four annual instalments. During the past year Swinford Union had been largely aided by grants. The condition of the Union required constant attention, and the Local Government Board had been giving constant attention to it. He did not think any further Bill was necessary at present.

PRISONS (ENGLAND) ACT, 1877—COST OF CONVEYING PRISONERS.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, under "The English Prisons Act, 1877," English counties are relieved from the payment of expenses for the conveyance of certain prisoners, these expenses being payable out of Parliamentary funds, whereas under the General Prisons (Ireland) Act of 1877, Irish counties are still liable for similar expenses, and have to defray them out of county funds?

COLONEL COLTHURST asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether he is aware that the Grand Jury of the county Cork have recently submitted a case to counsel respecting the incidence of the charge for conveyance of prisoners, and have been informed that under section 21, Prisons Act (Ireland), 1878, the said charge falls upon the county rates; and, if he is prepared to suggest any remedy?

MR. O'CONNOR POWER remarked, that the difference in the law in both countries affected the county which he represented to the extent of £1,000 a-year.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, the hon. and learned Member for the County Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power) has strictly and accurately stated the difference under the existing law in England and Ireland as to the source from which the conveyance of prisoners is defrayed. In England it is out of moneys voted by Parliament; in Ireland it is out of the county rates. With reference to the Question of the hon. and gallant Member for Cork County (Colonel Colthurst), it is the fact, as stated in his Question, that the Grand Jury of that county, at the last Spring Assizes, took counsel's opinion on the subject, and were advised as stated in his Question. Accordingly, by a Resolution, they drew attention to the fact that this annual charge for Cork County was about £1,800, and expressed a hope that this hardship would be redressed and a remedy found by making the source for this expense the same in both countries—namely, moneys voted by Parliament. That, however, is a question of policy, and should be addressed to the Prime Minister.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—MANORHAMILTON UNION—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that Mr. Laurance McDermott has twice applied to the Local Government Board for an investigation into the late election of Guardians for the Manorhamilton Union without reply; why no reply has been given; and, whether an investigation can be granted; and, if not, if he would state why?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, this gentleman had written several times to the Local Government Board, and had on each occasion received a reply. The Local Government Board were in communication with the Returning Officer on the subject of the late election of Guardians in the Manorhamilton Union; and Mr. M'Dermott was informed, as recently as the 21st instant, that the Local Government Board were not yet able to determine whether an inquiry was necessary.

Mr. HEALY asked if the reply of the Local Government Board was given after the Question was put upon the Paper?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he could not say that. The last letter written to him was on the 21st instant, and to each of his previous communications he received no answer.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—LIMERICK GAOL —GOVERNOR EAGER.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What has been the result of the sworn inquiry into the conduct of Governor Eager, of Limerick Gaol; whether on Sunday the 2nd instant bread was refused by the "suspects" as being sour; whether on the doctor certifying that this was not the case, and the opinion of an independent doctor being asked, this was refused; whether in every case of complaint an independent inquiry apart from the regular officials will be granted; if not, whether it is the fact that it is the officials who supply him with the information which he gives to this House; whether Mr. Power, confined in Limerick Gaol, wrote to him on the 31st March, pointing out that, although no outrage had been committed in Tralee since his imprisonment on the 20th October last, he is still detained in prison; whether no reply has been given to this letter; and, whether there is any reason for the further detention of Mr. Power?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the result of the inquiry into the conduct of Governor Eager was that he had been cautioned to be more careful in future that improper communications should not be passed out of the prison, and that all unnecessary interference with letters should be carefully avoided. He had also been directed to avoid as much as possible the infliction of punishment, and all unnecessarily stringent regulations, especially with regard to visits to prisoners. With regard to the bread supplied in the gaol, a few of the prisoners had complained of it, and this and other complaints had been inquired into by the Prisons Board, and most of them were found to be trivial. No request was made for an independent inquiry. The medical officer, however, had reported favourably on the bread. As for the case of Mr. Power, a letter had been received from him, and his complaint had been considered by the Lord Lieutenant, who had been forced to the conclusion that he ought to remain in custody. He was, however, allowed out on parole, and on his further application it was extended to the 18th instant.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—INVESTIGATION OF CASES OF PRISONERS DETAINED UNDER THE ACT.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a form printed in the "Waterford Mail" of March 22nd, purporting to be the form to be used by political prisoners who seek investigation into their case, is correct?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that no form whatever was required by persons detained under the Protection of Person and Property Act.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT—EMIGRANT SHIPS.

MR. A. MOORE asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, having regard to the numerous complaints and abuses brought to light during last Session, and to the very rapid emigration taking place at the present moment, he is prepared to revise the Passenger Acts, more particularly in the interests of young unprotected girls, and in the direction of the recommendations put forward by the Board of Trade officials and sanctioned by himself in his Minute of 5th July 1881?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, I hope the object the hon. Member has in view, in common with myself, will be obtained without further legislation. The Report of the Board of Trade officials and my Minute thereon were forwarded in August last to the principal shipowners in the United Kingdom, and also to the principal officers in the various ports, with instructions to report to the Board of Trade any ship carrying emigrants to the United States which did not comply with the recommendations issued by the Board. The principal shipowners, with very few exceptions, have expressed their willingness to meet the suggestions of the Board as soon as they possibly can. The Reports of the principal officers at the various ports show that the number of vessels in which the suggestions of the Board of Trade had not been adopted is steadily diminishing, and there are now very few vessels carrying emigrants that have neglected to adopt them. The Board of Trade will continue their efforts to secure the compliance of all shipowners; but they hope to be able to secure this without further legislation.

MR. A. MOORE gave Notice that, in consequence of the unsatisfactory answer of the right hon. Gentleman, he would take an early opportunity of calling attention to this subject; and on Thursday he would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether his attention had been called to a paragraph in the papers stating that seven emigrants had died on the way to New York on board an emigrant ship, and that the surgeon reported that these persons embarked in a very weak state of health, and were passed by the emigration officer at the English port; and whether he would cause full inquiry to be made as to how it was that those persons were passed by the emigration agent at the English port?

UNITED STATES—TRIAL OF BRITISH SUBJECTS.

MR. PULESTON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that Lord Granville, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, recently interfered in behalf of a British subject, accused in the State of Michigan, in the United States of America, of administering the poison morphine?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, an application was made last month to Mr. West by William Lane, a British subject, who stated he had been arrested on the 18th of June last on a charge of attempted murder, and had since then been held in gaol awaiting trial, which he was utterly unable to obtain. Mr. West accordingly wrote to the Secretary of State, asking that inquiry should be made respecting the case. Mr. Frelinghuysen replied that Lane was arraigned for trial on the 29th of September, 1881, since which time repeated continuances have been had, but in every instance at the request of Lane's attorney. The trial was commenced on the 24th of March last, and Mr. West reports that it has ended in the conviction of the accused.

STATE OF IRELAND—COUNTY WICKLOW.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has read the charge delivered to the Grand Jury at Wicklow by the County Court Judge, at the Quarter Sessions just concluded, as reported in the local journal of the 22nd April, as follows:—

> "Gentlemen, as there is no case to go before you, you will be discharged. . . . I have just come from Baltinglass, where also there was no case for the jury. This shows very satisfactorily for your county. I am exceedingly glad to be able to discharge you from your duties;"

whether the Judges at Assizes and Quarter Sessions have frequently borne testimony, in their charges to Grand Juries of the county, to the peace and quietness prevailing in Wicklow; whether the returns of crime and outrage, and of malicious injury, indicate the same; and, whether he can inform the House upon what grounds he refuses to advise the Lord Lieutenant, in the face of these facts, to revoke the Orders in Council under which the county has been proclaimed?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he regretted that, notwithstanding the testimony borne by the Judges of Assize and the Chairman of Quarter Sessions as to the peace and quietness prevailing in the county Wicklow, the Government did not feel justified in revoking the Orders under which the county was proclaimed. It was quite possible there might be an absence of outrages, and yet that the county might not be free from intimidation.

MEDICAL GRANT (SCOTLAND).

Mr. RAMSAY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether any decision has yet been come to as to the amount of the medical grant to be made for Scotland for the year 1882-3?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Sir, the Government had hoped to deal with the Grant for Medical Relief in Scotland in connection with the general question of Grants in Aid of local taxation. As they had been reluctantly obliged to abandon that hope, it is considered that this particular anomaly is too great to be any longer continued. It will be my duty, therefore, as a temporary arrangement, to substitute for the Estimate of £10,000 now before the House one for £20,000. It may probably be necessary to amend the law with respect to the conditions under which the Grant is made.

TURKEY—MIDHAT PASHA.

Mr. M'COAN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Foreign Office has received any confirmation of the statements reported in yesterday's papers, that Midhat Pasha is kept in chains at Taif, and that his wife and family at Smyrna are in a state of destitution; and, if so, whether Earl Granville will instruct Lord Dufferin to use his private good offices at the Porte to obtain some mitigation of the cruelty thus inflicted on a Minister who, while in office, always manifested a just regard for British interests in the East?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: No information respecting Midhat Pasha has been received at the Foreign Office; but Lord Dufferin has been instructed by telegraph to make inquiries as to the truth of the painful report to which my hon. Friend refers.

IRELAND — POTATO CROP COMMITTEE, 1880.

Colonel NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the Resolution of this House of the 20th July 1881,

> "That, in the opinion of this House, it is expedient that Her Majesty's Government should take steps to carry into effect such of the recommendations of the Potato Crop Committee of 1880 as relate to Ireland, by facilitating the progress of further experiments as to the best means of lessening the spread of the potato disease and promoting the creation and establishment of new varieties of the potato;"

If any attempt has been made to give effect to the above Resolution of the House either at Glasnevin, or elsewhere; and, if any provision has been made in the Estimates for the experiments and cultivation referred to in the above Resolution?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Yes, Sir; steps have been taken for giving effect to the Resolution of the House referred to by the hon. and gallant Member, and are, shortly, as follows:—In 1880-1 two sets of experiments were tried at the Munster Model Farm, under the auspices of the Cork Agricultural Society; and Mr. Carroll, the Agricultural Superintendent under the Board of National Education, will continue to make similar experiments this year at Glasnevin and Cork. He will also extend the scope of the experiments to the production of new varieties of the potato by the propagation from the seed of the apple of the potato. The process is slow, and takes four years to produce the fully developed potato; but Mr. Carroll looks on it as a most important feature in his experiments. Last year seeds of different varieties were sown at the Glasnevin farm. The small tubers which those seeds produced have this year been planted, and in 1884 the fully developed varieties will be obtained. Furthermore, Mr. Carroll has got some seed from America to raise new varieties. This seed, in small quantities, will be sent gratis to the principal agricultural schools, with instructions as to its treatment, &c. It will also be sown at the Glasnevin and Cork farms. Mr. Carroll will sow this spring the seed of an old Irish potato of great excellence—the "Black Apple." The development of the sowing will be complete in 1885; and, in order to encourage the production of new varieties of the plant, through the agency of their agricultural schools, the Commissioners of National Education have obtained the sanction of the Treasury for offering prizes for competition among the teachers of those schools. There will be four sets of prizes for different varieties of the potato; each set will consist of a 1st, 2nd, and 3rd prize, and the directions for sowing seed will be issued.

In reply to Mr. Healy,

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he had no information as to the weight of seed and the extent of ground.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY asked why these experiments were to be confined to agricultural schools in Ireland? Potatoes did not grow only in Ireland; and there was a distinct understanding that this was to be a national expenditure.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he considered that as the schools he had referred to were supported at the expense of the nation, it was the fittest place for the experiments.

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE.

Sir MASSEY LOPES asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he can now state when the financial arrangements for the year have been announced, what provision has been made to give effect to the Resolution of the 13th May last, with reference to the appointment of a Minister of Agriculture and Commerce?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Gladstone), in reply, said, he had never intended in what he had said when the Resolution was passed to convey the impression that this particular subject, any more than any other subject of administration, was to be connected with the Financial Statement of the year. He did not think the moment had arrived when they could conveniently enter upon it. What he had had rather in view were the Votes regarding the Department with which the proposed Minister might possibly be connected. He would, however, endeavour to find an opportunity, when the state of Public Business would permit, to refer to the subject.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

WAYS AND MEANS.—REPORT.

Resolutions [April 24] *reported.*

Resolution 1.

Mr. E. W. HARCOURT said, he wished to take the opportunity of thanking the Prime Minister for the very literal way in which he had carried out the promises he had made earlier in the Session on the subject of roads. He believed the sum which the right hon. Gentleman proposed to appropriate to the maintenance of disturnpiked roads was exactly the sum which those roads at present cost. He thought, however, what they had chiefly to congratulate themselves upon was that the principle was conceded that main roads were to be maintained, not out of the rates, but from other sources. The satisfaction, nevertheless, with which the arrangement would be regarded, would depend entirely upon the manner in which the relief was to be distributed; and, again, as to the method of relief, it was to be remembered that the chief offenders in destroying roads were brewers' vans, timber waggons, and other carriages drawing heavy weights, as well as traction engines, and these ought to be dealt with before it could be said that any justice was done. He had had a large correspondence with highway authorities throughout England, perhaps larger than any other Member in the House; and he thought he could undertake to say that if any degree of justice were done in the matter of maintaining main roads from sources other than the rates the President of the Local Government Board would find very little difficulty in making such alterations as were necessary in the Highway Act of 1878 in a way which would give general satisfaction.

Mr. RYLANDS said, he understood from the Prime Minister that it was his desire that they should take this stage of the Budget without much discussion, and that sufficient opportunity would be given on the second reading of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill. His object in rising now was to express a hope that that Bill would be made the first Order of the Day, because he was bound to tell the Prime Minister, in regard to the great Expenditure, there would be considerable examination and discussion. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that public opinion was indifferent on this question; but he must say, on behalf of his own constituents and the populous constituencies of Lancashire, that one of the main causes of dissatisfaction with the late Government was their large Public Expenditure. He must also tell the Prime Minister that he had hardly gauged the feelings of the House when he said that the House was indifferent to the Expenditure of the country. He (Mr. Rylands) had a Notice on the Paper on that subject, and he should have pressed it had he not desired to avoid, in the present state of Business, embarrassing the Government. There must be full opportunity for discussion, and they ought also to have an opportunity of redeeming the pledges they gave prior to the General Election.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I rise, Sir, not to prolong this conversation, for it is, I think, undesirable the matter should now be gone into. It is quite obvious that the question raised with regard to Expenditure, and the financial position generally, ought to be fully discussed. I have no doubt that a full discussion will bring out some points that are not at once evident upon the mere statement of the amount of Expenditure; and there will, perhaps, be an opportunity of dispelling some false ideas on the subject. At the same time, it is quite clear that the position, as stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer yesterday, is one that demands the serious consideration of the country and of this House, and that we should not be doing our duty, or satisfying the general expectations of the country at large, if we did not make it the subject of serious debate. I could not help noticing the suggestion thrown out yesterday by the Prime Minister that it might be necessary to adopt further or other measures for checking expenditure. I confess that that raises a very large question, upon which I should be sorry off-hand to express an opinion; but it is one very worthy of discussion. I hope, however, we shall not now run into a general or particular discussion, because we have other Business before us; but let it be understood that a full and fair opportunity will be afforded hereafter to discuss the statement of the right hon. Gentleman.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Gladstone): Nothing could be fairer or more reasonable than that. It is quite in conformity with what I endeavoured to convey last night, that full opportunity should be given for discussion; and if the best opportunity arises on the second reading, rather than on going into Committee, I am perfectly willing to consult the convenience of the House. Since full opportunity will be given, it is very desirable not to make any partial anticipations. With regard to the remarks of the hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Harcourt), they were in place, and I thank him for them. Our pledge was limited by the arrangement made at the beginning of the Session, and I do not regard the principle in this grant as having quite so extensive an application as he does. That, however, is not the question. It is not necessary to enter into details; but I must remind the hon. Gentleman that in his estimate of the amount he must take Scotland into consideration, because Scotland is entitled to receive some fair proportion of the amount in respect to main roads.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he did not think the taxpayers would be quite so pleased as his hon. Friend (Mr. Harcourt) appeared to be, especially when they found that a certain proportion of the small amount which was to go to highways was to be given to Scotland. He asked the right hon. Gentleman to give this subject that fair consideration which it required. He recollected the pledges the right hon. Gentleman made to his own tenants with regard to local taxation. He now proposed to increase the Carriage Duty, a duty which had been reduced, and which would again make it a most objectionable tax. The Prime Minister had entirely overlooked that class of traffic which had done the most harm to the roads—the large vans and heavy locomotives. These and the omnibuses, which went to railway stations, were allowed to go free; while the light carriages, which caused little wear to the roads, were to be more heavily taxed. He hoped the right hon.

Gentleman would reconsider this matter. With regard to the Malt Tax he was one of those who always strongly advocated the repeal of the tax when barley was at a very low price; but he did not when barley rose to the extraordinary high price it did during prosperous years. But since the right hon. Gentleman had taken off the Malt Duty and placed the duty on beer the price of barley had gone down very considerably. We could grow far better barley in this country than could be grown abroad; but the price of barley was depreciated because, as the right hon. Gentleman knew, he had permitted anything to be used in brewing, and such ingredients as rice and maize and a greater quantity of sugar were now used. Many brewers, especially the small brewers, using substitutes for all kinds of malt and hops, produced beer of a very inferior quality, to the detriment of the people of this country. [*A laugh.*] The hon. Member for Scarborough might laugh, because he was one of those who recommended his countrymen to drink water only; but all did not share his opinion, and many a man in drinking his glass of beer desired to have it good. He would venture to say that unless something was done to check the evil he alluded to, the repeal of the tax would be anything but a benefit either to the farmers or the country.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN said, that, acting in accord with the general desire of the House, he would not enter into a discussion on the Ministerial proposals. But he desired to give Notice that when the Bill based on the Budget Resolutions came on for second reading, he would move an Amendment condemnatory of the intended additional duty on carriages. He recognized the justice of the demand that had been made for concession with respect to turnpikes; and he did not think the sum the Chancellor of the Exchequer contemplated setting aside for that purpose was excessive. He wished to speak with becoming deference and respect of any fiscal propositions of the right hon. Gentleman; but he could not help saying that he thought he had not shown his customary skill in discovering the means for raising the required funds. The mode of assisting those who paid for highways did not strike him as a satisfactory one; but, apart from that, the proposal to increase the tax on carriages would hamper a useful, varied, and important trade, which was already suffering from depression. There was a large capital embarked in the coach-building business, and there were thousands of workmen employed in it. That trade had suffered proportionately more than any other trade from the recent bad times. The duty at present imposed was a bar to development, and the additional duty would be a further deterrent. The coach-building business was one of the few trades now that were taxed. The Chancellor of the Exchequer pointed out very lucidly on the previous day how the duty on malt was doubly injurious to the trade. It not only imposed a duty, but impeded the maltsters by compelling them to conduct their operations subject to Excise control. The same thing applied to the coach business. Carriage builders were crippled in their operations by the action of the representatives of the Inland Revenue. The persons who used carriages in the usual way were best able to pay the extra tax; but it was not them he was considering. It was the men directly engaged in the trade itself; and when the time came he would endeavour to adduce reasons why the Government should abandon the intended increase of duty. It might be possible, he thought, to extend the proposed relief to the highways without imposing any duty at all.

MR. MAC IVER asked for some assurance that an opportunity would be given for discussing the Motion of which he had given Notice the previous night, and which it was certainly his intention to bring forward at some stage of the Budget discussion—

> "That Customs duties shall be replaced on such foreign importations as come into unfair competition with the industries of Great Britain and Ireland."

He asked for this on two grounds. There were many people who seemed to think that importations of luxuries from France might very well be subjected to a tax; and there were many who regarded with alarm the extraordinary depreciation of the revenue derived from intoxicating drinks. Many people felt greatly alarmed at the fact that the Revenue was dependent upon intoxicating drinks for nearly one-half of it; and, so far as that went, it created a state of things which contributed largely to prevent any serious remedial measures being adopted to check intemperance. It was with a desire to forward the cause of temperance, as well as with a desire to free our industries at home from unfair competition, that he trusted a proper opportunity would be given to raise this question at some future stage of the financial Bill.

Mr. EARP contended that it was incorrect to say that many substitutes had been used for malt for brewing purposes. The diminution in the consumption of barley and the fall in its price were not results of the repeal of the Malt Duty. The diminution in question was partly the result of those changes in the habits of the people to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had alluded. The brewing trade had been depressed, and consequently there had been less demand than formerly for barley. When the brewing interest should revive higher prices would be got for barley; and in the long run the repeal of the Malt Tax, instead of bearing prejudicially upon the farmer, would affect him beneficially.

Mr. RAMSAY said, he did not wish to prolong this desultory discussion; but he was glad to hear the Prime Minister announce that he had not forgotten Scotland when he proposed the Budget last night. He wished, however, to draw the right hon. Gentleman's attention to the fact that it was not from Scotland that the outcry for grants in aid had chiefly come. Their complaint had been directed hitherto to the fact that the grants allowed to Scotland had not been in proportion either to her population or taxation, and that the share they had got of those grants was less than they were fairly entitled to. If he was correct in saying that the grants in aid had not been demanded by Scotland, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider whether it would be expedient to give any new grants in aid for any purpose whatever, in addition to the subsidy derived by the people of England from the Imperial Exchequer. He thought it was a very doubtful question—he did not know what the opinion of the majority of the House would be upon it—whether the counties that received those grants in aid derived any such benefit as was supposed by many of those who demanded them. His experience was the opposite. In the county with which he was connected, they used to get from the Exchequer a share of the sum of £5,000 for maintaining the military roads in the Highlands of Scotland; and he believed the roads in the same district now were maintained at less expense to the ratepayers within the several districts than when the Road Trustees had the £5,000 from the Imperial Treasury in addition to their own contributions. Now, if such was the case, and if the assessment levied for the maintenance of the Police Force had increased since the Government came to pay one-half of the whole amount, these facts should lead the right hon. Gentleman to reconsider the question of renewing those grants in aid, and, at the same time, whether it would not be better to give efficient local administration to the several counties, and so enable them within themselves to levy and control local charges instead of drawing from the Imperial Treasury. He had no wish to detain the House further than to say that it would be desirable that Scotland should be exempted from the increase proposed to be made in the duty on carriages, and left very much as she was—only the Prime Minister taking care to give her, for all purposes, the same proportion of the grants, except special grants for the roads in England, but leaving them in other respects as they were.

Mr. DUCKHAM maintained that when samples of barley were of as good a quality as in past years they realized a satisfactory price. The low price now obtainable for barley he attributed to a deterioration in the samples. He could not connect it with the repeal of the Malt Tax. He begged to express his gratitude to the Prime Minister for the relief to the agricultural interest which he had shadowed forth in his Budget.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, nothing could be more certain than that the Prime Minister, in proposing the abolition of the Malt Tax, had in view the enabling of the brewer to use other materials than barley in the manufacture of beer. If the Prime Minister was right one or two things would be the result—if barley was used as before the abolition of the Malt Tax, the amount of barley used in the manufacture of beer would be largely increased; if, on the other hand, other materials than barley were used in the manufacture of beer, it was perfectly obvious that the price of barley must fall, irrespective of the foreign barley that might be imported. The brewer, therefore, was now exposed to two sorts of competition, to neither of which he was exposed before—first, to the competition of foreign barley and foreign malt; and, secondly, to the competition of other substances than barley.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER said, he wished to take that opportunity of giving Notice that, on the second reading of the Budget Bill, he would endeavour to justify himself with respect to a charge which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devonshire (Sir Stafford Northcote) had brought against him, with reference to a statement he had made as to his administration of finance. The right hon. Gentleman had said his statements were of a misleading and inaccurate character. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that he had no intention of misrepresenting him. At the proper time and the proper occasion, he would ask the House to listen to his justification of the statements he had made. He heartily endorsed the expression of his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), with reference to the dissatisfaction of large constituencies in this country with regard to the National Expenditure. Members on the Liberal side of the House, he believed, were bound to say as honest men that they won their places by pledges to reduce that Expenditure. They were bound to support the most economical Chancellor of the Exchequer this country ever had in reducing the present enormous Expenditure, which was both extravagant and unnecessary.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he had no intention of imputing to the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) any desire to misrepresent him. He simply said, or rather wrote, that certain statements which the hon. Member made were, as he considered, inaccurate or misleading.

Mr. CAINE said, that if the hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) would study the statement of the Prime Minister with reference to the falling-off of the revenue derived from alcoholic liquors, he would find that the depression was caused by the great increase in society of those who, like himself, believed it was better to drink wholesome water than unwholesome beer.

Mr. Alderman W. LAWRENCE regretted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not found himself able to deal with the anomalies in the Probate Duty. Freehold property ought to be brought under the same taxation as leasehold property. They ought either to abolish the Probate Duty on leasehold property, or to impose Probate Duty on freehold as well as leasehold property.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he was sorry the Prime Minister was not present, because he wished to repeat a question he put last night, and on which he received no information. The right hon. Gentleman last night stated that the Government had sent to France a portion of the Revenues of Cyprus, which this country had impounded. He should like to know whether that arrangement took place after an understanding with Turkey or before? When we took Cyprus, we did not give Turkey to understand that we would impound a portion of the Revenue for ourselves or anybody else. It appeared to him that if we acted spontaneously as agents of France, and laid a distringas upon moneys due by Turkey to France, we established a principle of a very doubtful character.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, the reason why the hon. Gentleman's question of last night was not answered was simply because he went away without waiting for an answer. The answer was this—that the loan was jointly guaranteed by England and France; and Her Majesty's Government believed they would have been acting most dishonourably if they had not secured what was due to France as well as what was due to this country.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Was there an understanding with the Porte?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: There was no understanding with the Porte, and the Treasury simply acted in accordance with the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown, who said it was perfectly clear that they were within their rights in stopping those sums out of the guarantee fund.

Mr. J. G. HUBBARD said, as the guarantee was joint, our Government could not justly have received a single sixpence from the Porte without dividing it with France; but he thought such joint guarantees were greatly to be deprecated.

Mr. ECROYD said, he hoped an assurance would be given by the Government that opportunity would be afforded for the discussion of questions of deep importance connected with the Budget. He should like to discuss the possibility of reducing the duties on tea, coffee, cocoa, and dried fruits, which bore upon the labouring population very severely, and of imposing duties upon the articles of luxury from France and other foreign countries, with which our shops were filled. He concurred with the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Joseph Cowen) in his objection to the increased duty on carriages, inasmuch as it would operate as a distinct discouragement to coach-building, which was an important branch of English industry. It would have been infinitely better had the Chancellor of the Exchequer raised a considerable revenue from articles of pure luxury, instead of maintaining an exorbitant duty on tea. If only in the interest of temperance, they ought to encourage the consumption of an article which was acquiring a more and more important place in the domestic economy of our labouring classes.

Resolution *agreed to.*

Resolution 2.

Mr. PELL declared his inability to join in the expression of pleasure at the Chancellor of the Exchequer's proposal for rectifying the admitted injustice which arose from the abolition of toll-gates. The redress which the right hon. Gentleman had offered was not of an equitable nature. In fact, the right hon. Gentleman could hardly intend that his proposals should receive the sanction of Parliament. It occurred to him that the right hon. Gentleman would not be surprised if, on the second reading of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill, the proposals of the Government were rejected, and if the hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. E. W. Harcourt) were left where he was at the beginning of the Session. The roads were said to be worn down by the trading classes. It was the heavy and the rapid traffic, which really rendered the maintenance of the roads costly, that brought a heavy charge upon the ratepayers. But the trading classes were not to be taxed, except when they took their evening drives in a light carriage. Those who would be taxed were the innumerable people who, after a life of diligence and thrift, had been enabled in their old age to provide themselves with a light carriage and a horse in order that they might enjoy the pleasure of a drive from the town into the country. Of course, the upper classes would also be hit by the Chancellor of the Exchequer's proposal; but the middle classes, who did not use the roads in a way calculated to damage them, would, in a very large degree, have to provide the funds for the restoration of the wear and tear caused by the traders and the representatives of the large commercial houses. This did not appear to be an equitable way of dealing with the question, and he thought the Resolution ought to have pointed to a contribution of a more general nature from all classes of the community.

Mr. BIGGAR said, he really thought that the Prime Minister, when proposing the additional duty on carriages, was intending it as a practical joke. The right hon. Gentleman was simply repeating his former tactics with regard to the Malt Tax of shifting money from one pocket to another. The tax which the right hon. Gentleman proposed to raise upon carriages was one of an injurious nature, for the simple reason that the manufacturers of cars and carriages in this country gave purely local employment. He was disposed to support the view of the hon. Member who thought it would be more satisfactory if the right hon. Gentleman taxed some articles of luxury which were not manufactured in this country, and were imported. The effect of the tax on carriages would be, he feared, to lessen the number of those vehicles used by the classes who keep carriages, and thus to strike a blow at the coach-building trade, which had not been at all prosperous in recent years.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked when it was proposed to take the second reading of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, that the second reading of the Bill would be set down for Thursday, with a view to a day being fixed for its discussion.

Resolution *agreed to.*

Resolutions 3, 4, 5, and 6 *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. PLAYFAIR, Mr. CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, and Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 140.]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES) BILL.—[BILL 21.]

(*Mr. Attorney General, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Chamberlain, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Solicitor General.*)

SECOND READING. ADJOURNED DEBATE.

[SECOND NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [24th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

And which Amendment was,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "considering no corruption has been proved to exist in the larger town constituencies, or in any county constituency, it is inexpedient to adopt such uniform restrictions and punishments as will render the fair conduct of an election in a great constituency perilous and penal,"—(*Mr. Robert Fowler,*)

—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he did not wish to introduce a discordant note into the general chorus of approval with which the measure had been met; but he could not forget how very many Bills had been introduced in the course of the last 50 years for improving the methods by which Members were returned; and yet it was questionable whether the House now compared favourably with the House of 50 years ago; tested by results, it might be questioned whether they had gained or lost, whether the Assembly was more competent to do Business, and whether it was more disposed to do it in a patriotic spirit. They must all sympathize with the desire of making elections cheaper, with the object of placing Parliamentary honours within the reach of classes who now could not hope to compete for them, for it was a melancholy reflection how many persons there were in the country anxious to spend their time for the benefit of the public, and able to distinguish themselves in that House, who were prevented from doing so solely by the want of means. The reason why so much money was spent on elections was that so many persons desired to be elected, and rich men desired and were ready to pay for the privilege of a seat in the House. Although the occupation was neither pleasurable nor easy, the position was so keenly sought after that men were prepared to give thousands for it. However deplorable this might be when we considered who were excluded, it showed that there was some healthy political feeling in the country, and that we had not descended to the level of some countries, where a man could not be a politician without some sacrifice of respect. They must all sympathize with the further object of the Bill, which was to make elections pure; he confessed, however, he looked at it with much less enthusiasm than he did at the first object, not because it was less important, but because he thought it was far less capable of attainment. Corruption by hard cash was not the corruption which, at this moment, we had most to fear from. There were other forms of corrupting constituencies besides giving electors money, or treating them in public-houses. And these methods were likely to increase rather than diminish with every successive extension of the suffrage and increase of the constituencies. Old forms of corruption would fall into disuse without stringent measures to put them down. The bribery, not of individuals, but of classes, was likely to increase rather than diminish. The bribes he spoke of could be clothed in the most eloquent language, put in the form and outward semblance of the loftiest morality, and those who used them would very likely be rewarded by the highest honours of the State. Such appeals to the ignorant classes in the constituencies were becoming more frequent, and they were responded to as salmon were drawn by flies. The bribery to be dealt with by the Bill touched a small fraction of the class which the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster called the "residuum" when he differed from them and the "people" when he agreed with them. It was a very small fraction of that class who were corrupt in the manner contemplated; but the corruption of which he spoke reached every class. It must be admitted that organizations like the Caucus produced the same benumbing and deadening effect that bribery did. The evil of money bribery was that it taught the elector to regard his vote, not as a trust which he used for the highest political purposes, but as a something to be sold; and the organizations of which he spoke had a not less deadening effect upon the individuals who composed them, upon the electoral body, and upon Members of Parliament. If organizations of that kind were to become common over the country, the result would be that, in spite of all they might do against bribery, they would find they were not a higher Legislative Assembly, but a lower one. Passing from these vaticinations to the Bill, he would ask the Attorney General to consider whether the penal provisions were not much too severe? There was no use in showing zeal against corruption by heaping up one penalty upon another. Judges might be trusted to administer the law, although a Judge might have reached his position through a seat in that House attained by corrupt practices; but we could not expect juries to do the same. It was of no use making our laws in advance of the morality of the country; and if we made penalties too severe, juries would insist upon returning verdicts of "Not guilty." The only result of the undue severity of the Bill would be, not to promote purity, but to shelter corruption. His hon. and learned Friend would, he had no doubt, consider from this point of view the suggestions that would be made in Committee. In making these observations, his object had been, not to chill the ardour of the Government in the cause of purity, but to remind the House how small a proportion of the present corrupt practices took the form of actual money bribery, and to point out that Parliament seldom showed to advantage when it congratulated itself on its virtues.

Mr. Serjeant SIMON said, he thought they must all recognize the courageous endeavour made by the Bill to suppress a great and crying evil—an evil from which every Member of the House had more or less suffered, from which every candidate had suffered, and which was a scandal to the country. When an appeal was made to the people for their decision on the course of policy which was desirable for the country, they expected an honest and faithful answer; but if that answer were procured by corrupt practices, the appeal had been in vain, and the answer was not a true and faithful one. The attempt of his hon. and learned Friend to put an end to such a scandal they must hail with satisfaction. At the same time, while he recognized great merits in the Bill he thought it susceptible of considerable improvement. He agreed with the principle of a fixed maximum amount of expenditure, and he held that this provision constituted one of the best and most important parts of the Bill; but the maximum, he thought, should be more elastic, and that it should be fixed with reference to the will, character, and circumstances of constituencies. Like the hon. Member opposite, he was anxious for the return to the House of men of moderate means. The endeavour to make the House one not for rich men only was a proper endeavour, and which, if it succeeded, would add to the dignity of the House and be a benefit to the country. There were men of great ability and high character, but who could not face the extravagant expense of elections as now conducted; whereas men who had passed their lives in amassing wealth, and had not given, perhaps, a continuous half-hour's consideration to a single question of public concern, could, by lavish expenditure, find an entrance into the House. It was time to put an end to such a state of things, and encourage men of ability and character, but of moderate means, to enter public life and devote themselves to the service of the country. The same remark also applied to the working-men candidates. It was conceded on both sides of the House that it would be desirable to have labour represented in that House to a greater extent than it was now represented. He hoped to see the time when, instead of one or two, there would be, at least, a dozen working men sitting on those Benches. Some years ago, to the honour of the Party opposite, the property qualification was abolished; but it still existed, for all practical purposes, in the form of fees to the Returning Officers. Some parts of the Bill were not altogether satisfactory, and required explanation. The 4th clause, for example, would operate very severely in making a candidate liable for all the acts of his agent. Nothing, of course, could be more criminal than the conduct of the corrupt candidate; but it was not just that a candidate should be punished for all that his agents might do. The doctrine of agency was not the same in election matters as in Common Law, as, in the former case, the employer was held liable for acts done by his agent, not only without orders, but even in direct contravention of his orders. He put it to the House to say whether it was fair to punish a candidate for illegalities committed in such a manner, in the way and to the extent proposed by the Bill? He thought that there should be some limit fixed to the time during which an election might be said to continue. At present it was not easy to say when an election began. Candidates were often announced years beforehand; and perhaps the penal clauses of the Bill might treat as a corrupt practice a dinner given to his neighbours by a candidate who was announced years before to come forward at the next vacancy. As for the proposal to revert to the practice of trying Election Petitions by one Judge, he was entirely opposed to it. In 1874 he moved for a Select Committee on the subject, and the Committee came to the almost unanimous conclusion that Petitions should be tried by more than one Judge; and the law was altered accordingly. He, therefore, could not support the proposal to return to the trial by one Judge. Either two Judges must try election cases, or there should be an appeal from the decision of a single Judge, which would considerably increase expense. He regarded the Bill, on the whole, as an honest endeavour to remedy a great evil; but its details would require careful examination. He hoped, therefore, the Attorney General would have regard to the views of Members expressed in this discussion and in Committee; and the result, he believed, would be an efficient measure.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, that some hon. Members appeared to think that it would be advisable not to pass observations on the details of the measure before the stage of Committee. He, however, was of opinion that such a course must, in the end, be productive of considerable delay; and, therefore, he should not take the advice of those who counselled reticence at the present time. The first point to which he wished to draw attention was that that portion of the Bill which dealt with "illegal practices" would apply to every constituency in the Kingdom. Any candidate for the representation of a constituency who should be guilty of such practices would be disqualified for life from representing that constituency. Now, that would be a tremendous punishment. When seeking in the Bill for a definition of the offences which were to entail so severe a penalty, some friends and himself had at first thought that they must be the victims of an optical delusion. Their difficulty was explained by the fact that the Schedules purporting to explain the nature of these illegal practices were inverted. As it had been proved that corruption existed to a certain extent in the smaller constituencies, but that there was none in the large ones, it would be supposed that in the case of the smaller constituencies the expenditure would be limited, and that a higher scale of expenditure would be tolerated in the large constituencies. But, according to the Schedules, the smaller the constituency the larger might be the expenditure per head, and the larger the constituency the smaller the expenditure per head. The Attorney General, for example, in the borough of Taunton, might spend about 7*s.* per head in an election contest; but if in contesting Middlesex, which was a much larger constituency, he (Lord George Hamilton) were to spend 2*s.* per head, he would be prevented for life from representing that county. Surely, so ridiculous a disproportion could not be justified. The Attorney General had pointed out that certain candidates had reduced their expenses at the last Election below the amount permitted by the Bill, and had cited the case of the Members for Birmingham. Their expenses amounted to a little less than £6,000, and that sum would have been admissible according to the provisions of this Bill had it been law, because three candidates stood together; but a proportionate expenditure would not have been allowed to one candidate standing by himself, whom an expenditure of £2,200 would have disqualified for life. What he objected to was that severe and inequitable restrictions were placed upon large constituencies because a certain number of small constituencies had been proved to be corrupt. The Bill practically put all the constituencies of England in swaddling clothes because a certain number of small boroughs had shown themselves unable to walk uprightly without assistance. Now, the smaller constituencies were the remains of the old system of representation, and it was tolerably certain that the next Reform Bill would efface them. The Government, therefore, were now legislating for a moribund system; and, in order to protect constituencies which sooner or later must cease to exist, were imposing such restrictions upon candidates in large constituencies as would make the fair conduct of elections almost impossible. He held that the Schedules could not be allowed to stand. Something must be substituted for them which would work fairly. He suggested that a distinction should be drawn between counties and boroughs. Had hon. Gentlemen who were likely to stand for large constituencies realized what would be their position under this Bill? They would not be able to communicate with their constituents by post, because that course would be too expensive. The only way in which the candidate could make his views known was by public meetings. But then he was not allowed to advertise the public meeting. [The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) dissented.] At any rate, one of the clauses was capable of that contention. Anyone contesting a county constituency would find himself in a position of great embarrassment. Another difficulty which would confront him under the Bill would be that he could not employ a sufficient number of clerks for carrying on the necessary business. He would suggest that a section ought to be taken out of the Ballot Act Continuance Amendment Bill. He would further suggest that, in regard to these Schedules as to expenditure, the Attorney General should reverse his system. He should calculate for the largest constituencies first and estimate what expenses were necessary. He then could reduce the scale of expenditure in proportion to the size of the constituencies, and in that way he would arrive at a uniform system.. It was quite clear that it was not necessary to have so large an expenditure for a small borough as for a large constituency. Or, if the Attorney General objected to that, let him estimate what sum might fairly be spent per head of the electorate, and then say that, in no circumstances, was the expenditure to exceed so many shillings per head. In that way candidates would know what to do, and a far better check than the one proposed would be placed on the evil complained of. Then, as regarded the employment of individuals, he did not believe that large constituencies were affected—though in small constituencies it was different—by the number of persons employed by the candidates. It might be necessary to employ 50 clerks for a day to get through necessary clerical work, and they would not be employed again. But, under this Bill, the most absurd restriction was imposed; and he did not see how, under it, it would be possible to get through the legitimate business of the central committee. Therefore, he thought it would be well to strike out the first Schedule, so far as large constituencies were concerned. If they put all these tremendous penalties on Parliamentary candidates to stop bribery and corruption, the ingenuity of man would, in some way or other, carry out those practices without rendering the guilty parties responsible, and a ready method was at once suggested in the municipal elections. Now, he did not suppose that, in the small boroughs in which corruption prevailed, they would do any good unless they applied the corrupt practices penalties to municipal as well as Parliamentary elections. Moreover, there was another danger which was perfectly certain to occur under this Bill if candidates were to be subject to great penalties. In a very short time, he believed, almost every political association would enter into an arrangement to the effect that those employed would have their salaries raised in ordinary years if they gave their services gratuitously whenever an election occurred. Some such system as that would be adopted, and he failed to see how that Bill would check it. He might illustrate this by referring to what was called the Home Counties Liberal Union. The operations of this Society extended to a good many constituencies; and if an election occurred in any one of these constituencies within the area covered, it would always be possible for this Association or any other to turn on to help the candidate the whole of the officers employed by the Association. If they incurred a penalty it could not be a severe one, and, of course, the penalty would be paid by the Association. If the

Schedules remained as they were when they came into Committee, they would not make as satisfactory and rapid progress as they otherwise might do.

Mr. H. SAMUELSON said, it was a matter for congratulation that at last the House found itself engaged in practical legislation. He congratulated his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General on the favourable reception, upon the whole, which his Bill had met with on both sides of the House, and thanked him for his promise to consider suggestions, from whatever quarter of the House they might proceed. The Bill was said to be too stringent; but the disease of corruption was undoubtedly spread very widely, and virulent diseases required drastic remedies. They had been told that this Bill was an attempt to legislate in advance of public opinion. It was certainly not in advance of the opinion of persons who had considered the subject, and he did not believe the Bill was much in advance of public opinion generally. The constituencies were deeply interested in the matters dealt with by the Bill; and there existed a healthy state of opinion, which only required the stimulus of sincere and vigorous action on the part of the Government, showing a real recognition of the magnitude of the evil and a positive determination to eradicate it, to come prominently to the surface. Such a stimulus was afforded by that Bill. He would advert to one or two evils which the Bill did not touch; and if no other Member proposed any Amendment with reference to them, he himself would do so. Nothing was more foreign to the spirit, though not to the practice, of our elections than intimidation. The Ballot, to a great extent, diminished the evil of intimidation; at any rate, so far as employers and customers were concerned. But there were certain other forms of intimidation against which there was no provision in the Bill. There was the requisition dodge. Requisitions in favour of candidates were sent out by the friends of the candidates to electors, who were requested to return the requisitions with their signatures to a candidate's committee or some influential person. The person to whom the requisitions were to be returned could do great injury, if they would, to electors who refused to sign the requisitions; therefore, weak and timid voters were thus intimidated into signing a promise which they often had every intention of breaking. There was also the custom of sending to every voter a polling card, to be personally returned to the committee room after the poll. A man might as well vote openly as take his voting card to the committee room. These practices ought to be declared to be illegal. There was the custom of inserting in newspapers a long list of voters as members of a candidate's committee. Every person who was named in such a list as a supporter of a candidate ought to be regarded, for the purposes of the Corrupt Practices Act, as an agent of that candidate, who ought, to a certain extent, to be made responsible for the acts of that agent.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND said, that, having lately contested two constituencies, and having had the misfortune of fighting two Election Petitions and one scrutiny, he thought he had some experience of the question now before the House. That experience was all the greater because the constituency which he last fought, and which he now represented, was described by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) as the rottenest of rotten boroughs. He thought it was a great mistake for any hon. Gentleman so to stigmatize a constituency of which he had no knowledge, and where he was perfectly unknown. It was a charge very easy to make, and very difficult to refute, as very few boroughs had the good fortune to be able to prove, by the decision of Her Majesty's Judges, as Evesham had done, that such a statement was not only unfounded, but unjust. In his own case, after a trial which lasted from the 2nd to the 17th of the month inclusive, the Judges not only unseated his opponent and gave him the seat, but also awarded him all the costs, yet the law was such that taxing-masters were able to put the Judges' decision at defiance and mulct him in several thousand pounds. He was told that that was always the case; but if that was a question of such national importance that two of Her Majesty's Judges were kept for over a fortnight in a country town, should the cost be so heavy in case of success, and nearly ruinous in case of failure? Was not the knowledge that such must be the result sufficient to deter men from presenting Petitions? He thought a measure ought to be passed to put a stop to the evils disclosed by the recent Commissions; but the present Bill was, in his judgment, at the same time too weak and too strong —too weak because it held out no inducement to keep a party straight, too strong because it was nothing more or less than a Coercion Bill against candidates, and, if it passed, it would put an end to any Member being able to do good in his own borough at any time when he was sitting for it. And though he would be one of the last to encourage bribery under the name of charity, yet he thought that true charity was one of the greatest privileges of Members, and to take away from Members the power of doing good would be a great misfortune. He hoped a clause would be introduced to make the system of Petitions very much cheaper, for it was useless to give a luxury which was too dear to be enjoyed. He also thought it desirable that the present provision of the law relating to a scrutiny should be abolished.

Mr. STANTON said, he represented a constituency (Stroud), which, in 13 months, had had five contested elections and four Petitions; and the House would believe that he spoke feelingly on the subject, considering the very dreadful experiences he had had. He believed there was a general feeling in favour of the second reading of the Bill; but, before it passed, he should like to see some provision introduced with regard to out-voters, who were frequently labouring men. Now that the expense of elections was to be curtailed, that class, being unable to bear the cost of a journey to the polling-booth themselves, would, unless some system were devised, be practically disfranchised. He would therefore suggest that the out-voters should have the power to apply to the Returning Officer for a voting paper, to be signed in the presence of a magistrate, and to be returned to the Returning Officer through the Post Office. It might be said that that was interfering with the secrecy of voting; but he would trust to the magistrates not to exercise undue influence nor to divulge their knowledge. The events at Stroud, he might observe, occurred because, at the trial of Petitions, the parties who petitioned were wise enough not to claim the seat. Consequently, the acts of the Petitioners could not be inquired into. Might not the state of things he had described be dealt with in this measure? If the tribunal, whatever it might be, were allowed to inquire into the conduct of both sides, they would get rid of the abuse of Petitions, for Petitioners ought to come before the Court with clean hands, which was hardly ever the case at present.

Mr. SCHREIBER: I could not help thinking, Sir, last night, that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General took a somewhat disparaging view of his own Bill, when he wished that it should be read a second time after three hours' discussion in a languid House. Now, in my view, no Bills are so important as those which deal with the franchises of the people and the return of Members to this House; and if, in the course of the present Session, we succeed in passing a measure founded on this Bill, and an analogous measure for the municipal elections, we shall do much, I think, to redeem the Session from the barrenness which otherwise seems likely to distinguish it. Now, Sir, no doubt this is an example of what Lord Palmerston once called a "spanking Bill." But, in my opinion, the occasion demands a "spanking Bill;" either that, or that the electors who are so minded should be free to dispose of their votes without those risks to the buyer and seller which are sometimes thought such an excellent joke, and sometimes are no joke at all—witness, the election agents who have been sent to prison, and the two Cabinet Ministers who have been sent—in search of other seats. One thing there is which cannot be tolerated—I mean that the law should remain as it is. Either it must be made more stringent, or it must be entirely repealed. Now, Sir, although I have listened most attentively to all that has been said in the course of this debate, I have not heard a single word about the causes of the flagrant corruption which marked the late General Election; and I do not know how we are to cure a malady, unless we are first clear as to its cause. Of the two causes which seem to me to be at work in the constituencies, the first connects itself so closely with the "struggle for existence," that I hardly like to speak of it as corruption. The poorest class of voters in our towns are so poor, that with them the great question of the day is always how they shall get through to-morrow. Those men, Sir, see two gentlemen, whose wealth is always grossly exaggerated by report, contending for the prize as if their lives depended on the result, and seeing also large sums of money spent on printing, agents, and committee rooms, they, too, put in their claim for a modest share of "what is going" with a force which the local agent finds himself unable to resist; and so, by colourable employment or otherwise, the candidate's return is vitiated. Now, there is only one way in which this pressure can be done away with. We must forbid by law the expenditure which causes it; and that I take to be the real defence of what the hon. and learned Attorney General calls his "Maximum Schedule," and on which, with the permission of the House, I shall wish to say a few words presently. The second cause of corruption I find in the annual recurrence of the municipal elections. Now, Sir, in speaking of that subject, I wish it to be distinctly understood that I know nothing but what is good of my own constituents, and that in anything I may say I refer to what I have read in Blue Books or in newspapers about the constituencies of other hon. Members. Well, what is happening now was distinctly foretold by me in 1868. Here is what I said—

> "But, when all this had been done, he (Mr. Schreiber) would not have the House deceive itself—it would have done nothing until it had grappled with the evils of bribery at municipal elections. The Bill of last Session established an identity of Parliamentary and municipal franchise; and he said that while corruption was constant, annual, flagrant at the municipal elections, it was a mockery and a farce to send down Parliamentary candidates and tell them to hold pure elections;"—[3 *Hansard*, cxcii. 669.]

and, further on—

> "Whether there would or would not be bribery depended on whether there was or was not a balance of party which made it worth while to contest the municipal elections. So surely as these were contested corruption would come in; and with a reduction of the franchise they would only extend the area of corruption."—[*Ibid.* 670.]

Encouraged, Sir, by the success which has attended on that prophecy, I now venture to make another, and it is this—that if "Financial Boards" are established in the counties, with a rating franchise, and with annual elections of their members, your county elections will also become corrupt. The fact is, Sir, that the working man is, as a rule, supremely indifferent whether the local grocer or the local ironmonger sits in the local Parliament; but to the local wire-puller the municipal elections are of supreme importance—first, as tests of the strength of Parties; and next, on account of the patronage which the local majority enjoys. In this way, certain currupt conventions are set up in the municipal elections, which, when the Parliamentary election comes round, make themselves felt with fatal force; and we may spare all our labour on this Bill unless we are determined to deal with the same seyerity and, at the same time, with the question of the municipal elections. I now wish, Sir, to make a few remarks on one or two clauses of the Bill. The penalty imposed by Clause 4 would be excellent, if the present rate of expenditure is to be maintained. It is a matter within my own experience that a candidate may come down to a constituency; by a profuse expenditure may procure his return; may be unseated on Petition; may then transfer to a friend the interest which his corrupt expenditure has created; and may then, at the end of five or six years, return to the place himself, and make it a subject of the loudest complaint that he was ever unseated on Petition. For such a proceeding the penalties of Clause 4 furnish an effectual remedy; but, under the new scale of expenditure, I must say I do not see how they can be necessary; for the Schedule will go so near to starving an election that it will be quite impossible for a candidate in the future to make himself "agreeable" to a constituency by his expenditure. Passing to the question of "illegal," as distinguished from "corrupt" practices, I am not able to agree with the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), for I think it simply monstrous to make laws only to break them. Either let us not make the sin by making the law, or, if we make the law, let us enforce it; either let us abolish the offence of "illegal" practices altogether, or let us visit the breach of the law with the heaviest penalties. I come next, Sir, to the "Maximum Schedule," and taking Poole as a model constituency, with some 2,000 electors, I find I should be permitted to spend £100 in printing and in placarding the walls of the borough. Well, Sir, I really could not undertake adequately to set forth the shortcomings of the present Government for the sum of £100; and I should greatly prefer some latitude in that respect, thinking that I might with advantage spend a larger sum. I therefore do hope, Sir, that the hon. and learned Gentleman will be willing to stretch what he calls his "Maximum Schedule." I ought, perhaps, to mention here that, in 1880, I found it necessary to spend as much as £450 on printing, my placards being torn down by an organized band of 20 men as fast as they were put up. Then, with regard to agency, I see that I shall be allowed the sum of £270 for all the other expenses of the election. How am I to secure out of that sum the services of a competent agent? I can only say, Sir, that I owe my election and my present opportunity of inflicting this speech upon the House to the fact that I was willing to pay for the services of the best agent that money could procure. And, speaking generally, it is my understanding that if I want a good thing I must expect to pay for it; and if I want the opinion of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General I should expect to have to pay for it. I have no wish, Sir, to see this House composed of poor men, for there is nothing of which I am more profoundly convinced than of this—that the liberties of this House and of the people have been won by men of independent fortune. Every Member of the House ought, I think, Sir, to satisfy these three conditions. First, it ought to be a matter of supreme indifference to him on which side of your Chair he and his Party sit; next, he ought to be able to snap his fingers at any Minister who threatens him with a Dissolution; and, lastly, his circumstances should be such as to place his motives beyond the reach of suspicion. It is, I believe, Sir, because its Members have, in the main, long satisfied these three conditions that this House has been able to establish its hold on the respect and the affections of the English people. I have to thank the House, Sir, for the indulgence with which it has listened to these observations; and I have now only to regret the absence of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whose long connection and intimate acquaintance with the politics of the City of Oxford give him a varied and a valuable experience which ought to have been placed at the disposal of the House; and along with that of the right hon. and learned Gentleman I have also to regret the absence of another Member of the Government, whose presence on this occasion was almost equally desirable—I mean, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Scarborough (Mr. Dodson).

Mr. O'DONNELL agreed in general terms with the observations of the hon. Member who had just sat down as to the necessity of the House being composed of independent Members who would be able to snap their fingers at any Ministry which threatened them with a Dissolution. But the mere extent of a rent-roll would not bring about that happy consummation. He did not agree with the hon. Member that men of wealth had been exclusively the leading defenders of the liberties of this country. An Irishman (Edmund Burke) rose on many occasions in the House on behalf of liberty; and he was not aware that Mr. Burke was a man of independent fortune, though, indeed, from his wealth of brains he could have endowed the Members of several average Ministries. William Pitt (afterwards Lord Chatham) was for many a day anything but a man of independent fortune. This whole question of independence was a question of relative terms and relative work. The man who barely earned his weekly income might be a man of independence, while the man who counted his annual rent-roll by tens of thousands might be the most abject slave that ever crawled in the wake of a Ministerial Whip. This Bill might be accurately described as a Bill for the prevention of lucrative rewards for services rendered at Parliamentary elections. He was not sure that the House would succeed in convincing the electors at large of the reality of the abhorrence in which it held the system of lucrative rewards for political services until the House first commenced to abolish lucrative rewards for political services in its midst. The Bill was aimed at bribery. Was it anything short of bribery for the Government to invite the votes of Lancashire cotton spinners by proposing the abolition of the Cotton Duty? Was the granting of titles as a reward for political subservience far short of bribery? He thought it would be well that Governments should have clean hands before they ascended the pedestal of virtue to lecture half-starving electors with a view to prevent them accepting bribes. A very large dose of corruption seemed to be the necessary basis of Party Government. The hon. Member who last addressed the House considered £100 a small sum to expend in proclaiming throughout his constituency the shortcomings of the Liberal Government; but the printing bill which he (Mr. O'Donnell) had to pay for the little borough of Dungarvan—and he believed the sentiments he expressed were sufficiently vigorous—did not reach £25; and he thought that, with a judicious selection of sentences, and a careful attention to the most telling phrases of opprobium, the hon. Member with his £100 would get exceedingly good value for his money. As for the Bill itself, it was very good as far as it affected the grosser forms of bribery; but they, he feared, were going out of fashion to make way for finer methods of corruption, which were growing up under the influence of civilization and culture. Under a changed order of things, the Bill would open the door to abuses of the most dangerous kind. He should be delighted to see a diminution in those scandalous bills of costs which disgraced many constituencies; but even after the legal expenses had been reduced to the maximum scale contained in the Bill, he was afraid there would still be the possibility of an enormous amount of corruption. The Bill would not prevent that most dangerous form of corruption — the "nursing" of constituencies, which might be done in various ways. It was carried on by candidates who were wealthy, and by others who were supposed to be wealthy. He knew a candidate who before an election filled the voters of an Irish borough with vain hopes of the speedy erection of a great mill in their midst. He knew another candidate who actually paraded through a town, some short time before his election, a procession of machines, conveying the idea that he was about to make that town the centre of a manufacturing industry. He knew another candidate who ostentatiously sent a staff of surveyors from London to survey the coast in the neighbourhood of a maritime borough, and thus created the impression that he was about to embark in the most lavish expenditure upon piers and harbours. These were illustrations of what "nursing" constituencies meant. A more dangerous form of corruption than that arose through the action of permanent organizations—he cared not whether Liberal or Tory—which manifested their activity with regard to every kind of election, and introduced corruption into every branch of the Representative system. There was nothing in the Bill to deal with such proceedings, and, indeed, he doubted if systematic corruption of that description could be stopped. He believed, however, that the Bill would stop the grosser form of corruption. That, perhaps, was all that the House had a right to expect. But, so far as the attempt to try Election Petitions by a single Judge was concerned, however objectionable in England that might be, it was absolutely intolerable in Ireland. They could not trust themselves to the intense partizans who continually found their way to the Judicial Bench in Ireland. They might have partizans in England, but in Ireland they habitually got partizans. He knew, in his own case, that the question whether he should be unseated or not depended upon who the Election Judge should be. He hoped, if the Government insisted on a single Judge for England, they would consent to allow at least two Judges for Ireland. He should support the second reading of the Bill, although he believed that it would not make any great impression upon the political morals of the country.

Mr. W. H. JAMES said, that the expenditure of Conservative candidates, as returned to the House, was invariably greater than the expenditure of Liberal Members. He did not, however, wish to press that point. There was nothing more difficult to define than bribery. There could be no doubt that it was part of the social system, not merely in the matter of election, but in the ordinary affairs of life. It existed there to a deplorable extent. Sir Edmund Beckett, writing to *The Times* on this subject, pointed out the great extent of the evil. This was at the root of the electoral corruption which they now condemned. When a candidate came before the electors, many persons in humble position were, unhappily, trained in the belief that the vote they were asked for was hardly worth the having unless they could get something for it. He would give one illustration of this. In the course of a canvas in the county of Kent, a candidate applied to a butcher for his vote. The butcher replied—"Yes, Sir, I shall be very happy to vote for you if now and then you will give me a vote for a leg of mutton." This was the general view taken in a certain class—there should be a *quid pro quo*. When this Bill came into Committee, he should endeavour to make certain Amendments upon it with regard to the furnishing of all details of expenditure to some public officer. He believed that if such a principle were carried out a great discouragement would be given to corrupt practices.

Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE said, he was prepared to give his general support to the second reading of the Bill, and he was also opposed to the Amendment then before the House. He believed that the evil with which the Bill proposed to cope was not a stationary evil, but one which was growing in our very midst, and was one which required harsh measures to grapple with it. He thought the hon. and learned Gentleman might be congratulated on the favourable acceptance with which the Bill had been received at the hands of the House; and he was of opinion that he had done right in assenting to the further debate on the second reading of the Bill. His (Sir William Hart Dyke's) experience with reference to such matters was, that if a Bill was hurried through the second reading, it generally recoiled upon the promoter, who had much greater difficulty in dealing with it at the Committee stage, in consequence of his ignorance of the general feeling of the House. With reference to the remarks of an hon. Member opposite, he was strongly of opinion that if, instead of discussing the merits or the demerits of the Bill, they proceeded to throw stones at each other across the floor of the House, they would be only wasting the time of the House, and cause a sudden and abnormal rise in the price of plate glass. He wished to add his experience to the assistance of the Attorney General, with the object of making the Bill a good one; and with regard to any other matters he was utterly hard-hearted and reckless. Although the Bill was a most excellent endeavour to stop bribery, he was somewhat alarmed that it was so harsh in some of its provisions. However good their intention might be, the Bill would frustrate it by the harshness of the proposed remedy. He thought they ought to be careful, in order that they might not, by passing the Bill with such severe penalities, cause a swinging back of the pendulum and a re-action against it which might lead to a very serious modification in the future. They had been told that it was a very great hardship that many excellent men should be debarred, by the existing system, from taking part in the proceedings and debates of the House; but it seemed to him that if some of the provisions were not seriously altered, the Bill would have the effect also of preventing a large number of candidates, whose presence would be of great advantage to the House, from ever taking part in an election. He alluded to Clause 4 more particularly, in which it was laid down that if any unfortunate candidate, through his agent, was guilty of any illegal practices, he could not again become a candidate for the constituency. He thought that the clause was a very harsh one as it stood. In the first place, it was obvious that they could not restrict the time occupied in an election, which might last a week or 10 days, or, it was possible, might go on for many weeks, or even months, directly or indirectly. Under the clause, as it then stood, he could not conceive it possible that any two candidates, running a hard race for an election, could carry on the contest for many weeks without being almost distracted by the danger they would run under that harsh clause. Then, with regard to the appointment of only one agent for each constituency, the agent, under the Bill, was made a very important man indeed, and was, practically, the arbiter of the destiny of the candidate during the election. He thought that the severe provisions of the Bill would put a candidate for a large and straggling county in the utmost danger if he were only allowed to have one agent. In such a constituency, with a contest lasting three weeks, it would be utterly impossible for any one agent to prevent, "here and there," some illegal act, which might upset an election. There was not a single county constituency which he would dare fight to-morrow, with anything like security, with only one agent, as the return might be made invalid, with all the pains and penalties attaching to it. He had a great objection to the clause dealing with the maximum of expenditure, because there was too wide a margin. The maximum was not truly fixed, because if it were a correct scale for the expenditure of an election which might last a fortnight, he would say that it was not a true and correct scale for an election which lasted two months. It was certainly wrong in one case or the other. He could see a good and solid reason why there should be a maximum; but, at the same time, he did not see how any election could be conducted in a very large county constituency for a considerable time under the maximum scale. He did not think it would be fair to press the Attorney General to abandon the principle of a certain maximum; but perhaps the hon. and learned Gentleman would consider whether it would be possible to make some alteration in his maximum scale, more especially as they could not restrict the time of commencement or the duration of a contest. In Section 4, Clause 32, of the Bill, it was provided that where a person was prosecuted before an Election Court for any corrupt or illegal practice, the Court should immediately proceed to adjudicate. Supposing that some corrupt machinery outside the scope of the Bill should be introduced by irresponsible persons totally unknown to the candidate, he wanted to know why the section should not be applied to a tribunal sitting in a borough for the summary decision of any charges which might arise? His suggestion was that they should have two Justices sitting in a borough during an election, who could at once decide upon any case which should be brought before them. He thought by those means that they would deal a more deadly blow to corrupt practices than could be found in a great many clauses of the Bill before the House. It was necessary to deal with a difficulty when it arose, and he would venture to say that were such a system as that applied it would be found best calculated to afford immediate relief to any candidate placed in a difficult position. He trusted the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite would carefully consider the many suggestions and amendments which had been proposed with regard to the Bill; and he could assure him that all on the Opposition side of the House would cordially co-operate with him in putting an end to a great evil which they had all talked about for many years, and all had regretted, but he believed had never seriously made up their minds, one and all, to obliterate from their electoral system.

MR. LEWIS said, he found himself in great difference with his Friends on the Opposition side of the House with regard to this Bill. He was unable to support the second reading on any ground. It was obvious to the House that it would not be right for him to withhold the expression of his opinion on the subject. He objected to the Bill strongly, because he considered that all the chief alterations which it made were alterations which were highly inexpedient, if not absolutely unjust. It appeared to him that the Bill was remarkable for the alterations it would make upon three leading points, one of them involving several other points of no little importance. In the first place, the character of treating for which the candidate was made responsible, was entirely altered by the Bill. In the second place, a totally new class of offences, with penal consequences, was created by the Bill. And, thirdly, they were asked to give the go-by to the benefit of legislation as to the strength of the Election tribunal, which was based upon the Report of the Select Committee of the House, to which he would refer presently. With reference to the constitution of tribunals to try Election Petitions, he had the strongest possible objection to the clause embodying that alteration. He looked upon it as a most reckless and vital invasion upon the safety of Members' candidates, that their liberties, their character, their political history, their hopes for the future, and all the objects which political men held most dear, should be placed in the power of one Judge, without appeal, under circumstances which did not preclude the possibility even of bias. From their past experience, he was entitled to say there were some sad cases as to which they had heard the remark that a political bias had existed. He had no hesitation in saying that there had been, in the decisions of one Judge especially, most painful evidence of political bias; and in saying, further, with reference to one decision, which was perfectly notorious throughout the Kingdom under the name of the "rabbit case," that it had excited grave dissatisfaction against the tribunal of a single Judge. Nothing would induce him to abstain from opposing this unjust Bill in every way which the Rules of the House would enable him to do so. The House, in a fit of self-denying generosity, thought it right to cease trying Election Petitions, and with a kind of idolatry for judicial personages which was, unfortunately, too rife in England, and for which there was no just foundation, said, "We will place the trial in the hands of one man." He was bound to say that in one or two cases in Ireland, in which Members not connected with the political Party to which he belonged were concerned, there were judgments by which one or two Members of the Home Rule Party were turned out, which he read almost with disgust. The House appointed a Committee in 1875, of which his hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General was a Member. The Committee, by a majority of 11 to 5, decided that no decision turning a Member out of his seat should be allowed without the concurrence of two Judges. In the majority, he remembered, was his hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General, and he was in a position to say there was no more determined supporter of that Resolution than the Solicitor General, whose name was on the back of this Bill. The Report of that Committee remained unnoticed for a considerable period. The late Government brought in more than one Bill in which they overlooked that recommendation of that Report; but the late Attorney General was so satisfied with its just requirements, that in the last Bill which they proposed before they left Office they decided to introduce trial by two Judges. In an Election Petition the Judge tried both the law and the facts. Had they any analogy in the whole of their judicial system to that? Yes, they had. All the members of the Judicial Bench in the Chancery Division were exactly in the same position; and what was the case with regard to appeal? Why, that there was an appeal in every case, which might ultimately reach the highest Court of Appeal in the House of Lords. From the decision of a single Judge in the Chancery Division there was an appeal even on interlocutory matters. But had the House the least idea how that appeal worked? Were the Judges always right? Those Judges were of great experience. Many of them had been in a leading position at the Bar, and others upon the Bench, for years. Did we find that even in the large majority of appealed cases their decisions were upheld? By no means. He had been able to obtain a Return for the year 1878 of the appeals from the decisions of the Chancery Judges. There were 253 appeals from the Master of the Rolls and the Vice Chancellors, and in no less than 106 cases their decisions were either reversed or materially altered. He believed that the fact of there being two Judges trying Election Petitions would frequently save a large amount of time. As regarded the new offence of illegal expenditure, the provisions of the Bill would probably be, he believed, evaded. If he were a single candidate for a double-barrelled constituency, he should only be allowed to spend some £500; but if he got three "bogus" candidates to stand with him during the whole time of the election, and if they gave him the advantage of their agents and expenses, he should be enabled to spend a considerable amount more than the Bill intended he should; while if a candidate contested a county with 30,000 electors, he would only be entitled to have one agent, and to pay him a wholly inadequate sum. The result must be that the candidate, unable to secure the services of a respectable man, would be obliged to employ some shady customer. At the last Election a certain gentleman stood for Middlesex alone, and his expenses amounted to £7,000. That candidate was the pure son of a pure father; he represented a pure interest, and it was impossible to suppose that he did any impure thing. Well, the benevolent author of this Bill would only allow him to spend £930. It was ridiculous to suggest that a Middlesex Election could be conducted, even in the most niggardly and miserly fashion, upon such an amount. How could the expenditure be controlled? At the Election for West Kent in 1865, it became known at half-past 3 on the day before the polling day that a forged circular had been sent to all the out-voters, stating that each Party had agreed to withdraw a candidate; and it at once became necessary to spend £200 in despatching messengers and telegrams throughout the county, in order to counteract the influence of this wicked and impudent forgery. Yet, under the Bill, payments made in such emergencies would be illegal payments, and would render a candidate liable to be for ever prevented from representing the constituency. If he might invent a title for the Bill, it would be—"A Bill for the purpose of frightening Persons from becoming Candidates for a seat in Parliament, and for imprisoning and disqualifying all those who do." If it were conceivable that it could be passed without modification, a pretty equal division on both sides of the House would find themselves in gaol. He intreated the House not to assent to the second reading, because it was impossible to mend a Bill like this when it got into Committee. ["Oh, oh!"] Well, they would ring the bell for a Division, and Gentlemen like the hon. Member for the North Riding of Yorkshire (Mr. Milbank), who so ejaculated, who was now reaping the advantage of sitting so long on that side of the House, would come trooping in to vote down every Amendment that was proposed. The whole legal and moral character of treating, he might remark, was changed by the omission of the word "corrupt." In conclusion, he asked the House not to agree to the second reading of a Bill which was a reckless, an inexpedient, and an unjust attack on the liberties of constituencies.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he did not rise for the purpose of taking any part in the discussion, but merely to ask his hon. Friend to withdraw his Amendment.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, he was quite willing to comply with the request of the right hon. Gentleman, but hoped to raise the question in Committee.

Mr. CALLAN said, that, not being amenable to the blandishments of the Treasury Bench or the Front Opposition Bench, he had no intention of yielding, even at this late hour, to the request of the right hon. Gentleman, made probably by arrangement. He had observed the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs taking notes throughout the discussion. He supposed the hon. Gentleman declined to speak now, lest it should be said the Government contributed to prevent a division. No such consideration weighed with him (Mr. Callan) and therefore he proposed to speak his opinion regarding the Bill. ["Divide!"] Last night, when he asked the Attorney-General to grant an adjournment of the House, he would not consent to do so. No doubt, he wished that there should not be a discussion which might disclose some unpleasant facts about the borough of Taunton and other Liberal constituencies. The Attorney General did not desire to fish in troubled waters, and to expose the corruption of the Liberal Party. He regretted it was not proposed that the Bill should operate retrospectively, because he thought, with Baron Dowse, that if they were to view with a judicial mind all the proceedings that occurred in reference to Members of that House, they would scarcely have a House of Commons at all. Why had the word "corruptly," found in previous Acts, been omitted from this Bill? It must have been left out designedly. He was not surprised that a right hon. Gentleman representing Taunton should designedly leave out the word "corruptly." No explanation of this had been offered, and in the short time that remained it was not possible for the Attorney General to give an explanation.

And it being ten minutes before Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *this day*.

The House suspended its Sitting at Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

MOTION.

LUNACY LAWS.—RESOLUTION.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON, in rising to call attention to the impropriety and danger of permitting private persons to make pecuniary profit by keeping in their custody lunatics of the wealthier classes; and to the unfairness of requiring the ratepayers to maintain lunatics of the middle and lower classes; and to move, "That all lunatics ought to be committed to the keeping of the State," said, the Lunacy Laws were in such an anomalous state that the very gravest abuses were possible under them —abuses which, if these laws did not actually encourage, they certainly permitted. The present system, if system it could be called, had grown up during 40 years without revision or re-consideration, as a whole, and was wrong in principle, in practice, and in detail. He feared he would succeed in creating but little interest on the subject among the occupants of the Front Benches on either side of the House, for the official mind upon this question was absolutely dead. The President of the Local Government Board and the Home Secretary, who might be called the heads of the lunatics—he meant in their official capacity—cared for none of these things ; and he had almost the same complaint to make of the lethargy of their Predecessors in Office. But he would warn the Government that the country was once roused to the fearful abuses that prevailed, and that the country might be roused again. The law divided lunatics into two classes, rich and poor—a mere arbitrary division without a true distinction. The rich lunatics were handed over to a body of private speculators, who made profit out of their detention. The poorer class—that was, the class below those who could pay £70 or £80 a-year to the owners of licensed houses—were placed in the category of paupers. He did not wish to speak harshly of persons, but only of the principle ; he should mention no names; but he could not help speaking strongly of a system that encouraged speculation and large expenditure in licensed houses, with a view to the profit of their owners. The money so invested must pay interest. The owners of these licensed houses were anxious to receive lunatics, and found it difficult to release them. It was not easy to make up one's mind to get rid of a patient who was paying £1,000 a-year. What a temptation was thus placed before poor human nature ! It was quite possible to retard the cure of a lunatic by the administration of drugs, and it was almost impossible to prove that any wrong had been done. He asked the Government to take away from the owners of these houses a great temptation. The law must necessarily permit, with regard to lunacy, the forcible arrest of individuals. Prompt measures were necessary without a long inquiry. Therefore, additional precaution was necessary to guard against undue detention. A Scotch Commissioner in Lunacy had said that the question of the detention of lunatics was generally determined by the convenience and comfort of others, not of the patient. That was a point he wished the House to realize. The discharge of a lunatic was a loss to the proprietors; and could they expect a man to clear out his own boarding-house ? Inspection was provided, it was true ; but the staff of Inspectors was small and overworked, and wholly inadequate to remedy the evils. Prevention was better than cure. Surely it was better to remove temptation. What he would propose in regard to the rich was that there should be a State proprietary of these licensed houses. That the State should gradually take over the establishments—it must be remembered they were more than self-supporting ; they yielded a large profit from the payments of the patients—and pay the Medical Superintendent, who would then have no interest in the detention of lunatics, a fixed and adequate salary. Let all vested interest be recognized, and let the change be gradual, the house remaining in the same privacy, and in the care of the same medical man, if he was efficient. The only difference would be that the temptation of self-interest would be removed from the proprietors, whose vested interest would be saved, and that the profit would be utilized for those lunatics who were not able to pay for their maintenance. He was not proposing a mere ideal remedy for a theoretical grievance—real grievances were there. The Commissioners themselves in their Report said—

> "There is an uneasy feeling, somewhat widely spread, that further safeguards are needed for the protection of persons alleged to be insane."

These were words founded on actual experience. He would give out of the last Lunacy Report two instances, one in which the Commissioners were compelled to require the resignation of the assistant medical man, so grievous was the dissatisfaction at his conduct. Another case he wished particularly to bring before the notice of the House. The Commissioners reported in respect of one licensed private lunatic asylum—

> "Very considerable discontent was discovered among the patients, and numerous charges of cruel practices were brought forward. The cruelty was proved; it consisted in putting blisters on the nape of the necks of unruly pa-

tients, which afforded opportunities, apparently freely used, of causing pain by roughly dressing the patients. It appears also that tartar emetic was freely used to bring the patients into a low and weak state. None of the applications of tarter emetic or blisters were recorded in the books."

He brought forward those two cases from last year's Report of the Commissioners to prove that all things were not so well conducted in private asylums as many supposed. He had no wish to make a sensational speech; he only wished the Government to deal with this matter before a passionate feeling arose in the country on the subject. If he showed some reason why the State should take over the superintendence of private licensed asylums, it would follow almost as a necessary consequence that it should deal in the same way with the poor who were taken care of in the pauper asylums. Under the present system, all lunatics who could not afford to pay £80 or £100 a-year were placed in pauper asylums. The arrangements with respect to those asylums were simply chaotic, for there were no less than six conflicting authorities; they were the Home Secretary, the President of the Local Government Board, the Courts of Quarter Sessions, the Boards of Guardians, the Visiting Committees, and the Commissioners appointed by Government. Those different bodies were constantly in conflict. Again, a different system as to the care of lunatics existed in each of the Three Kingdoms. Moreover, pauper lunatic asylums were filled with persons belonging to the middle classes, comprising officers of the Army and Navy, clergymen, and literary men. If it were a hardship and a cruelty to associate pauperism and insanity, surely it was a hardship and an injustice to the ratepayers to make them provide for the insanity of the middle classes. The lunacy of the country was increasing; 1,500 persons were added every year to the list of pauper lunatics. Lancashire had recently been compelled to spend £80,000 on new buildings; Gloucestershire, £25,000; Shropshire, £46,000; Middlesex, £40,000; and Kingston-upon-Hull, £50,000. He might be told that this proposal was nothing but centralization; but, at the present moment, lunatic asylums were, in reality, governed from the Home Office, and local bodies had little or nothing to do in the matter. Nor did he think it possible that these institutions could be properly governed by the local authorities. If the Government were to take over the pauper lunatic asylums, they would be able to introduce a system of classification. At present all cases, whether acute or chronic, were thrust together into one large building very much to the injury of the lunatics themselves; the result being that the recoveries in pauper asylums were less numerous than in licensed houses. If the State took over all asylums, they would be able to create a regular gradation of payment, according to scale. They would be able to get rid of the present abominable system of subvention to the local rates, which the Prime Minister had declared to be the worst possible system that could exist with regard to rates. They did not want another subvention, but they demanded that Departments which properly belonged to the nation should be taken off the rates altogether. It might be said that he was bringing two questions forward at the same time; that was not the case, for he was calling attention to the whole system of the Lunacy Laws, which arbitrarily and wrongly divided lunatics into the two classes of rich and poor—an unsound and indefensible system. If his proposal were supported, they would succeed in dissociating pauperism and insanity, which would be a blessing to the poorer classes; at the same time, they would relieve the ratepayers of a most unjust burden. With regard to the rich, their detention as lunatics would be dissociated from any idea of private profit or speculation; thus a benefit would be conferred upon rich and poor, and a scandal removed from the laws of this country. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

MR. GURDON, in seconding the Motion, said, that among all the cases of unjust burdens cast upon the owners of real property, the maintenance of lunatics was the most unjust of all. What possible reason was there that the expenditure for the maintenance of lunatics should fall exclusively upon the owners of real property? Could it be contended for a moment that the owners of real property furnished a larger proportion of lunatics than the owners of other property? Lunacy was a national misfortune, and ought to be under national management and supported by national expenditure. To a certain extent the late Government recognized the fact by a subvention in aid of the maintenance of lunatics; but, like other subventions, it was not an unmixed good. The first result was that a large number of imbeciles were transferred from the Unions to the lunatic asylums—certainly not an economical proceeding. What they wanted was that the management and cost of maintenance of lunatics should be taken over by the State. He thought there was a far stronger case for State management of lunatic asylums than of prisons and police. There was no local provision for dealing with lunatics. The Visiting Justices of counties had really no power in the matter; the power was really in the hands of the Lunacy Commissioners. If the State took over the care and maintenance of lunatics, there would be the minimum of interference and the maximum of relief to the local ratepayers. He was quite willing to admit that the best private asylums were well managed; but, unfortunately, there were second and third-rate, and even in the best regulated among them there could not be such a thorough inspection and publicity as were desirable, and there was, in consequence, an uneasy feeling in the public mind on the subject. There was this important consideration to be borne in mind, that the proprietor of a private asylum had every inducement to keep a rich patient as long as he could; whereas in a public institution he would be discharged as soon as possible.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That all lunatics ought to be committed to the keeping of the State."—(*Mr. Stanley Leighton.*)

Mr. DILLWYN said, he did not wish to go into the question whether the maintenance of lunatics ought to fall upon the State or the local rates. His own feeling was in favour of the charges being borne by the rates. While not agreeing with his hon. Friend on that question, he did think that there was great danger in permitting private asylums to keep lunatics of the wealthier classes. He did not say no private asylums should be allowed; but he thought there should not be such a monopoly as now existed of the custody of the wealthier lunatics in the hands of private proprietors. The law at present was most unsatisfactory. If he were an unscrupulous person, he did not see that there was anything to prevent his incarcerating anyone in a private asylum if it was his interest to do so. There were good and bad private asylums; and if he went to a bad one, he might offer to pay handsomely, say, £1,000 a-year, and he would be told that he must get the certificate of two medical men, and the asylum proprietor would probably add—"I can recommend you medical men for the purpose." The trick was then done, and the unfortunate victim was taken to the asylum *vi et armis.* That was the law at the present moment. He had carried the second reading of a Bill on the subject, and he was in hopes that the Government would deal with a question which was a scandal and disgrace to the country. The question had been before Committees of the House, and there was no excuse for the Government's not having dealt with it before now. They were bound to do so. Until Government took the matter up nothing would be done; and he hoped they would at last take the matter up in earnest, and deal with it as a Government alone could do.

Mr. SALT said, that his experience was of public more than of private asylums. Private asylums ought, no doubt, to be under most careful supervision; but they had to consider not only the characters of asylums, but the wishes of those who honestly desired to do their best for their afflicted friends. There were cases in private families where the friends of the lunatic would be strongly indisposed to hand him over to the officials of the State. Private asylums ought to be subject to the inspection both of the Lunacy Commissioners and of the magistrates. Besides, medical men owning the best private asylums had, from their position and wealth, more opportunity to exercise a wise discretion, and to carry out the best methods of treatment, regardless of expense, than the officials of a public asylum, who were only paid a moderate salary. Although he was prepared to go a long way with his hon. Friend (Mr. Stanley Leighton), yet he could not say that, in his opinion, private asylums should never be permitted under any circumstances whatever. The best private establishments should be maintained, while those of an inferior character should gradually be suppressed. He believed there were some strong reasons why public asylums should be maintained by the State. As a financial matter, a good deal was to be said for it; and, moreover, such a course would be likely to get rid of some of the difficulties which now existed in regard to the removal of lunatics. There was one matter connected with the question to which he wished to draw particular attention. Whether lunatics were retained in private or public asylums, there should be a periodical visitation of them by the magistrates. It had been said that the magistrates were of no service in such a case, because they possessed no technical knowledge; but he felt sure—and he spoke from experience—that the occasional inspection of asylums by magistrates had a most beneficial effect. He thought that their acknowledgments were due to the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Shropshire for having drawn attention to this important subject.

Mr. GREGORY said, that in the course of his professional life he had happened to have some experience as to the custody of lunatics, and he ventured to say that nothing could be more conducive to their health, happiness, and cure than the treatment bestowed upon them in a well-managed asylum. He admitted that there might be private asylums that required more direction and control, or it might be that some of them deserved extinction. He knew a striking case that came under his own experience of an old lady who was, by order of the Court of Chancery, detained as a lunatic in a private asylum, and she gradually recovered, and the Medical Superintendent declared that she was not a fit subject for the Institution, and that she must be removed. When this was explained to the old lady, she said that she was willing to be guided by her friends if they desired her removal, and to have the Commission of Lunacy superseded; but she expressed her preference for remaining at the asylum where she had spent so many happy years, and a private arrangement gratifying her wishes was made. He knew one private asylum in his own neighbourhood which was most admirably managed. There were grounds, gardens, and plantations surrounding the premises, and there were billiard-rooms and concerts and other entertainments provided, and everything was done to promote the health and happiness, and, if possible, cure, of the patients. He questioned if this would be the case under the State. The management of asylums would then be managed under certain inflexible rules, and there would be one uniform system of treatment and control, which would not be beneficial in the interests of the patients, and there would not be the same varied experience in the efforts to cure their malady. He admitted that better management might be enforced by the Inspectors now appointed by the State; and with properly qualified Inspectors and control there would be nothing to complain of. He believed that those who managed private asylums were, as a rule, men who, out of respect for humanity and their own positions, would not do anything wrong against those left in their charge. With regard as to who was to pay for the support of pauper lunatics, that, in his opinion, was entirely another question; but the question now before the House was one of control and management. He doubted very much, however, whether the change now proposed would promote the interests of the country. In any case, if the present proposal was adopted an immense responsibility would necessarily be incurred by the Government, or the Department of it upon which the maintenance and control of all the present asylums throughout the country was to be thrown.

Dr. FARQUHARSON only wished to say one word upon the subject before the House, as he had no wish to keep the House from the important discussion that was to follow, and that was that in the main he agreed with his hon. Friend that it might be desirable to change the law upon this question in some respects. He emphatically dissented from any argument brought against medical men using their position to keep patients in lunatic asylums. They had heard something of the retarding of cure by drugs; but the Royal Commission from which evidence had been given did not bear out that assertion. The temptation, although great, had been thoroughly resisted. The temptation in the case of medical men in private practice to get more out of their patients was also great; but that had likewise been resisted. He would not say more, as he had no desire to keep the House from the very important discussion which was to follow.

Mr. ROUND said, he wished to say a word in favour of the Motion now before the House, and to thank the hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton) for calling attention to the important question of the cost and treatment of lunatics. He looked at the question from the ratepayers' point of view, and he never could see why the whole cost of providing for insane persons should be thrown upon one description of property—namely, houses and land, while six-sevenths of the income of the country were exempt from any contribution. He thought lunacy was always considered a national calamity, and he remembered the Prime Minister saying, when he introduced the Irish Church Disestablishment Bill in 1869, and was alluding to the surplus funds, that "the maintenance of lunatics was a duty of the community." These poor people were not drawn from one particular class, and he thought it unfair that the whole burden of their maintenance should be thrown upon ratepayers. At the present time the agricultural interest was suffering from an unprecedented depression, and he believed the ratepayers in the county he represented felt strongly on this subject. He thought that the increase of insane persons, and the necessary increase in buildings for their reception, was attracting attention, as in many counties a second asylum was now found to be required. In 1879 the cost of building asylums amounted to £290,000, in 1880 to £358,000, and in 1881 to £370,000. The whole cost in connection with lunacy was about £1,250,000. He wished to draw the attention of the Secretary of the Local Government Board to the difficulty of ascertaining the total cost from the present Returns and Reports. He had first to examine the accounts of the County Treasurer, then the Local Taxation accounts, and also the Lunacy Commission Report. He suggested that the information of the total cost of lunacy should be given in one Return. His own county was peculiarly unfortunate in respect of lunacy charges, for it was saddled with the cost of the maintenance of almost all pauper lunatics who were brought from India and landed on the Essex side of the Thames; and he hoped the Indian Government and the Local Government Board would give some further relief in this respect. He feared that there was a retrograde feeling in the present Parliament on the subject of local taxation. He remembered that the last Liberal Parliament, elected in 1868, supported by a majority of 100 a Resolution that many of these local charges should be borne by the whole community. He had looked at the Division List on that occasion, and saw the name of the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Dodson) amongst the majority. He trusted, therefore, that he would not refuse his support to the present Motion, and he earnestly pressed the consideration of the whole matter upon the attention of the Government.

Mr. HIBBERT said, he fully recognized the inconvenience and expense to which the county represented by the hon. Member for East Essex (Mr. Round) had been put through the landing in the county of lunatics from India, and he could assure him that the Local Government Board would do all in their power to relieve the county of this additional burden as far as they could. The Motion of the hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton) was chiefly directed to two points—to the question of private asylums, and to the taking over by the country of the lunatics in the country generally. With respect to the first question, he did not think the hon. Member would secure a majority in that House. He had listened very carefully to his remarks, and had only been able to gather two cases of hardship—one of cruelty, and one of unjust detention, in the private lunatic asylums in the country. Many of them, perhaps, were not satisfactory; but, as everyone knew, there were private asylums and private asylums. A very strong case would have to be made out before the Government abolished the system in this country and took over to themselves the care of the whole body of lunatics. There were no less than 6,300 private asylums in the country. [Mr. Stanley Leighton: 6,300! There cannot be so many.] He (Mr. Hibbert) was reading from the Commissioners' Report, which gave 2,880 registered private lunatic asylums, and 3,420 licensed houses for the reception of lunatics, making 6,300 in all; and he did not think the Government, after their experience of the expense of taking over the prisons, would be ready to adopt the same course with the lunatic asylums. Nor did he think that any case had been made out against the public lunatic asylums. He had himself been for many years a Visitor of a large one in Lancashire, and he thought he agreed with his hon. Friend that they were the better of the two. They required, however, great care in inspection, and greater care, perhaps, should be exercised in sending patients to them. While fully admitting that, he thought it must be well known to the House that it was almost useless for the Government to bring forward a Bill to remedy these defects with any fair chance of placing it upon the Statute Book. He must admit that there had been a very considerable increase in the number of lunatics. In private asylums the number had risen from 6,454, in 1871, to 7,741, in 1881; in public asylums from 56,735 to 73,113—a very large increase indeed. Much of this increase, however, was due to the subvention given a few years ago to lunatic asylums, and the Commissioners had pointed out that the Act of 1874 had tended to remove lunatics to public asylums. Many had been sent thither whom the managers felt disinclined to receive, on the ground that those institutions were to be regarded as curative institutions, and that confirmed lunatics ought not to be sent there. In this view, two establishments would be required—one for the hopeless cases, and one for patients who might recover; and such a system was not without its advantages. With respect, however, to the principal proposal of the hon. Member, the proposal that the State should take over the public asylums and thereby transfer the expense from the ratepayers to the country, he did not think the House would sanction any such proposal. It was evident, from the statement made last night, that the funds at the disposal of the Government were not large, and additional taxation would have to be proposed if any such scheme were contemplated. He did not think the pauper lunatic class ought to be treated differently to the pauper class in general. No doubt, some hon. Members were in favour of a subvention to the outdoor poor; personally, speaking for himself and not for the Government, he should be very sorry to see the State paying anything directly in aid of the poor. That would be a very dangerous and difficult step to take. If the Government undertook the treatment of all the lunatics, there was no reason why they should not act similarly towards the blind or the deaf-and-dumb class. It had been said that the magistrates had very little control in the matter. He did not agree with that statement; they certainly would have much less if asylums came under Government management. On these grounds, therefore, he could not, on the part of the Government, support the proposal of the hon. Member; and he should be obliged, if a division were taken, to vote against it.

Mr. BERESFORD HOPE said, that, having had opportunities of closely watching the working of a private asylum, he should be able to bring down the subject from the world of romance to the level of indisputable fact. Horrifying pictures had been drawn by the hon Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) of the treatment of lunatics. The House had heard from him of gentlemen who were desirous of spending £1,000 a-year for their own sinister purposes. They had heard how much a-year would go to the ruffianly madhouse keeper, how much to the doctor or surgeon, and how much to the Visiting Magistrates; and, no doubt, the House was carried away by such a picture, which was worthy of a novel by Zola. But, for the consolation of those who had relations with £1,000 a-year—which they were willing to spend to persecute them—he would explain to the hon. Member for Swansea and to the House the process by which a gentleman could be confined in such an asylum. In the first place, he must be handed over to the madhouse keeper by some other person; and it was not everyone who had £1,000 a-year and was willing to expend it in making someone else miserable. Then came the doctor who kept the madhouse, and then the two doctors who signed the certificate knowing that signing a false certificate would entail the utter ruin of their character. Then, again, any lunatics in an asylum were at liberty to write to the Commissioners, and this they could do over the heads of the keepers. How many cases of systematic cruelty and neglect had been heard of? Was the hon. Member for Swansea prepared to say that there had been more cases of assault in private than in public asylums? He had figures to prove the contrary. Then, another argument on which the hon. Member dwelt was that the doctors of these private asylums were tempted by motives of gain to keep their patients longer than patients in public asylums; but the actual facts were that, whereas in public asylums the average period of detention was rather more than three years and seven months, in private asylums it was less than two years and five months; so that the balance was in favour of the private asylum. In fact, he believed the tendency was to let the patients out too soon. How could these injurious charges be brought against a body of highly-educated gentlemen, who spent their lives in the pursuit of science and in works of charity, of their being actuated by low and base motives? The private asylums ought not to be abolished; but the treatment of lunatics should be left to private enterprize and science, as in the case of the treatment of other maladies, and the competition of private enterprize ought not to be discouraged. The old superstition that there was some wide difference between diseases of the mind and diseases of the body was vanishing away before scientific research. The great improvement of medical science in our days was vitally encouraged by personal competition. If they abolished this in the case of "mad doctors," they made them an inferior class, and they struck a disastrous blow at the growth of medical science in regard to the treatment of the insane. The great name of Lord Shaftesbury had been invoked during this discussion; he had fought the battle of the lunatics, and years ago his voice was raised against private asylums. Five years ago a Committee sat upon the subject. As no one had yet quoted a sentence from the Report of the proceedings before that Committee, he would now quote one. As the name of Lord Shaftesbury had been used in connection with that subject, he would quote what was said by that noble Lord in his evidence before the Committee. Lord Shaftesbury's evidence was to the effect that the state of things in private asylums had greatly improved since 1859; that he could not now say of them what he had said before that date, and that there had been continuous advance and improvement since that date. He (Mr. Beresford Hope) wished also to point out that the private asylums were more successful than the public ones. The percentage of cures in the former was 50 per cent of the whole number, whereas in the public institutions it was only 44 per cent. He quite agreed that it might be desirable to extend the powers of the magistrates, to extend the system of medical examinations, and to make it more careful and scientific. But if we were to go into the question of subvention by the State where were we to stop, and where was the money to be found? Was it to be found in an additional guinea on carriages, or by a tax on adulterated tea?

Mr. HIBBERT said, he wished to correct the statement he had made as to the number of private asylums. The number ought to be 153.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that he had had great experience of the subject, as for many years he had been Chairman of a Visiting Committee of Magistrates. He regretted the absence from his place of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary, as it was a question especially belonging to his Department, and he himself had had much to do with the question at the Home Office. There was a divided jurisdiction on the question of Lunacy, which belonged partly to the Lord Chancellor, partly to the Home Secretary, and partly also to the Local Government Board. He had been particularly engaged on the question some three years ago; and it struck him there were three points especially requiring attention—first, to see that there were sufficient safeguards to protect sane people from being taken into private asylums; secondly, to see that they were properly treated; and, thirdly, that there should be proper means to obtain their discharge when cured. When on the Visiting Committee he had found that many persons were detained who ought to be let out, and he was instrumental in letting them out. He had obtained the appointment of a Select Committee, and that Committee in its Report dwelt on the very points which he had mentioned. The public were not convinced, as they ought to be convinced, that proper precautions were taken before a person was confined in an asylum. He could not conceive anything more terrible than that a person who was not insane should be placed in an asylum out of which it was extremely difficult to get; and they could not be too careful in protecting persons against interested relatives. The Committee suggested that the certificate ought to be granted by two medical men; that the first order to commit should be confined to a limited period, and that a fresh examination of the patient should take place every year. That was a valuable recommendation, as the most important results of a good treatment were seen at an early stage of the disease. Then the Committee advised that precautions should be taken to prevent sane persons from being locked up, and that means should be secured for letting the patients out as soon as ever they were cured. He hoped the Government would take the matter into their serious consideration and carry these recommendations into effect. He had no doubt the Visiting Justices did excellent service in the matter and procured the release of many persons wrongfully detained, as he had himself done when the Chairman of a Visiting Committee. He desired to have a more certain assurance than at present that nobody would be confined in the present asylums who ought not to be confined there. As to the treatment which they received when they were confined there, little complaint was to be made. The Lunacy Commissioners came down and sometimes took things for granted. He was bound to say that once upon a time he paid a visit suspecting something to be wrong. He came down at 8 o'clock on a Sunday morning, when there were no Inspectors, and when he could see things for himself. He took a friend with him, and they did find a considerable amount of wrong going on. He believed that something like this would tend more than anything else to keep things right. He hoped his right hon. Friend would meet these observations in the spirit in which they were made.

Mr. THOMAS COLLINS (who rose amid cries of "Agreed!") said, he was surprised at the impatience that was shown on the other side of the House. He thought it should be recollected that when it was said that persons were improperly detained, there were other cases, perhaps more frequent, when persons actually lunatics were allowed out of the asylum. He would allude to the case of Maclean. That man had been let out, and the result of that might have been much more serious than it was. The question which the hon. Member for Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton) had raised was a very large one; but he thought he had acted very unwisely in the interest he had at stake in mixing up two distinct propositions. They had some very strong language from the hon. Member for Shropshire and the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), but they had no facts. A larger proportion of persons who went to the private asylums were restored to health than was the case in public asylums. He did not say that this proved that the public asylums were worse managed than the private asylums. Wealthy relatives of patients in private asylums might more frequently remove them, and this might account for the fact to which he had called attention. He contended that to hand over all lunatics to the control of the State would be a retrograde step, and that, at any rate, it would be a change for which public opinion was not yet prepared. Already the State was superseding individual action far more than was wholesome. Every year attempts were made in that House to make the State everything and the individual nothing. It appeared to him that the hon. Member for North Shropshire would have been better advised if he had restricted his Resolution to the question of the cost of pauper lunatics. In his mention of that topic the hon. Member had expressed his decided dislike to the principle of subventions; but did he mean that the whole cost of the maintenance of this class of lunatics should be borne by the locality itself? A great deal had been said of the increase of lunacy in the country, and, no doubt, the subvention given by the last Parliament had increased the demand for more accommodation in the county asylums. In the West Riding of Yorkshire, where the population was 1,800,000, a second asylum had lately been established, and within the last few months a site had been provided for a third; but the fact was, not that lunatics had increased of late years, but that they were better cared for now than formerly. He would rather have seen the lunatic asylums than the gaols transferred to the Treasury. He would not recommend the hon. Member for Shropshire to press his Resolution as it stood; but would suggest that he might consent to an amendment of it, and he invited some hon. Member to move an Amendment, so that they might then debate a definite issue.

VISCOUNT EMLYN said, that the request made by the hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton) appeared to be a very large one. As to those who were maintained in private asylums, he quite agreed with the Secretary to the Local Government Board that the hon. Member failed to make out a case for the change he proposed. The cases he brought forward went to prove, not that the cost of maintenance ought to be transferred to Imperial funds, but that the supervision was not sufficient. He granted that it might be better; but all that we had a right to ask was that private and public asylums should be carefully, regularly, and efficiently supervised. He could not support the suggestion that private asylums should receive more assistance from the State. It was very difficult to discriminate between persons of the middle class and those of the lower class, and to draw a line separating one from the other. His hon. Friend proposed that all lunatics should be committed to the keeping of the State. With that he could not agree, for the proposal, if adopted, would have a tendency to lower the middle classes. Their object should be to make the middle class independent, and not to reduce it to the level of the pauper class. At the same time, necessary supervision should be exercised, in order to make sure that middle-class lunatics were not ill-treated or improperly confined. It was a mistake to suppose that lunatics of that class were maintained at the cost of the ratepayers. Where accommodation had been provided in pauper lunatic asylums for future tenants, the Visiting Justices had been ready to extend to those middle-class lunatics who approach nearly to the pauper class the assistance of which they stood in need, and had allowed them to enter asylums on payment at a remunerative rate. It could not, under such circumstances, be said that persons belonging to the middle class were thrown upon the rates. One complaint which was made was that subventions granted by the State to local authorities encouraged extravagance. It was not true, however, that the subvention of 4*s.* per lunatic had led to extravagance. A contrary tendency had, in fact, been apparent. An hon. Member had referred to the question of the removal of lunatics. On that subject he would say no more than that he hoped that when the question of the removal of paupers should be taken in hand the question of the removal of lunatics would be dealt with also. He was of opinion that a better classification of lunatics was needed, in order that the criminal lunatics now kept in the county asylums might be separated from ordinary pauper lunatics. The inconvenience of the present system would not be remedied by sweeping away all local control and handing over the asylums to the Imperial Government. Bearing in mind the troubles and sorrows caused to paupers by lunacy, he questioned whether they would benefit by being deprived of the local interest attaching to their cases. He thought that some supervision by the magistrates should be maintained over these institutions; but he considered there was no necessity for the sweeping changes recommended by his hon. Friend.

MR. DODSON said, that his right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary was absent owing to an unavoidable engagement, and not to any want of interest in that debate. The right hon. Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had called attention to three important points—namely, the conditions under which lunatics were admitted, their treatment, and the manner of their release. But the Report of the Committee which sat on the matter was not unfavourable to the existing system. So far as he was acquainted with the evidence, there was scarcely one proved case of undue detention for the sake of profit to the proprietor of an asylum, and not a single case of detention through the action of interested relatives or friends. If that be so, the existing system could not be said to be a bad one in that particular. So few Members had spoken in favour of the terms of the Resolution that he thought the hon. Member had better soon go to a division or withdraw his Motion. Under the present system many lunatics were paid for by their friends, whereas the hon. Member wished to throw the expense of their maintenance on the State. [Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON: That is not my proposal.] The hon.

Member's proposal was that all lunatics should be committed to the keeping of the State. It appeared to him (Mr. Dodson), however, that the duty of the State with regard to these persons began and ended with the work of inspecting the places in which lunatics were confined to see if cases of oppression occurred. He could not see why the State should maintain all lunatics—[An hon. Member: That is not suggested.]—well, he could not see why all lunatics should be "committed to the keeping of the State," which were the hon. Member's own words. He failed to see why it should be the duty of the State to undertake the charge of these persons any more than of persons suffering from infectious diseases. In his opinion, the State already undertook too many duties, several of which would be better left to the management of local authorities. With regard to the other part of the proposal of the hon. Member for Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton)—namely, "the unfairness of requiring the ratepayers to maintain lunatics of the middle and lower classes," he understood it to mean that the State should completely, or to a greater extent than now, come to the assistance and support of the ratepayers. He would not enter into the question whether the subvention given by the State of late years had or had not been beneficial in its operation, or answered the purposes for which it was intended; but the hon. Member for Shropshire had, no doubt, heard the Budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and was perfectly well aware that the Government were not at present in a position to supply the means he referred to. Under the circumstances, he thought the debate should now be allowed to come to a conclusion, either by a division or the withdrawal of the Motion.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman had hardly done justice to the complaints which had been made with very great force from time to time in this House, and, notably, by his right hon. Friend (Sir R. Assheton Cross) on the Front Opposition Bench within a few minutes, in regard to the condition of private lunatic asylums, and the uncertainty, to say the least of it, which existed in the public mind in regard to proper care being exercised in the discharge from the asylums of persons cured. The hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) had, no doubt, met with very great support in the action he had taken for years past on this branch of the subject. After the Report of the Select Committee it could not be said that they were not familiar with the subject, and his own opinion was that all apprehension ought to be removed from the public mind in regard to these private asylums; and though he was not in favour of the State taking these lunatics into its charge—and into its pay, as it were—he certainly thought the ideal system they ought to aim at was a system by which lunatics belonging to the wealthy and middle-class families might have that ample security which the poor enjoyed in pauper lunatic asylums—namely, the security that it was not to the interest of any human being in the asylum to retain them in it one minute after they were cured. In a public asylum the interest of all the officials was to discharge the patients as soon as possible; but in the private asylums this state of things was reversed, and his view was that no lunatics should be intrusted to those who were pecuniarily interested in their maintenance. It did not follow that the lunatics themselves or their relations or property should not be charged with the cost of their maintenance, or that they should not be kept in a manner adequate to their position and means. They need not be maintained at the cost of the public—that was the short way of putting it; and his hon. Friend was not, he thought, open to the charge of desiring to relieve the better class lunatics from the obligation of maintaining themselves, or relieve their relatives of the obligation of maintaining them. With regard to pauper asylums, for many years he had taken an interest in this subject, not only on account of his long connection with the Local Government Board, but because he had been for many years Chairman of a pauper lunatic asylum in his own county—one of the best managed asylums in the Kingdom. He was strongly convinced of the great advantages which had attended the establishment of these pauper lunatic asylums, and he thought it a very serious and onerous obligation on the local authorities that they should have been obliged, without any assistance from the State, to maintain these institutions. He looked with the greatest satisfaction to the part he had taken in this matter. The right hon. Gentleman was not enamoured of subventions; but there could be no doubt that in this particular case they had worked a vast amount of good. The amount was so small that it did not interfere with the Guardians in the exercise of the discretionary power of maintaining pauper lunatics in their homes or in workhouses, if they were fit to remain there. The cost of maintaining pauper lunatics at home or in the workhouse would still be less than half the amount it cost to maintain them in the asylum. He did not think anything could be more conducive to the interests of the poor as a body than that the State should relieve the ratepayers of some portion of the cost of keeping pauper lunatics. The institutions in which they were maintained were controlled by Government officials—the control being in no respect in the hands of the Guardians. It seemed to him it would be easy to have an extension of that principle, and that there would be no difficulty in providing for the maintenance of the whole of the lunatics of the country in that way. By this means the incomes of the managers, superintendents, and medical and other officers would be secured, and it would not be to the interest of anyone to keep a patient in an asylum after he was cured. He would not detain the House any longer, except to express the opinion that, although the terms of his hon. Friend's Motion were open to some question, their general object was worthy of the support of the House.

MR. R. H. PAGET begged to thank the hon. Member for Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton) for having opened this interesting discussion on a question which all who had ever had anything to do with lunatic asylums must feel to be of considerable importance. He wished to say a word with regard to middle-class lunatics, to which allusion was made in the Resolution of the hon. Member. No class was placed in such a position of difficulty as the middle class, when members of their families were unfortunately afflicted with lunacy. It was well known that the expense of private asylums was so great as to render it impossible for all but the rich and well-to-do to have recourse to them; and, at the same time, it was felt that middle-class lunatics were not proper persons to be received into asylums maintained at the expense of the rates. They were considered an unfair burden on the rates; but the difficulty was there were no other asylums open to them, those of a private character being too expensive for them to resort to. Some very pertinent questions had been addressed to the Government on this question; and, without wishing for a moment to degrade or pauperize a class which was specially independent, he would say this—that the State should take some step to alleviate their unfortunate position. It had been brought to their notice to-night that under the State-subvention system lunatic asylums had become very full, and that in many cases it had been found necessary to make a considerable extension of buildings. He would venture to offer this for the consideration of the Local Government Board—that the time had now arrived when steps should be taken to remove from our pauper lunatic asylums the class of idiots. The question had been raised before in the House, and he very much regretted that, hitherto, no vigorous attempt had been made to effect this object. Everyone who had visited pauper lunatic asylums must know this—that in every one of these asylums there was a considerable class of idiots. They were as well looked after as the circumstances of the asylums would permit; but they were a hindrance to the discipline of the institutions, and there was no provision for improving the existing state of things. Everyone who was acquainted with the subject must know that idots would and could be far better maintained in separate asylums. If this was true—as undoubtedly it was—of the adult idiots, it was ten-fold more true with regard to those unhappy idiots of a more youthful age. The experience of Earlswood and other idiot asylums showed what could be done when young children, in that unhappy state of idiotcy, were taken by the hand and carefully trained and brought up. Instead of living lives of misery and helplessness, their latent faculties might be trained, and they could be made useful members of society—their faculties might be developed, and an extraordinary change might take place in their mental condition. This could only be done in institutions set aside for the training of these children, and at present there was no such provision made for their treatment. [An hon. MEMBER: There is in the Metropolis.] He (Mr. R. H. Paget) thanked the hon. Member for reminding him that provision of this kind had been made in the Metropolis; but it was not the case in the rest of England. He considered it one of the greatest blots in our arrangements for the care of lunatics that we had no such provision throughout the country; and now, whilst they were debating the whole question of the care of lunatics, was a fit opportunity for calling attention to the matter. He hoped, before the discussion terminated, to hear from some of those who were officially connected with the subject that they were prepared to take some steps to deal with this point, as he ventured to say that no more humane object could commend itself to the mind of the most philanthropic person than taking in hand and training those unhappy persons who had been idiots from their birth. It must be remembered that the maintenance of these persons in the present pauper asylums was one of the reasons why those institutions were so full. If they could be sent to proper asylums, where they ought to be maintained and trained, there would be more room in the pauper lunatic asylums. People talked about overcrowding, and the necessity of building; but what was it that had led so much to the overcrowding of lunatic asylums? Was it not this? Did not everyone who had been connected with the management of these asylums know this, that it was a constant practice to send aged, senile paupers into the lunatic asylums—paupers suffering simply from a decay of the mental faculties, who were not fit persons for the hospital treatment of lunatic asylums? Their condition was that of advanced years and of mental and physical decay. Cases of this kind were known to everyone—they were occurring every day. Large numbers of these poor creatures were sent into the asylums, to remain there months, or weeks, or days, until they were released by death from their sufferings. Why were these people received into the asylums? Why, because Boards of Guardians now received inducement to take them which was not offered them before. Perhaps it was not so much an inducement, and it might be more correct to say that that which was a positive hindrance before had now been removed. The President of the Local Government Board would do well to take this matter into his careful consideration. If the right. hon. Gentleman could see any way to exercising his authority, and producing new legislation under which places could be established for the care and maintenance of these people suffering simply from failure of mental faculties consequent, in most cases, upon advanced age, he would relieve the pauper lunatic asylums of a vast number of those who now crowded them out, and would obviate one of the great evils that were now complained of—namely, the necessity for largely increasing buildings and the staff of the asylums. There was one other remark he wished to make, which tended in the same direction, and it was this. He was not in the House at the time, but he understood from those who were that, in an official speech this evening, an opinion was expressed hostile to the idea of any State subvention in aid of the indoor poor. [Mr. HIBBERT: I simply expressed my own private opinion.] He was sorry the hon. Member entertained such an opinion, and trusted he might be able to convert him. He (Mr. R. H. Paget) believed that if State subventions were given in aid of outdoor poor, it would be by no means difficult to persuade the various Boards of Guardians not to consider the various Union-workhouses as belonging to a given local authority, but as belonging, as a whole, to the Poor Law authorities. He believed there were a great many vacant places and beds in some Union-workhouses, whilst others were overcrowded. If they were no longer isolated, but were classified and brought together, he believed it would be found that in many districts one or more of them could be dispensed with. If buildings of this kind could be dispensed with for Poor Law purposes, what more fit and proper use could be made of them than to fit one up as an asylum for the training of idiots, another for the care of harmless lunatics, and so on? These afflicted persons, in such institutions, could, no doubt, be maintained at a more moderate rate than they were at present in the pauper asylums. It would be a great advantage to free the lunatic asylums of harmless imbeciles. There would then be ample room in them for the treatment of that class for whom they were intended, and they could then be used in their proper capacity—namely, as great hospitals. A lunatic asylum should be a hospital for the care of persons afflicted with disease; and when the disease reached a stage from which there was no hope of recovery, and when all that was desired for a patient was that he should be carefully tended and well fed, the patients should be sent off to these buildings he had described. When the authorities had done this, they would have done all that humanity could demand. But the thing must be done in this way. It was in vain to say "Oh! send these people off to the various Union-workhouses." They knew that to be wrong—they knew the poor imbeciles and idiots deteriorated there. [*A laugh.*] The President of the Local Government Board might laugh at this, but it had been actually proved to be the case. It had been proved within his own experience. Some years ago, in Somersetshire, their lunatic asylums being full, and it being necessary for them to send a number of people to another institution for a time, they, with the greatest anxiety and care, selected a definite number of the most harmless lunatics, whom it was thought could be transferred to workhouses without injury to their physical or mental condition. Before sending them out the precaution was taken to put them in the scales and weigh them. At the expiration of about two months the majority of them were brought back. But what was their condition? Why, they had all deteriorated, mentally and physically, and in every case they had lost largely in bodily weight. Nothing could be plainer than that the Union-workhouses was no place for them. The necessary appliances were not there. The necessary diet and care was wanting; and in the case he had mentioned the unhappy lunatics were all injured by their residence in the workhouse. Now, the whole result of the subvention which had been so much decried had been to do that which the Lunacy Commissioners for years past had told them they ought to do. Take these isolated instances of imbecility from the workhouses where they were badly treated—or, he would not say where they were badly treated, but where the circumstances were unfavourable to their treatment—and place them in the great hospitals for lunacy, which were, and ought to be, the proper asylums for such people. He must apologize to the House for having spoken somewhat warmly on this matter, but what he had stated he knew from his personal experience. He knew the injury that was done to these idiots and imbeciles when they were sent to the workhouses. He felt it was a step which ought not to be taken; and, so far as the 4*s.* a-week subvention had had the effect of freeing the workhouses and sending these people into the asylums, it had been one of unmixed good. As regarded this particular Motion of his hon. Friend, he could not help regretting that the hon. Member had got two or three subjects rather mixed up in it. He (Mr. R. H. Paget) could not agree to it as it stood. He could not assent to the proposition at the end, "that all lunatics ought to be committed to the keeping of the State." He believed there was much the State ought to do in regard to middle-class lunatics, in regard to idiots, and in regard to the maintenance of the more harmless cases of lunatics in asylums, which might be linked on to, or connected in some way with, the great pauper asylums. This debate would have been of great value if it had had the effect of drawing the attention of those who were responsible in this matter to the fact that the Lunacy Laws were not so entirely satisfactory that there was not room for improvement, in more ways than one, and of teaching them that they were not to sit still and hug themselves in a sense of complacency, believing that all was good, and that there was no room for reform. There was plenty of room for reform, and he trusted that those in authority, and those who had the power to bring in useful legislation on the matter, would not be slow to deal with that which he ventured to assert was of great and urgent necessity, affecting, as it did, the welfare of a class whose case commanded the sympathies of all those who were actuated by the ordinary feelings of humanity.

Sir TREVOR LAWRENCE said, he was a Member of the Committee which sat on this subject in 1877 and 1878, and had attended almost all the meetings. He had heard a vast amount of evidence, and had given it a great deal of consideration, therefore he trusted he might be allowed to say a few words on the subject. If there was one thing which was conclusively proved during the inquiry, it was that the accusations brought against the private lunatic asylums were entirely without foundation. The hon. Member for Swansea, at whose instance, in a great measure, the Committee was appointed, after having investigated the facts, and taken a great deal of trouble to bring before the Committee the most promising cases, as he thought them—as showing the manner in which business was carried on in those places—came himself to the conclusion that no case had been made out against the private lunatic asylums. He would appeal to the Solictor General, who was also a Member of that Committee, to bear him out when he said that no case was made out against the keepers of the private lunatic asylums. Every Member who had seen the interior of those asylums must be well aware that the greatest possible skill and the largest possible outlay was brought to bear within them on the treatment of the insane. Let anyone who doubted that statement pay a visit, for example, to the very admirable asylum of Dr. Newington—it would not be a long distance to go. He would ask anyone who had been over that establishment whether, if he was unfortunate enough to have a relative afflicted with lunacy, that would not be a place he would like to send him to? If there was any body of men to whom the thanks of these poor suffering people were due, it was the Commissioners of Lunacy, of whom Lord Shaftesbury was the head. If he might venture the remark, instead of there being a number of sane people shut up in lunatic asylums, there were many out of their minds at large who ought to be in confinement. He was sure hon. Gentlemen who received much correspondence would fully bear him out, when he said that a very considerable number of letters they received emanated from persons who ought to be under some restraint or other. There was one very important consideration in connection with the maintenance of private lunatic asylums. If the Motion of his hon. Friend were to be carried, the result would be that those persons who ought to be brought under the influence of immediate treatment would be kept as long as possible from the influence of that treatment, in the hope that the stigma supposed to be involved would be avoided, and that the family to which the lunatic belonged would be free from it. One of the advantages of private asylums was that they provided admirable treatment for the insane without real publicity. With regard to public asylums, his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Somerset (Mr. R. H. Paget), was right when he advocated the separation of the imbecile and idiots from lunatics. The county of Surrey, which he had the honour to belong to and to assist in representing, had large asylums, and they were constantly being called upon to build others for imbecile paupers and idiots, who, so far as treatment or security were concerned, might as well be out of them. There was no question of security; they were only put there to be taken care of; and if the President of the Local Government Board could see his way to separate imbeciles from lunatics he would do much to help the cure of the insane. One of the great difficulties about private asylums was the liberation of patients at the right moment. Mental disease was not like bodily disease. Bodily disease was over when it had been gone through; but mental disease very often passed away for a time, and then returned. Many cases were brought before the Committee which showed the necessity of extreme care and caution in liberating lunatics. With regard to the point of having patients in public asylums, it was well known, also, that pauper lunatics were occasionally found in private asylums. In Surrey, when their asylums had been gradually getting full, it had been necessary for the authorities to pay a large sum for the purpose of getting some patients in private asylums. He was one of those persons who thought that the Department which his right hon. Friend (Mr. Dodson) represented was already very greatly overburdened; and he was sure nothing could be worse and less desirable, in the interest of the lunatics themselves, or the community in general, than that the lunatics should be handed over to the Local Government Board. If his hon. Friend went to a division he should most certainly vote against the Motion.

COLONEL MAKINS said, he was glad that neither the condition of the atmosphere outside the House nor the depressing nature of the discussion itself, nor the visible impatience of some hon. Gentlemen opposite, had prevented them having a most valuable and interesting debate on this Motion. He was prepared to go into the question more particularly as to the very great variation in the cost of maintenance of lunatics in different parts of the country; and he was prepared to adduce figures with reference to that point, in order to show how necessary it was that hon. Gentlemen who took an interest in the subject should take the matter into their consideration. If the debate had done anything it had shown the great necessity which existed for a classification of the inmates in our lunatic asylums. If the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would take into his consideration the desirability of the separation of the imbeciles and idiots from the more pronounced lunatics, the time which had been spent on this debate would not have been thrown away. As to private lunatic asylums, he admitted the force of the remarks that had been made by his right hon. Friend the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Beresford Hope) and by his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Surrey (Sir Trevor Lawrence). There was no doubt that many of the proprietors of private asylums did conduct them in a most excellent way, and did provide shelter for those among the upper classes of society who were unhappily afflicted with lunacy. At the same time, there were objections which might be raised to the continuance of private asylums, and he thought one of them was the question of finance. If the inmates of private asylums were transferred to public lunatic asylums, not, of course, as paupers, not as patients to be paid for by the country or the ratepayers, but as patients under the care of the State, there would not only be a cessation of many anomalies, but he believed a large fund might be raised, which would go to the relief of the rates. He was not prepared to support the Resolution at the present moment; but he would not say the Resolution was not entitled to reasonable support. It was a Resolution which sooner or later would have to be considered by the House. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Hibbert) agreed with him as to the necessity for classification. He did not think he need pursue the question.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Colonel MAKINS said, he was sorry to find that the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had so little sympathy with the mental sufferings of his fellow-creatures. He should, however, endeavour to meet the wishes of the hon. Gentleman, as far as he could, by abbreviating his remarks. He would not trouble the House with the statistics which he had prepared with reference to the variations in the cost of lunatics in different parts of the country, except to point out that, whereas the cost of lunatics in boroughs was 11*s.* 4½*d.*, and in counties, 9*s.* 6¼*d.*; in private asylums, which were generally under philanthropic management, it was very much greater. Therefore, he thought that even in that respect there would be a considerable advantage to the community if the management of lunatic asylums throughout the country was brought within the purview of some central authority. He was one of those who objected very much to the principle of centralization; but he thought this was one of the cases in which an exception might be made. He had to express the earnest hope that the Government would take into consideration this important subject, and would take an early opportunity of bringing the matter before the House in a legislative form and upon the authority of the Government.

Mr. WARTON said, he must protest against the introduction of a little *clôture* by the President of the Board of Trade in reply to the hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton).

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 34; Noes 81: Majority 47.—(Div. List, No. 72.)

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PLACES OF WORSHIP SITES BILL.

(*Mr. Summers, Mr. Richard, Mr. William M'Arthur, Mr. Alderman Cotton.*)

[BILL 97.] COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Conveyance of lands by corporations and other public bodies), *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Grant of superfluous lands).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."—(*Mr. Summers.*)

MR. WHITLEY said, he wished to point out that there was no provision in this Bill to enable the Lords of the Treasury to put a veto upon sales by Corporations. According to existing Acts of Parliament, Corporations could not sell land without the authority of the Lords of the Treasury; but this Bill provided for no veto by the Treasury.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause *ordered* to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 3 (Short title) *agreed to.*

New Clause—

"A corporation or municipal body shall not make any such grant without the consent in writing of the Secretary of State for the Home Department, where such consent is now required by any existing Act of Parliament,"—(*Mr. Whitley,*)

—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."

MR. HIBBERT said, he quite agreed with the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley) as to the present law with regard to Corporations; but as this new clause was not on the Paper, he would suggest the hon. Member should put it down for Report, in order that time might be given for its consideration.

MR. R. N. FOWLER said, he hoped that, under the circumstances, the hon. Member for Staleybridge (Mr. Summers) would consent to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. R. N. Fowler,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday.*

House adjourned at One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 26th April, 1882.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Land Law (Ireland) Act (1881) Amendment [2], *debate adjourned;* Bankruptcy [37]; Metropolis Management and Building Acts Amendment * [107]; Interments (Felo de se) * [98]; Militia Storehouses * [116].

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT (1881) AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 2.]

(*Mr. Redmond, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Healy, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Justin M'Carthy.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. REDMOND said, the duty which devolved upon him of moving that the Bill be now read a second time was important and difficult. Its difficulty and importance must constitute his claim to the indulgence of the House while he endeavoured to explain the proposals they now made. He believed the necessity for legislation to amend the Land Act of last Session was now well-nigh universally recognized both inside and outside the House. That Act had two great objects, neither of which had been attained. The first was to bring redress within easy reach of every tenant in Ireland who was suffering from injustice; and the second—which, of course, depended, to a large extent, on the success of the first—was to conciliate the good-will of the Irish people, and to spread peace and prosperity throughout the land. The Land Act had been more than seven months in operation. Some of its provisions were only enacted for six months. Of those provisions which had expired they could speak absolutely, and say that they had proved melancholy and disastrous failures. The permanent provisions of the Land Act had been sufficiently long in operation to entitle them fairly to form an opinion as to the success they had had or were likely to achieve in the future. Of these also it might be said that they had failed to fulfil the object with which they were enacted. As the Act stood now, it could apply to only about one-half of the tenant farmers of Ireland; but the very class of tenants which, by reason of their poverty, most required protection was, owing to the failure of the Arrears Clause, excluded from the operation of the Act. Of all the tenants in Ireland who were entitled to apply to the Land Court, only about 80,000 had done so, and yet its machinery was so clogged that years must elapse before these cases could be disposed of. Consequently, widespread disappointment and disaffection prevailed among the people. Those who were precluded from applying to the Land Court denounced the invidious and unjust distinction by which they were excluded; those who had applied lamented the prolonged delay, coupled with the continued obligation which rested upon them of paying exorbitant rents pending the decisions of the Court upon their cases. All this time the work of eviction was steadily proceeding, and the Irish people, who were told to look upon this measure as a message of peace, and as a settlement of their just demands, saw now with consternation that the work of extermination was carried on with increased facility under its provisions. The natural result of the failure of the Land Act on the one hand, and of the provocation by Coercion on the other, was the condition in which Ireland was found to-day. The Bill which he had now the honour to propose afforded a means—he was almost tempted to say the only means—whereby peace, prosperity, and tranquillity could be restored to Ireland. The proposals in the Bill were moderate and just. They were made in the name of the Irish people, and he claimed for them the fair and unprejudiced consideration of the House. The Bill might be said to deal with four distinct matters of importance. He would take first in order that question which, by reason of its vital and pressing necessity, might be considered first in importance. He meant the question of arrears. It might be well to recall the history of those arrears. They had their origin in those years of bad harvests, when over a large portion of Ireland famine was averted only by the charity of the world. In the districts referred to small tenant farmers were unable to live without assistance, and, naturally, rents fell into arrear. The necessity of averting destruction from those men who were suffering from the act of God was recognized by the House of Commons, which two years ago passed the Compensation for Disturbance Bill. The necessity of lifting off the shoulders of the people the load of arrears it was impossible for them to meet was recognized by Parliament when last year it inserted the Arrears Clause in the Land Act. In recent times no responsible politician had alluded to the subject without acknowledging that the Land Act must remain, to a great extent, a failure so long as those arrears were allowed to continue an impassable barrier between a large portion of the people and the benefits of the Land Act. The Arrears Clause of the Act of last Session had expired. From first to last the Arrears Clause was inoperative. To-day the work of evicting from their homes those who were unable to pay rent in respect of years when the soil did not produce enough to enable them to live was being carried on with terrible rapidity. During the quarter ending the 31st of March last, no fewer than 1,300 families, or 7,000 souls, were evicted from their homes in Ireland; and as long as such scenes continued to be enacted peace would be an impossibility. At all cost the work of eviction must be stopped in Ireland. So long as it continued discontent, bloodshed, and outrage were absolute necessities of the situation. Now, the proposals of the Bill for dealing with the question of arrears were strictly moderate, and they had the merit, which the Arrears Clause of the Bill of last year had not, of being thoroughly practical. In a spirit of fairness to both landlord and tenant they recognized that Providence had blessed Ireland with, at least, one really good harvest since the arrears were incurred; and, consequently, the first requirement of the Bill was that the tenant should be obliged to pay a year's rent, or, at any rate, what the landlord should consider equivalent to one year's rent, in respect of the year ending the 31st of August last. When that had already been done by the tenant of a farm valued at not more than £30 a-year, and when the Court was satisfied that the tenant could not possibly pay the arrears, the Court was empowered to make a grant to the landlord not exceeding one year's rent, or not exceeding one-half the total arrears, which grant was to release the tenant from all liability for arrears up to the 31st of August last. The result of that proposal would be that, in the case of the tenant of a farm of the yearly value of not more than £30, if three years' rent were owing, the tenant would be bound to pay the rent for the year ending August 31 last; the Court would grant a sum equal to the second year's rent, and the third year's rent the landlord would be called upon to sacrifice. That sacrifice could not be considered unfair; because it must be remembered that these arrears were, for the most part, arrears of rack rents, and that under no conceivable circumstances could the landlord hope to recover, by any means, the total amount of arrears due to him. One great difference between the proposed clause and that in the Act of last year was that the latter was optional to the landlord, and the former to the tenant; while the grant proposed to be made to the landlord was absolute, and would not have to be repaid by the tenant. The Bill proposed that the money required for these grants should be supplied from the Irish Church Surplus Fund. The Irish Church Surplus Fund was the property of the Irish nation; and he knew of no more national object to which it could be devoted than to saving the Irish people from extermination and ruin. That, he thought, was a practical proposal, and moderate; and he thought when hon. Gentlemen, who in that House represented the landlord class, came to give their opinion, it would be found that, even in their eyes, the proposal did not deserve opposition or censure. There were also other provisions in the Bill connected with arrears, which he had, perhaps, better mention at once. In view of the block in the Land Courts, it was deemed absolutely necessary that some protection should be afforded to tenants pending the settlement of their rents. As things were a tenant might apply to the Court, but might have to wait years for the decision of his case, during which time he would be called upon to pay his present, perhaps, exorbitant rent. Moreover, when the judicial rent was fixed, it was only dated from the first gale day after the decision. This Bill stated that when a tenant applied to have a fair rent fixed all proceedings for recovering the full amount of the old rent should be stayed, pending the decision of the Court; that the rent payable in the meantime should be calculated on the basis of Griffith's Valuation; and that payment should be made of the new rent (when decided), not as now, from the next rent day after the decision, but from the next rent day after the application to the Court. It was provided also that, after the decision of the Court, the difference between the fair rent and the rent paid on the basis of Griffith's Valuation pending settlement should be refunded by either the landlord or the tenant as the case might be—an arrangement not unlike that recently suggested by the hon. Member for the County of Tyrone (Mr. Dickson). He might point out, in passing, that Griffith's Valuation, which had been the subject of many denunciations, and had been described as "confiscation" and "robbery," had been virtually approved by most of the Sub-Commissioners throughout the country. He now came to the second important matter dealt with by the Bill—namely, the question of leases. To the leaseholders of Ireland the Act of last year had unquestionably been a mockery and a delusion. By a process of reasoning not easy to understand, a distinction was drawn in the Land Act between leases made before 1870, and leases after 1870. The latter, if certain conditions were fulfilled, could be interfered with by the Court; but leases made before 1870 were held to be sacred. It was notorious that leases were forced upon tenants since 1870, with the intention of robbing them of the benefits of the Act passed that year; but it was equally notorious that in 1869 similar leases were forced upon the tenants in anticipation of that Act. The fact of a man paying an exorbitant rent under an unjust lease for 20 years instead of 10 was no reason why redress should be denied to him. However, in their wisdom, Ministers and Parliament thought otherwise; and they decided that the only leaseholders who should have the benefits of the Act last year were leaseholders holding under contracts made since 1870; but experience had proved that those men had been fooled to the top of their bent by the action of the Land Courts. He believed that only about 70 leases had been set aside, or about 5 per cent of the number of applications. He understood that Mr. Justice O'Hagan had stated no lease had been interfered with by his Court, which could not have been upset in an ordinary Court of Equity. The Lease Clause of the

Land Act was hedged round with such conditions that it was practically useless even to holders of leases made since 1870. One reason which made the clause of last year useless was that the provision that leases forced upon a tenant since 1870, even under a threat of eviction, if it was at the expiration of an old lease, could not be interfered with by the Court. That was a needless and absurd provision. Its effect had been to cut away from the operation of the Act nine-tenths of the leaseholders who had accepted leases since 1870. He would give an illustration. He knew a farmer who held under a lease which expired towards the end of 1871. During the continuance of that lease, which had been a long one, the tenant had erected a house, in which he established the business of a general country shop. This business became valuable, and the landlord knew the tenant would pay anything rather than be deprived of it. At the expiration of his lease, accordingly, a new lease was forced on him at an exorbitant rent, and he had to pay to the landlord a fine of £500 in respect of the business which he had himself created. This lease was forced on him by threat of eviction in the very tangible form of notice to quit. This man had no remedy under the Land Act, for the reason that the lease was forced upon him, not when he was a tenant from year to year, but on the expiration of another lease. Another way in which the leaseholders since 1870 had been cheated out of the benefits of the Act was by the provision making it necessary to prove that the lease had been forced under threat of eviction. Many landlords or their agents had sworn that the notices to quit were not technically to make them accept a new lease, but to induce them to pay a higher rent. Upon that subtle distinction a large number of applications were dismissed. He had a curious piece of information with regard to how the Lease Clause had worked in the county Wicklow. Sir Edward Hutchinson had a number of tenants who, up to 1872, were tenants from year to year. In 1872 large increases of rent were demanded from them, and they were given the option either to take a lease or not. Many of them accepted leases as the lesser of two evils. Those people had to pay as high rents as those who did not accept leases, and were now shut out from the benefit of the Act. The others had gone into the Land Court and obtained reductions varying from 20 to 30 per cent. That illustration showed how the Lease Clause of the Land Act was a mockery. It had kept the word of promise to the ears of the people and broken it to their hopes. This Bill proposed to deal with the question of leases in a thorough and simple fashion. He proposed to place a leaseholder on the same footing as any other tenant in Ireland, so that if he considered that he was suffering injustice he could apply to the Land Court for redress, and trust to the Court to judge of the merits of each individual case. He trusted when the Bill was discussed they would hear no more about the exploded fallacy of freedom of contract between landlord and tenant; it no more existed in the case of leaseholders than in the case of yearly tenants. It was well known to all who were acquainted with Ireland that no tenants were more severely rack-rented than the leaseholders. Unless the protection and benefits of the Land Act were extended to this class of tenants, it must fail to meet the requirements and to satisfy the just demands of the Irish people. He now passed to the third matter of importance dealt with by this Bill. He referred to the "Healy Clause," which he might be permitted to call the heart of the Land Bill of last year. That heart had been paralyzed, if not killed, by the judgment of the Court of Appeal in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath." The "Healy Clause" enacted that no tenant should be charged rent in respect of improvements made by himself or predecessors in title for which he or they had not been compensated by the landlord. The Court of Appeal in "Adams *v.* Dunseath" practically killed this provision, by defining the word "improvements" to mean improvement works effected by the tenant, and not the increased letting value which was the consequence of that improvement. He might give from a magazine article which he read the other day an illustration which bore on this point. It was the case of a tenant who held a farm, a portion of which was waterlogged, and valueless in consequence. The tenant expended £100 in drainage works, thus largely increasing the letting value of the farm. According to the ruling in "Adams *v.* Dunseath," the tenant would be only entitled to a fair percentage on his £100, and all the increased letting value of the holding became the property of the landlord. He did not believe that this proposition would bear a moment's examination. Assuredly the farmer rented the land as it stood. If by his action he injured the farm, he had to pay the landlord compensation for deterioration. If by his action he improved it, why should the benefit not be his? If his speculation were unsuccessful, his was the loss. If successful, assuredly the entire benefit should be his. But this was only one point in the judgment to which he referred. The Court decided, and they laid down the doctrine that the enjoyment for a certain time was to be taken as compensation by the tenant. He did not believe that the Judges in the Court of Appeal had acted in accordance with the spirit in which the right hon. Gentleman the Premier framed the measure. The doctrine of enjoyment being compensation was unjust. In many cases tenants had been paying exorbitant rents in respect of their own improvements. This Bill provided that in cases of improvement the presumption should be in favour of the tenant, that the burden of proof should be thrown upon the landlord. This was manifestly fair, because the tenants had no records to show the money they expended; whereas the landlord could have very little difficulty in showing, from the accounts in his rent office, every farthing spent by him on improvements. The Bill proposed to define improvements as not only improvements in works, but improvements in the letting value of the holding. It proposed that the doctrine of compensation by enjoyment should be done away with. It also further defined and elucidated the term "predecessor in title." Up to this point they had been dealing with the relations of landlords and tenants in Ireland. They regarded that portion of the Land Act as a stop-gap. It could not provide a permanent settlement of the Land Question, and if they desired to make the defective clauses more efficient, it was only to secure protection and justice to tenants pending the settlement of the question on different lines. The Land League had, it seemed, accomplished a great work in the political world to-day. They found all sections of Irish politicians, and English politicians as well, acknowledging that the only permanent settlement of the Land Question which was possible was the settlement advocated in the first place by Michael Davitt and the Land League. Landlordism in Ireland was doomed; and the landlords were crying out in behalf of those doctrines which two years ago were denounced as confiscation and robbery. The Purchase Clauses of the Land Act were inoperative, because they were halting and half-hearted proposals in their conception. The proposals contained in this Bill were thorough and practical, and they were also, as he contended, strictly moderate. Where the Land Court was satisfied of the credit of the applicant it was empowered to advance the whole of the purchase money to the present tenant. In the case of a tenant over £30 valuation it was proposed that the Court should hand over the money on annuities of 5 per cent, extending over a period of 35 years. To tenants under £30 it was proposed that the Commissioners should be empowered to advance the whole of the money on annuities to be repaid at the rate of £3 16*s*. per annum, extending over 52 years. Those proposals worked out very simply. In the case of a tenant occupying a farm at £40 a-year, the Court would advance the £800 required for the purchase, and upon that amount the tenant would pay £5 per cent, or £40 a year for 35 years, when the farm would become his own; and in the case of a tenant occupying a farm at £20 rent, the Court would advance the £400 purchase money, and the tenant would pay £3 15*s*. per cent, or £15 4*s*. a-year for 52 years, at the end of which time he would become the owner of the soil. In the case of the tenant paying over £30 there would be no increase of rent; in the case of the tenant paying less than £30 a-year there would be an actual reduction of rent. To these proposals, which were moderate and practical, he did not anticipate any serious objection. From the landlords he certainly did not expect any opposition, because some such proposals as these must be carried if a large number of the landlords were to be saved from inevitable ruin. As for the Government, he confessed he did not know what to expect. If the Government had grasped the situation in Ireland they could have no hesitation in accepting the Bill. It provided the means of staying the strife of generations, and arriving at a generous, amicable, and just settlement. He could not conceive that the Government was so dead to the sense of its responsibility in Ireland as to refuse to give its approval to the proposals in the Bill. From the landlord's point of view, the proposals were just and fair. He was one of those who did not desire that every man in Ireland who was a landlord should be driven from the country; and he was convinced that if these proposals were carried out, some, at any rate, of the landlords, even though they might have to sell their estates, would be content to live in the country for the future. Those of them who had any love for Ireland, any sympathy with the wishes and aspirations of the people, would remain; and those of them who had not might go, for they were alien in spirit as well as in race. There were other proposals in the Bill, but he would not go into them, as they were matters of detail, and he must thank the House for having given him its attention. He had explained, as clearly as he could, the important provisions of the Bill. He had said that the proposals were moderate. They were not made on the responsibility of one Member of the House, but they were the proposals of the whole Irish Parliamentary Party for the amendment of the Land Act, for the restoration of peace and order in Ireland. It was their answer--and it was a complete and crushing answer — to those who said that they desired to deprive the tenants of the benefits of the Act of last year. He did not know what fate awaited the Bill; but this, at all events, he knew—that if the Government abandoned their hateful policy of Coercion, which baffled conciliation, and which proved utterly powerless to repress—if they accepted the proposals now submitted to them by the Irish Party, in a spirit of honesty and moderation, he believed in his heart they would be doing a great deal to hasten the arrival of the day when Ireland would no longer be what she was now—a disgrace and a danger to England—but when she would be a peaceful and prosperous nation, finding the best security for law and order in the existence and prosperity of a peasant proprietary, and finding her surest guarantee for liberty and Constitutional rights in laws made by Irishmen on Irish soil.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Redmond.*)

Mr. GLADSTONE: I do not think, Sir, that we have any right to complain either of the length of the speech of the hon. Gentleman, in which he has introduced an important, and what, I hope, will be a useful debate, or of the judicious method he has pursued in directing our attention rather to what he considers the principal and essential features of his Bill, than to a very full and exhaustive statement of its details —or, finally, of the spirit of that speech, in regard to which I make due allowance for the points of view from which he approaches the subject. Of course, there are parts of it—I mean parts of his general declaration — in which he will not expect me to concur; but I fully grant that, from the point of view of one who has approved of many proceedings in Ireland down to the present date, of which I am not able to approve, he has fairly and impartially said everything that he could in his speech towards opening a favourable prospect for the working of the system of the Land Law in Ireland. There is one extremely important portion of the speech and of the Bill which I intend to recognize as a most fair and proper subject—a most allowable subject—for present and immediate discussion; but on which I do not propose to dwell to-day, for a reason which I will give, and which, I think, the hon. Member will probably admit to be sufficient. My object in rising at this moment is, in the first place, to do such justice as I can to the spirit and to the language of the hon. Gentleman; and, in the second place, perhaps, to narrow, to some extent, the field of the debate. Sir, I undoubtedly regard this Bill as establishing, on the part of those who have brought it in, a fair claim to this acknowledgment—that we are bound to assume the perfect good faith of their proceeding; and, whether we agree or do not agree with the principal enactments of the Bill, we cannot, I think, in justice, construe it otherwise than as an authentic expression of the desire of the hon. Gentleman and his Friends to make the working of the Land Act such as that it shall be, in their view, an effectual security for the restoration of peace and tranquillity in Ireland. Indeed, Sir, the language of the hon. Gentleman near the commencement of his speech—I do not know that I quote his exact words—left no room for doubt upon this head; because he said, in effect, that the Land Act and the provisions which it contained, *plus* the Bill of the hon. Member, with the provisions which that Bill contains, afforded the only means of restoring peace and prosperity to Ireland. That is, undoubtedly, a declaration worthy of notice, coming from the hon. Member, as the person principally in charge of this Bill, and as speaking for those whose names are on the back of the Bill, and for others. Under these circumstances, I regret that, for reasons which I will state, and for which the hon. Member himself must be prepared, it is not in the power of the Government to support the second reading of this Bill. He has spoken of the Bill as containing four main heads—one of them the subject of arrears, to which he assigns, at the present moment, an overwhelming importance; the second, the subject of the Purchase Clauses, to which he assigns not so much importance at the present moment, but which, under the ultimate development of the measure, is also of overwhelming importance; and the third, I will call it, though he took it second, the question of leases, to which he assigns a very great importance; and, lastly, the subject of improvements, to which he assigns, likewise, a very great importance. That is what I understand to be a very rough outline of the hon. Member's speech. Now, I draw a disdinction in speaking of the provisions of this Bill. I am not prepared, and we are not prepared, to depart from the grounds upon which we originally objected to the institution of a Parliamentary inquiry into the working of the Land Act. We considered, and we still consider, that the Tenure Clauses of the Bill ought not to be disturbed, nor, at the present time, to be amended. That we consider as a general rule. But there are matters outside the main subject of these Tenure Clauses with respect to which that objection does not apply. It certainly does not apply to the question of the Purchase Clauses; and I am bound to say that, in our judgment, it does not apply to the question of arrears. The question of arrears is one that may be dealt with without, in the slightest degree, disturbing the general structure of the Tenure Classes. But the question of the Purchase Clauses is one of a wholly different character. It is really not a question of interfering with the working of the Land Act—for the Purchase Clauses can hardly be said to have got to work—but it is a question whether, either by the modification of the plan which was embodied in the Bill, or by the development of the subject in accordance with some larger plan, good can be done with reference to what I think a very large majority of the House appear to contemplate as the ultimate solution of the Irish Land Question. Now, the hon. Member must not conclude from the remarks which I am about to make that I am derogating from what I have said with respect to the Purchase Clauses. The great Irish question will naturally present itself from three points of view to the mind of any Gentleman contemplating it. One point of view will be that which relates to the present Bill for the amendment of the Land Act—rather generally for the amendment of the Land Act. One will be the subject of the Purchase Clauses of the Act; and the third will be the important question of the proposals which it may be our duty to make during the present Session for the direct purpose of the maintenance of peace and order in Ireland. As regards the subject of peace and order in Ireland, I think, considering that that discussion stands in a certain form, at least, for an early day, it would be wrong on my part to advert to it at the present moment. I think, Sir, as respects the Purchase Clauses, the hon. Gentleman will probably feel that when a Notice has been given on the part of a large section of this House, which, in itself, leads to the expectation of proposals of great importance and great weight, considering the quarter from which they proceed, I should only prejudice that discussion; and I could not enter adequately upon this portion of the hon. Member's Bill were I to venture upon any remarks on that part of the subject beyond the admission I have made that it is a perfectly allowable subject for practical consideration, if we can have that consideration during the present Session. Now, Sir, the reason why we cannot support the second reading of this Bill is, that in many of the clauses of the Bill—in the majority of them—it does re-open, and re-opens very largely, the Land Tenure Clauses of the Act of last year. We have given the best advice and the best consideration in our power to the subject of those clauses. We did consider it at the time when the proposal for Parliamentary inquiry was made in the House of Lords. We opposed that inquiry, taking into view, undoubtedly, the associations under which the proposal was made. But, whatever those associations may have been, and even putting them aside—though I will not say that we have felt ourselves absolutely precluded by any preliminary bar, or by the idea of consistency with the course taken at the commencement of the Session, from reconsidering the subjects of leases and improvements, which I take as the two main divisions of the hon. Member's Bill with which I am now dealing—yet we are advisedly of opinion that, looking at the whole subject of the Act of last year, the delicacy of the questions raised, the gravity of the interests involved, and the amount of case which the hon. Gentleman is able to show for interference on those points, we should not be justified in acceding to the second reading of a Bill which involves the acceptance of a principle that so largely disturbs the framework of the Act. With respect to the question of improvements, we admit that, in certain points, the judgment to which the hon. Gentleman has referred does not accurately correspond—far be it for me to say it does not accurately correspond with the Act, because that would be a judgment questioning the legal authority of those who have given the decision—but does not accurately correspond with the intentions with which the Land Act was framed. But it has been our duty to consider carefully, in concert with our own Legal Advisers, and in concert with the Commissioners, so far as it has been in our power, what is the real scope and the real importance of those deviations, and we do not find that the scope of those deviations is such as—especially in the absence of a large experience—would justify us in re-opening the whole of that most difficult, complex question with regard to the relations of landlord and tenant in respect to improvements. Again, in respect to leases, I do not deny that there may be plausibility, and perhaps more than plausibility, in the claim made by the hon. Member that the tenant who takes a lease in succession to another lease may be entitled to have his claim, as against abuse, considered, as he would be entitled if he had been a yearly tenant before the conclusion of the lease. But we are not able to say that that, after all, is the question which is mainly kept in view by those who desire to re-open the subject of leases. The question mainly, in their view, evidently is this—they desire to place the lessee-tenant upon the same footing with the yearly tenant, not only with regard to his enjoyment of whatever advantage may arise in respect of abuses practised against him, but their claim—I do not say that Gentlemen may not be warranted, from their point of view, in raising it—is to have a reconsideration of rents under leases, in the same way as rents under yearly tenancies. Well, I must be frank to the hon. Members. We, I think, considered that matter pretty fully. I am not sure that the secondary point I have mentioned was considered last year; but, at any rate, the question of altering rents under leases was very distinctly considered, and the Government very distinctly gave their judgment that they would not be warranted in asking the House to interfere with the covenanting leases in regard to land. Our contention always, I think, was this—when we gave effect to the opinion of those who hold that a lease in Ireland does not extinguish tenant right, we contended that a lease was known and believed in Ireland to be a covenant to pay a certain rent for a certain number of years; and with that covenant we are not prepared to interfere. I now come to this most important question—the question of arrears. That is a provision of a temporary character; and I am bound to admit that, although the clause in the Act of last year has been by no means without utility, and although no inconsiderable claims have been made in respect to no inconsiderable amount of arrears under it; yet it has proved to be very far short indeed of the necessities of the case. The hon. Member, I think, himself spoke—at any rate, various Members sitting in that quarter of the House have spoken—of the failure of that clause as constituting the failure of the Land Act; and have described the failure of the Land Act, from their point of view, as a dismal failure, very much in connection with the operation of this clause. On the other hand, we have heard from our own side of the House—and from very many Members sitting on our own side of the House, who appear to me to be quite as well entitled to speak for their constituents in Ireland as those whom the hon. Gentleman calls the Irish Parliamentary Party—urgent and repeated applications to draw us into a discussion of the question of arrears. We have never repelled those applications; we have not been insensible to the great and serious difficulties with which the question has been surrounded. I am quite prepared to say that we think it demands our practical consideration; and that we certainly look with some confidence, provided we can attain certain substantial conditions, to legislating upon the subject at a somewhat early date during the present Session. Now, Sir, the conditions which we deem to be essential to a satisfactory plan are these. We do not look upon this as a matter which ought to lead us into a general contentious re-opening of questions that have been considered and dealt with. We desire to be able to approach it—when we do approach it—in a spirit of perfect impartiality. It is for the interest of landlords quite as much as of tenants—and it is to the interest of all classes in Ireland, and of the country, and of the Empire, which never can be well while Ireland is ill—that, if possible, we should arrive at some fair and impartial settlement of this question. Well, then, next to the impartiality with which it is our duty to approach the question—and, indeed, if possible, even beyond it in its importance—is our desire to move in accordance with Irish opinion. And here I am not about to draw any invidious distinctions. After the speech of the hon. Member, I should be totally without justification if I did not give expression on this occasion to what, after all, is a truism and a commonplace—namely, that Ministers charged with the Government of the country, and with advising the House in the work of legislation, have no right, even if they had the inclination, to bear in mind, upon a subject of this kind, former differences, however sharp; and that it is their duty to invite from every quarter every suggestion which they can obtain from persons qualified to speak which may contribute to a satisfactory solution of the question; and therefore, also, I hope that those whom I see sitting directly opposite—and I am glad to see both the right hon. and learned Gentlemen the Members for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson and Mr. Plunket) with a pen or pencil in hand—will not withhold their counsel in regard to a practical subject of great importance, and I trust that no barrier of Party differences or old recollections may arise. And, thirdly, what I feel is this. Having to re-open the question of arrears, our plan must not only be impartial, it must not only be sustained by a wide concurrence of Irish opinion; but I hope it may be so framed as to be effectual. We have had the advantage of a good deal of Irish opinion upon this subject; but I think those who have applied their minds to it will be prepared for a little further development from myself. It is obvious, I think, that the question of arrears may conceivably be dealt with upon either one of two bases. There are a great number of important secondary questions involved in the question of arrears. The source from which the money is to be derived, and many other points, are points of importance, upon which a responsible judgment must be exercised by the Government, and by the House. But there are two distinct and definite bases, upon either of which a measure may be founded. It may be a voluntary measure; it may be a compulsory measure. If it is a voluntary measure, then it will be framed on the basis of the Act of last year. It would proceed upon the principle of making loans to tenants, and of the repayment of these loans under their voluntary action, with an increase of the inducements which were offered by the Land Act. But the Bill of the hon. Member contains a Compulsory Clause, and I am not sorry that it contains that Compulsory Clause; because I think that the question between voluntary and compulsory action is a question which may, under the present circumstances, be fairly entertained; and that the choice which the Government might make between those two methods of procedure is a choice that would be materially influenced by what they find to be the state of Irish opinion. That Irish opinion, I hope, will be largely drawn forth by the discussion of the Bill which the hon. Gentleman has laid before us. I have nearly said all I have to say upon these matters; but I wish to speak a few words on the clause of the hon. Gentleman with regard to arrears. It is on the basis of compulsion, and, being on the basis of compulsion, I am bound to say that I think it a clause, upon the whole, drawn with great care and judgment. There are several points in that Clause to which I wish to refer. In the first place, arrears, in the language of that Clause, are to be arrears owing in respect of rents due before and down to November, 1880. That is an important—a very important—condition of the Clause. Secondly, the Clause of the hon. Gentleman proceeds upon proved incapacity to pay. That, likewise, is a provision of great importance, and of great value, if we can work it. When we induced the House to pass, in 1880, what was called the Compensation for Disturbance Bill—I am not going to refer to any matters associated with that name—we proposed to proceed upon the basis of proved incapacity to pay. We were under the belief that the Civil Bill Court would be competent to deal with that question; and I do not despair, if a plan of this kind be adopted, of its working this provision, which, in point of principle, is a very valuable provision. Thirdly, the Clause draws a distinction, which I think is just, at a certain point of valuation. It marks the intention of the framers to meet the necessities of the case, and not to go beyond that necessity. The fourth point, as I have said, is that the basis of it is compulsion—that is to say, the application of the one party will suffice to make it compulsory on the other party. Now, I do not know—I am not now giving any judgment on the part of the Government—but I hope, with the hon. Member, it will not be supposed that because its basis is compulsory, it is therefore a Clause conceived in a spirit of hostility to either party. I myself happen to be acquainted with the sentiments of some considerable number of Irish landlords, and men who have taken a large share in the discussion of this question—by no means on the side of the tenant—who appeared to desire that some compulsory plan, in the sense I have described, of dealing with arrears should be introduced and adopted. That is a subject of great importance, and a subject on which we are anxious for more light. The hon. Gentleman finally proposes that the sum which may be advanced in respect of arrears under his Clause shall be a gift, and not a loan. I entirely agree with him that if we are to proceed upon the basis that he has described, that is the proper course to take; and I will go one point further, and say I think he is right in drawing the sum that he desires to have from the Church Surplus, in so far as this—that I do not know that anything could be more emphatically a peace-offering, or a more legitimate application of that money, than the application of it to this proposal. But I will go a point further, and I will say this—it would not be fair, on my part, to ask the hon. Gentleman whether he has entered into a careful calculation to show that the Church Surplus will yield at the present moment money sufficient for this purpose. But, viewing the nature of his case, I would venture to go one point further, and say that, believing, as we do, that the matter, although serious and important in a pecuniary point of view, yet is limited, I should not myself be prepared to make it a fundamental objection to a Compulsory Clause that something might possibly be required from the Public Exchequer in order to work that Clause efficiently. I am very anxious, indeed, to take the care that properly appertains to my function in setting forth what I conceive to be the main parts of this very important Clause in order that it may draw the attention of the House, and that we may learn whether Irish opinion is favourable to the one mode of proceeding or to the other mode of proceeding. For my part, I have stated the three conditions which, I think, it is our duty absolutely to keep in view—namely, in the first place, to treat this subject impartially; secondly, to treat it in conformity with Irish opinion, so far as we can entertain it, and to allow no recollections of former transactions to interfere with our appreciation of that opinion; and, thirdly, to make, if we can, a plan which shall be effective. What I hope is, that considering the good and fair spirit in which the hon. Gentleman has opened this question, the debate may be a debate which will tend mainly to a practical issue, and which will give to the Government that light and aid which I think the House will feel that we must necessarily want, before we can endeavour to enter upon the reconsideration of this most important subject of arrears in connection with the section of the Act. Not alone, I must say, the speech of the hon. Gentleman, but the introduction of the Bill itself, I hold to be a favourable symptom; and I trust that the debate may throw a light upon a horizon which has long unhappily been darkened. If it is, I cannot say how great a value I attach to any expectations connected with it; because, though I know, and have perfect confidence in the power of this country, and in the solidity of this Empire, for the purpose of asserting everywhere the Imperial authority, yet I likewise know that it is an Empire organized on the principles of freedom —that the compulsory government of any of its parts is an idea hostile and alien to the entire spirit of the Constitution. Therefore, whatever may tend to the uniting of Ireland, for a great practical purpose such as that we have in view, which raises no subjects of Constitutional difficulty, but which touches the whole constitution of society in that country—the importance of it I cannot overstate. Nor can I overstate the earnest anxiety of the Government to know that no weakness and no pettiness on their part shall interfere with their adoption of such a course as may be most conducive, not only to the passing of legislation in a satisfactory manner, but to the completing, in a most essential point, the important labours of last year for the benefit and for the happiness of all classes of the people of Ireland.

Mr. HEALY said, he was sure that he should not be expressing the opinion of hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House if he did not endeavour to reciprocate the expressions of the right hon. Gentleman in the temper in which he had met the proposals in this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman stated that he thought he saw in the Bill a gleam of hope; but their feeling of satisfaction with the course taken by the right hon. Gentleman was considerably mitigated by his statement that he would be obliged to vote against the second reading; and he (Mr. Healy) could not help regretting that when the Premier had stated that a gleam of hope which had been shed on the question the Government should proceed to place an extinguisher upon it. But he must say that their feeling was again mitigated by the statement that it was the intention of the Government to deal with the arrears question. He was very glad, indeed, that the Government had seen the great importance of it. It was a question which he might say, in the present condition of affairs in Ireland, was one of the greatest magnitude; and he thought, so far as he could judge from the expressions of the right hon. Gentleman, that the Government were about to meet the question in a proper spirit, as they were evidently intending to meet the wishes of the Irish people. With regard to the proposal to make the charge fall upon the Irish Church Surplus, which was an Irish fund, the Government must remember that it was not in the power of any private Member to propose to make a charge upon the public funds, and upon the pockets of the country; and, therefore, they were restricted to the Irish Church Surplus, as they were obliged to put forward some scheme, and he (Mr. Healy) considered it was a proper fund to be applied as they proposed. Therefore, he listened with satisfaction to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, that his mind was not shut against the question of the augmentation of that fund for the purpose of a charge upon the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman stated that they could not disturb the Tenure Clauses of the Bill—namely, those relating to improvements and leases. As to the first point, he gathered that the right hon. Gentleman did not admit the accuracy of the statements made by them on that question. But he stated he would wait, in order to see the effect of "Adams *v.* Dunseath." He (Mr. Healy) had occasion to put a Question on this point to the right hon. Gentleman; and his reply intimated that, while the decisions of the Court did not express the intention of the Government, yet he would watch carefully any further manifestations of injustice that might be occasioned by the decision in "Adams *v.* Dunseath." Before coming down to the House he (Mr. Healy) had fortified himself with some cases of that description. He took the case of two tenants on the estate of the Knight of Glin—Dillon and Hanrahan—who had appealed against the decision of the Sub-Commissioners; and their rents were raised, in one case £4 and the other £3, by the Court of Appeal in consequence. Owing to the decision in "Adams *v.* Dunseath," the judgment given by Judge O'Hagan represented a loss for the next 15 years of £60 in the case of Dillon, and £45 in that of Hanrahan. They had before the Court at present no less than 70,000 cases; and he asked the Prime Minister if he could give them any assurance as to what percentage of those cases injustice would not be worked by similar decisions? Last year the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) proposed an Amendment which was intended to put it beyond doubt that no enjoyment of improvements by the tenant was to entitle the Court to increase rent. The declarations of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister on this point were remarkable. On the 9th of August the right hon. Gentleman said that—

> "In the Act of 1870 we did, in respect to the tenant, recognize the principle that he might be recompensed by a reasonable lapse of time in respect of the improvements he had made, and that the use and profits of those improvements for a certain time might be considered as compensation; but we do not recognize that principle in the present Act."—[3 *Hansard*, cclxiv. 1393.]

On another occasion the right hon. Gentleman, speaking on an Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), said that the doctrine accepted at the time of the passing of the Act of 1870 was one they must certainly decline to recognize then, as it was neither the basis of the Act of 1881, nor was there any occasion for it—that was the doctrine that the enjoyment by the tenant of the improvements on the property for a certain time should be a ground for raising the rent. But the language of the Government was still more remarkable when the hon. Member for the City of Cork moved his Amendment on that subject, to the effect that the time during which a tenant might have enjoyed the advantages of his improvements should not be held to be compensation. The present Lord Chancellor of Ireland (Mr. Law) said that it was absurd to suppose that the Court would hold enjoyment to mean that the tenant had been paid for his improvements. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) also said the Amendment was unnecessary, because it was little short of impossible to imagine that a Court could think that compensation was due to the landlord for an improvement which had not cost him a single farthing. He (Mr. Healy) then rose, and, being mindful of a racy expression which the right hon. Gentleman had made use of, asked him if he would lay 10 to 1 that the Court would not assess rents on tenants' improvements. The right hon. Gentleman nodded, as much as to say that he was prepared to do so. Perhaps it was fortunate there was no stake involved, for if there had been, he was inclined to think that he (Mr. Healy) would have been, by this time, a considerable winner. He wished to call attention to a still more important matter. In the Act of 1881 there was no definition of improvements. There was, however, a statement that the definition of matters not given in the Act of 1881 was to be ruled by the Act of 1870; and that defined "improvement" to mean any work on an agricultural holding which adds to the value of the holding, and which is necessary to the holding. The most important point in the Bill was that, while it approved the definition of the Act of 1870, it omitted the requirement that the improvement should be suitable to the holding. He thought he could show that the definition of improvements in that Act, in view of the 9th sub-section of the 8th clause of the latter Statute, worked very unfortunately for the tenant. Let them take a case. Suppose that under the Act of 1870 the tenant built a villa residence on a farm. That, not being an improvement suitable to the holding, the landlord would not be bound to pay compensation for. But in the Act of 1881, it was stated that no rent should be payable on a tenant's own improvements. In "Adams *v.* Dunseath," however, the Court of Appeal had laid down that such rent might be charged when there had been a user for a certain time. The effect was that where there was an improvement which might be very necessary for the holding, but which the landlord did not deem to be so, the tenant might be assessed for it. Therefore, they were in a worse position than ever under that Act, than if the tenants had been left to make any arrangements they could with their landlords. It was a most extraordinary state of things.

The tenant was put in a worse position by the Act of 1881, with regard to improvements, than he was by the Act of 1870, because, in the Act of 1870, he was dealing with a landlord who would deal with him, in reference to assessing rents upon improvements, from motives of policy; but the Act of 1881 had taken out of the landlord's hands altogether the power of fixing rents, and put it into the hands of the Court, which was bound to decide the matter on mathematical and legal principles; and the legal principle was—that no matter what improvements might be made by the tenant, so long as he got a user of them, the Court was bound to fix a rent on them. Under the Act of 1870, the landlord was not bound to assess rent upon improvements unsuitable to the holding; but now the landlord had no power in the matter, and the Court was bound to fix rent upon such improvements. The Prime Minister had admitted that it was not the view of Parliament that rent should be levied on improvements. The cases he (Mr. Healy) had quoted showed that it was so levied. Therefore, he considered that they had made out a very excellent case as regarded improvements; and he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it was not his intention that rents should not be assessed in those cases? What were the intentions of the Government in regard to the other thousands of tenants whose cases had yet to be heard? Because of a failure on the part of Parliament, were these men to go on paying what the Prime Minister himself had said was unjust and beyond the intention of Parliament? In effect the right hon. Gentleman practically stated that because the House of Lords had brought forward a Committee, and because he was obliged to put down his foot at an early period of the Session, and say he would not have the Act of last year disturbed, he did not want to take it up again, notwithstanding that he saw his putting his foot down was doing an injustice to a large class of the people. Owing to the decision in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath," if it continued to be followed in the cases of some 80,000 tenants who had applied to the Court, at a fair percentage the loss to the tenants would amount to at least £1,000,000. Yet the right hon. Gentleman said, because the House of Lords had asked for a Committee, that he was not prepared to disturb the Improvement Clauses, although he (Mr. Healy) had shown what the original intentions of the Government and of Parliament were, and notwithstanding that he had instanced cases in which the tenants were sustaining considerable loss, and that, upon a fair average, the loss to the thousands whose cases had yet to be dealt with would amount to millions of money. This only impressed the more strongly on the minds of the Irish Members the real reason why the Government did not wish to disturb this Act of Parliament. What they were thinking of was the time of Parliament. The House had not time to attend to this matter. When the right hon. Gentleman thought of the weary days and nights of last year, he might be well excused if he hesitated at the prospect of another series of nights such as they had last year. Although, in a sense, it was to the Irish Members a labour of love, still they had no desire for it to be repeated. But in plain justice to the people of Ireland the Government ought to tell them what they intended to do, seeing that their failure to carry out their original intention of the Act of last year would involve the Irish farmers in a loss of so large a sum of money. The failure of the Act in the respect pointed out had not been owing to any *laches* on the part of the Irish Party, for the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had brought forward an Amendment which would have safeguarded the tenants, and saved these millions to the tenants; and it would be remembered that when that Amendment was submitted, the right hon. Gentleman stated that he could not conceive the probability of any Court ever holding that user by the tenant was a compensation for his improvements. The excuse given for not dealing with this matter was a very poor one; but he saw in his mind's eye a House that would be only too glad to lend its ear to the cry of the Irish tenant. But the only House which had the time and inclination to deal with that important matter had been destroyed, and the men who would constitute it were powerless. Therefore, when the foreign Government in Ireland had to consider whether, from the points of view of time and politics, they could deal with the question, it was humiliating for the Irish Party to come forward and to plead before foreigners, knowing well that the treatment of the question depended very much on how it would tend to serve Party purposes. That was, unfortunately, the conclusion which was forced on them. He had dealt at sufficient length with the first point—the improvements. As to the second, which was that the use by the tenant or his predecessors in title should be deemed compensation for improvements, the Court, in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath," had held that the word "improvements" meant the labour and capital expended by the tenant on the land which tended to increase its value, and not the increase in value. For those improvements the tenant was to pay. Thus, if a man expended £1,000 on his land, according to the Court, he would be simply entitled to an interest on it, and not to gain anything from the improved working of the land, owing to this £1,000 having been put upon it. That meant that if the £1,000 brought no interest, the tenant would receive none; and, if it did, the landlord was to share it with the tenant. That seemed to admit the truth of the allegation which had been made in that House, that the improvability of the land belonged to the landlord. But he was prepared to prove that such was not the case. Supposing a landlord had two farms, and charged £50 per annum for them, one being improvable and the other non-improvable, was he to be told that £50 did not include, in the view of the landlord, the improvability, on the one hand, and the non-improvability on the other? The Irish landlord was not a fool, and when he let his land he would take care that he fixed such a rent as would include the improvability. The improvability was already taken into account in the rent, and all benefits arising from any expenditure which tended further to improve the land must necessarily, in common justice, belong to the tenant. This Bill, which the Government had refused, was intended, therefore, to make clear the decision of the Court in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath." He wished to call attention for a moment to the pledge given last year by the Prime Minister on the subject of town parks. The right hon. Gentleman had then said that he could see no reason in principle why a man holding town parks land should be excluded from the benefit of the Act, and why they should not be treated like other holdings.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, the hon. Member must have misunderstood him. He had stated that, in his opinion, it was worthy of consideration whether the cases of these persons ought not to be dealt with in some Bill. He had never intended to convey the belief that town parks ought to be dealt with like other holdings.

Mr. HEALY said, this recalled to his mind the circumstance that, in the discussion on the matter, the Irish Members proposed that in respect to town parks the Act should be limited to towns of over 6,000 inhabitants, and the right hon. Gentleman said he could see no principle upon which distinction should be made between towns according to the number of their inhabitants; but he also said, during the course of the coming Recess, he would look into the subject. At any rate, he knew this—that when he had asked the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether he could give them any idea as to the area in Ireland covered by town parks, and the right hon. Gentleman having endeavoured to get the information through the only machinery for the purpose in the country—namely, the Local Government Board—stated that he was unable to find the area. The result was that nothing whatever had been done; but he (Mr. Healy) was sorry the matter had as yet remained undealt with, for the view had been conveyed to the Irish tenantry that it was the intention of the Government to inquire into it. These town parks, unfortunately, were very often held by persons carrying on some small business, perhaps the business of a publican, grocer, or general dealer, in a small village. According to the view of the right hon. Gentleman, these men were not farmers. He held that they were traders first and farmers afterwards. The people themselves, however, if asked what they were, would describe themselves as farmers first and shopkeepers afterwards. These men were excluded from the Act; and it appeared to them, and to him (Mr. Healy) also, very unfair that this should occur because a man eked out his living in the way described. Furthermore, there was what was called land let for accommodation purposes. It frequently appeared that a country doctor, with an income of about £90 a-year, or a parish priest or curate, whose income was generally small, found it necessary, to eke out his salary, to farm a a little land. That was at once held to be accommodation land, and the consequence was that those who farmed it were subjected to rack rents. In dealing with these matters the right hon. Gentleman should take a broad and comprehensive view, and include all classes within the provisions of the Act except a very special class indeed, and leave it to the Court to decide whether the rent fixed was a fair one or not. Finally, he desired to draw the attention of the Prime Minister to a very important matter which was untouched by the Land Act. There were now some 70,000 cases remaining undealt with by the Court. In the 60th section of the Act it was stated that all applications made to the Court up to a certain time were to be considered as having been made on the first day the Court sat, and, therefore, that the rent fixed by it should date as from the first rent day before the Act came into operation in August, so that the rents would date from March. There were 60,000 of the cases still down for hearing to which this section would apply. The Court was blocked, and it might be two or three years before the cases were disposed of. Therefore, while it could cut down the rents from March, 1881, the landlords might in the three years the tenants were waiting to have their cases tried, proceed against them by ejectment and turn them out, although it might afterwards turn out that the rents were far too high, and ought to be lowered some 25 or 30 per cent. The right hon. Gentleman, merely for the sake of technicality, because he did not wish to interfere with the Tenure Clauses of the Bill, was going to exclude 60,000 people from the benefits of the Act. It appeared to him (Mr. Healy) that this was a very unfortunate thing—there was something almost ludicrous about it. He could not believe that it had ever entered into the heads of the Government that there would be at least 60,000 tenants who would have made application, and whose rents would have been cut down as from the gale day before the passing of the Act. If the Government had imagined that there would have been such a large rush, surely they would have made arrangements to have safeguarded the tenants' interests until the Court could fix the rents permanently. They had not made such arrangements, however. This was an Act for which the tenants were told they ought to be grateful; but it led to strange anomalies. But the present Bill, whilst it carefully recognized the title of the landlord to rent, said that only the Government valuation should be made payable until a fair rent was fixed, and contained provisions thoroughly securing the tenants who were waiting to have the rent so fixed. The Government did not deem it necessary to refer to this clause in the Bill, or to the poor people who, on the faith of the right hon. Gentleman's representation, had gone into the Court, and were practically liable to be shipwrecked in the meantime whilst waiting to have their cases heard, without any protection from the Government. It appeared to him that this was an extraordinary thing, so much so that attention could not be too often and too vigorously called to it. It was now proposed that until the decision of the Court could be obtained in these numerous cases, there should be a stay of all proceedings, and that the rents should be taken at Griffith's valuation from the date of the application which was to relate back to the day after the passing of the Act. Doubtless, in all human affairs, most proposals, which dealt with conflicting interests as between man and man, were more or less imperfect and open to improvements, and that Bill, of course, had its imperfections; but he should like to know, bound as they were to bring forward a proposition on behalf of the tenant which would not have the appearance of being too much opposed to the landlord's interest, what proposal a body of men could have brought forward that would have been more impartial or more just to all parties interested? If the Government had properly considered the position of these tenants, he should have thought they would have done something for them. He would, therefore, appeal to them now not to exclude this subject from their action. The right hon. Gentleman had described the bringing forward of that Bill that day as a gleam of light amid the clouds of the Irish difficulty, and had said he believed it was the intention of the Irish Home Rule Party to make the Land Act of 1881 a living reality in Irish minds. He desired to impress upon the right hon. Gentleman that when a proposal of that kind was brought forward, it must be taken as an indication of the desire of the Home Rule Party, in the first place, to answer the charge that had been brought against them of attempting to upset and to shipwreck the Act of 1881; and, in the second place, to set themselves right with the country and prove their *bonâ fides* by bringing in a Bill of this kind, which had been described by hon. Gentlemen on the Government side of the House as a moderate measure. Being a moderate one, it was necessarily the result of compromise. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman that he had told the Opposition in the course of the discussion on the Bill of last year that that was the smallest Bill the Government could ask the House of Commons to pass. The right hon. Gentleman had great difficulty in passing it; but he at length succeeded, and now he (Mr. Healy) would tell the Prime Minister in turn to remember that this was the smallest measure the Irish Party would be satisfied with. Knowing the condition of the country to be what it was, and knowing the charges that had been made against them, it was the desire of the Irish Party, animated as they were by patriotism and a desire to promote the best interests of their country, that the Bill should be accepted as it was presented; but he would tell the House that, coming from the quarter it did, it was the smallest measure they would ask the House to pass.

Mr. O'SHEA said, that unsatisfactory as was part of the right hon. Gentleman's (the Prime Minister's) statement with regard to certain points of the Bill, he sincerely believed his declaration with regard to the intention of the Government to deal with arrears would be hailed with joy by the whole of Ireland to-morrow, and would do more for the pacification of the country than any number of superior Resident Magistrates or police. He was glad there appeared to be a mode of arranging this matter in a friendly way by—as the right hon. Gentleman himself described it — a "combination" of all Parties in the House. All sensible landlords in Ireland were most anxious that some peaceable settlement of this question should be arrived at. He (Mr. O'Shea) himself was in communication with a great many landlords in Munster and elsewhere, and all those who were desirous of seeing peace return were willing to make some sacrifice, and objected to the stringent measures taken by a few of their neighbours. It would be of the greatest possible importance that any arrangement of arrears arrived at should be made compulsory. In fixing the valuation of the holding to come within the operation of the Bill below £30, the hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond) had shown considerable moderation, and had hit the point of almost absolute justice, because tenants of such holdings were not the men who could but would not pay their rents; they were absolutely unable to pay. The proposal that all these cases should be adjudicated on by the Sub-Commissioners appeared to him, however, to be one of the ill-considered points in the Bill. The block of business in the Courts was already so great that he should be sorry to see extra work placed on its shoulders. A separate department should be formed in the Land Court in Dublin for carrying out the necessary arrangements. Power of intervention should be given to that department, and a severe penalty should be imposed upon anyone giving false testimony or making false affidavits. With regard to the right hon. Gentleman's statement on the subject of the date from which judicial rents should be paid, he quite agreed with the hon. Member for Wexford. It was illogical to compel a man whose name stood lower on a list to continue to pay a rack rent, while another man whose name stood higher had to pay merely a rent fixed by the Court. With regard to leases, during the progress of the Act last Session he had used every means in his power to bring forward information, in the hope that the Government would see their way to giving leaseholders the same advantage as the ordinary tenants from year to year. He could never understand how a contract made for a term of years became more sacred than a contract made for one year; and nothing had tended more to unfortunate dissension and to greater crime in certain localities with which he was acquainted than the omission of leaseholders from the operation of the Bill. The leaseholders saw on all sides of them men applying to the Court. They saw transactions between landlord and tenant out of Court. They saw the advantages gained by their neighbours who could state their cases, but they themselves had no hope under the Act. It was extremely mortifying to them, and it had created a sense of injustice in their minds that had led to horrible crimes. He hoped, then, it was not too late, although the questions of tenure were important, for the Government again to consider this matter, and, as they had already declared their intention to improve the Act of last year, that they would go still further. There was an amount of uncertainty about the decisions of the Court which produced unfortunate results. It was impossible that the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath" could remain without effect on the Land Act, differing as it did from the interpretation which the Prime Minister put upon the clause. No theorist could defend such a contradiction as there had been given effect to. He was sorry that in the Bill there had been no mention of labourers, and believed it was time that some step by a Royal Commission or otherwise should be taken to obtain the evidence which would bring before the House the absolute necessity of legislating for this class. In conclusion, he would earnestly appeal to Her Majesty's Government, now that they were dealing with this question in a friendly spirit, to allow the hon. Members who were in prison, and who had largely assisted in the preparation of the present Bill—for it was the Bill of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell)—to take part in the discussion of these subjects whenever they came before the House. He was sure nothing would be lost by doing that. On the contrary, it would have a most tranquillizing effect.

MR. MACFARLANE said, he had listened with the greatest attention and interest to the speech of the Prime Minister on that the first occasion when a serious discussion had taken place on the subject since the passing of the Land Act. He wished that some parts of the speech had been a little more clear and defined; but the tone and the expressions he used were such as to convey entire satisfaction to all those interested in the Land Question. At that moment they were in the dark as to the precise length which the Prime Minister would go in dealing with the question of arrears. A great advance, however, had been made when the Prime Minister accepted the necessity for dealing with the arrears, even if it involved an advance from the Imperial Exchequer. There were hon. Members who would object to that, for, unfortunately, there was a small section in the House who were only willing to give Ireland as much justice as could be given for nothing; but he believed that if the right hon. Gentleman proposed, as he had pledged himself, to move a serious Resolution on this subject, he would obtain the support of an overwhelming majority. It was now eight months since this Land Act was launched. From that time to this it had been, in nautical language, so to speak, on its trial trip, and was now in dock for Her Majesty's Government to repair. It had been found that its machinery, like all new machinery, did not run smoothly and completely; and it was now once more back in dock for the Government to repair, in order that it might be rendered more suitable for the large number of passengers it had to carry. The great danger the Act had incurred was that of being swamped by the number of passengers. Eighty thousand rushed to avail themselves of it; but, up to the present, only 10,000 had received any benefit. He was sorry to say that the Prime Minister had said that he would not deal with the question of leaseholders, and he did not think the right hon. Gentleman had taken up a logical position on the point. The right hon. Gentleman objected to disturb contracts. But the Act of last Session provided that in the case of every lease which should fall in during 60 years after the passing of the Act, the tenant who occupied under that lease should be a present tenant according to the Act. There could be no greater interference with contract than that, for the material covenant in all those leases that at their termination the tenant should deliver up possession was cancelled by the Act of last Session. He could see no difference in principle between setting aside a material covenant in a lease and setting aside every lease in Ireland, and he regretted the determination of the Government. He could not see why the law had not stepped in and made them all free at one stroke. He had previously pointed out to the right hon. Gentleman during last Session that the Act would be no settlement of the Land Question if it left 120,000 of the leaseholders unprovided for. He would not, however, pursue that subject further, for he knew how useless it was to discuss a subject, especially one connected with Ireland, when the Government had set its foot down and said, "We will go no further." With regard to the question of improvements, he regretted that Her Majesty's Government had not followed the principle of the Land Laws of Bengal. That principle was extremely simple, and would have settled the whole question without difficulty. The Indian Act provided that no extra rent should be payable to the landlord by the tenant, unless he could show that the value of the land had been increased from causes other than the labour and capital of the tenant. Such a provision would amply protect the tenant for his outlay; and if the question came before the House in a practical form, he would endeavour to induce the Government to accept it, for it seemed to him the simplest and soundest principle of justice that could be used in the case of Ireland. As to the Purchase Clauses, he believed it was accepted by the House generally that in their development would be found the only final solution of the Irish Land Question. The compulsory purchase of estates was not contemplated by anyone; but what they wanted was that when the landlord wished to sell and the tenant to buy the Government would advance the money where the security was sufficient. He was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman had not specified for the satisfaction of the House the exact nature of the proposal he intended to make in respect to arrears. The question could not have come upon the Government by surprise, because he (Mr. Macfarlane) proposed an important Amendment on the subject last year, which he was only induced to withdraw on the introduction of the halting proposal introduced by the Government. He understood that the Government would deal with the question some time during the Session; but it should be an immediate some time, for during the waiting tenants were being evicted. He thought the proper course would be for the Government to reinstate all the tenants evicted since the passing of the Act, if they could prove that the arrears were caused by rack-renting or the Providential destruction of the crops. He appealed to the Government on their behalf. They should remember that the tenants were being evicted in thousands for arrears at the present moment; and these poor people would be cast upon the world unless the measure contemplated by the Government was made retrospective. Though he disapproved of much of the policy of the Government, and condemned it as grossly mistaken and injurious to the interests of the country, yet he gave them credit for the best motives in introducing the Land Act, and in taking other measures which they had taken with respect to Ireland; but it was impossible for any man to govern a country with which he was not very familiar, if he absolutely refused to consult a single Representative of that country. It was impossible to derive proper and sufficient knowledge from the permanent officials at Dublin Castle. The right hon. Gentleman was perfectly capable of forming an opinion on any subject; but it was not in human nature not to be affected by the perpetual dropping of one story into one's ears. The Representatives of the land were not the persons whose advice had tended to the pacification of Ireland. It was these people whose principles, carried out for so many years, had brought Ireland to the state she was in. ["Question!"] He hoped it would be impressed upon the Prime Minister that a few millions of money laid out in solving this question and in reinstating these tenants would be money spent to advantage. Tenants so replaced would, he believed, never give the right hon. Gentleman an opportunity of reasonably suspecting them of anything disloyal. He, therefore, appealed to him to deal promptly and liberally with this question of arrears, the cost of which would be but as a drop in the ocean compared with the expenditure going on in Ireland at present.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, that, in his opinion, it was no exaggeration to say that the issues submitted then to the House by that Bill were in many respects of quite as great importance as those which were discussed at such length last year, and which most persons hoped had been settled for a considerable period. Personally, he did not last year—any more than he did now—believe that the Land Act could be a final settlement of the Irish Question. Indeed, he had prophesied so in the House last year in the debate on the second reading of the Bill, and on more than one occasion in Committee. He was then told by some of Her Majesty's Ministers that he was an evil prophet, and that he was doing his best to bring about the fulfilment of his own evil prophecies. He did not recall these observations from any wish to re-open old sources of difference or dispute, which must be painful and bitter to many in the House, but only for this reason—that, if upon this question he ventured now to say a very few words, he might remind Her Majesty's Ministers that what he told them last year had come to pass—namely, that before there would be a single future tenant under the Land Act, there would be several proposals made to amend it. This Bill was the first of such proposals, and it contained provisions of the utmost importance in regard to three of the main questions, and in regard to the four points which, though called subsidiary, were likewise of the utmost importance. He had great pleasure in paying a willing tribute to the ability and skill with which the hon. Gentleman the Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond) had submitted his case to the House. He would also congratulate the hon. Gentleman on the friendly terms in which he spoke of the landlords, for he expressed his own opinion that whenever the hour of final social liquidation arrived, it would not be necessary for all the landlords to leave the country, but some might be allowed to remain. Animated by his example, the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) likewise spoke in quite friendly terms of the landlords. Therefore, he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) felt that he could approach this subject in the same friendly spirit as hon. Members opposite had done. With regard to the question of arrears, when last year the Government submitted their proposals, which were not part of the Land Bill, he did not offer any opposition to them. His own opinion was, however, that the Government had only nibbled at the question. If he understood them rightly, the Arrears Clauses of the Land Act were purely temporary clauses, which had actually expired already. Therefore, it was not a question of amendment, since the measure was no longer a piece of legislation, and the Government were not now making any change of front at all. The Prime Minister had pointed out that the vital question in regard to arrears was this—Were the propositions which were to be laid before the House for ultimate acceptance to be permissive or compulsory? His (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice's) own conviction was that whatever was done in this matter ought to be compulsory. If it were not made compulsory, they had far better leave it alone altogether. Nobody could fail to see that the true reason for dealing with this question of arrears was to obtain peace and quiet in the land, and what was required was that there should be a new state of things in Ireland, when, if possible, all parties might start afresh; that there should be a burial of old feuds and differences; and that the fatal conditions of the country should be remedied so far as it was possible for propositions of this kind to remedy them. If they made the law optional, they placed it in the power of one or two individuals, who, by their own strong-headedness or unwillingness to operate, would have it in their power to nullify intended legislation. They would thus deprive themselves of the very objects they had in view. It would be advantageous, both to the landlord and to the tenant, to make these clauses compulsory, and he hoped that whatever the Government did would be compulsory. But this was not the only consideration which arose in regard to this question of arrears. The hon. Member for New Ross pointed out very clearly that there was an immediate connection between his proposals in the last clauses of his Bill relating to arrears and the first two clauses of the Bill, because he showed that unless something were done in the direction of the first two clauses, the very condition of affairs which they wished to remedy by legislating in regard to arrears might come into existence again in a slightly altered form. As regarded these proposals, he saw no objection to the 1st clause, which provided that the judicial rent was to date from the day succeeded the date of the application to the Court. The 2nd clause provided that, pending the decision of the Court, Griffith's valuation was to be taken as the rent. That proposition, as far as it related to Griffith's valuation, was one which he should feel bound to oppose. Every Commission which had inquired into the question had declared that Griffith's valuation could not be taken as representing in any way the existing condition of things in Ireland, for it was sometimes too high and sometimes too low, and was no actual criterion of the value of the land. As to the block in the Land Court, there was no appreciable diminution in the number of applications, and the adoption of Griffith's valuation would not only double but quadruple them. The consequence would be that the work of the Land Court would come to a standstill. He was sure that was not the object of the hon. Member for New Ross. He had no hesitation in stating that that was a terrible blot on the Land Bill, and he saw no sign of its immediate removal. Her Majesty's Government appeared rather in a state of unhappy optimism in considering this question, and were obviously unwilling to look the facts in the face. They continually spoke of the sensible impression that was being made in the number of cases; but he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) absolutely denied the accuracy of such statements. Even where decisions were actually given the cases were renewable in 15 years; therefore, what the Government had to show was not that cases had been decided, but that this enormous rush of business would be well at an end a considerable number of years before the expiry of the first term. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in his speech at Derby, began talking about sunshine. An hon. Friend near him suggested that it was moonshine. The right hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to think that the number of cases in the Land Court was actually diminishing. It was the absolute duty of Parliament and of the Government to look in the face this question of a block in the Court, and to see whether some arrangement, even if it were of a rough-and-ready description, could not be made in order to diminish it. He would suggest that a sort of flying Commission should be sent into every Poor Law Union district, consisting of one person appointed by the head of the Survey Office, one representing Parliament, and another appointed by the Land Court. This Commission should be empowered to fix an interim rent, which would be so much above or below Griffith's valuation. In Ulster he believed that valuation would be found fair. In Munster it was notorious that the valuation was made at a time when the circumstances were altogether different from those of Ulster, so that he believed Munster would represent one end of the scale and Ulster the other. An interim rent being ascertained, he would suggest that it should be taken as the rent pending appeal. If either landlord or tenant liked to appeal, he should be able to do so before the Land Court; but if either failed to go to the Court within a short time, then the interim rent should be the fixed rent. In that manner we should clear the block in the Land Court, for there would be sent to it only the disputed cases, and there would be some chance of the work being done before the end of the first 15 years. But if the Government really desired the establishment of peace and order in Ireland, they must go a step still further. In regard to small holdings they must make up their minds to fix a rent that was not to be permanently quarrelled over for 15 years; there must be something practically approaching to a permanent rent; and they must give the landlord, if he were dissatisfied, the right of tendering the estate for purchase. He would give the landlord the right of tendering his estate at a certain number of years' purchase of the rent ascertained by the interim Commission in the manner just described. He assumed that the rent so fixed would be low, and the tenants would be glad either to go on holding at that rent, or to buy up the estate in the same manner that they enfranchised copyholds in England. In this way they should deal with the arrears, as desired by the hon. Member for New Ross and by the Government, and they would arrive at a way of carrying out the Purchase Clauses conformably with the views of the writer in the *Quarterly Review*, which were supposed to be endorsed by right hon. Gentlemen opposite. ["No, no!"] He heard an hon. Friend near him say "No, no!" Let him tell the Radical Party it was of no use their saying "No, no!" to these propositions. It was high time that hon. Members who, like himself, believed themselves to be just as good Liberals as any Radicals in the House, and who also had a connection with Ireland, should say—

"Whatever the future of Ireland may be, whether good, bad, or indifferent, it is perfectly certain that the very worst thing that can happen to Ireland would be for her to become the sport of the Radical Party in England." ["Hear, hear!"] In saying that, he was not working to gain the cheers of hon. Members opposite; but still he would say that nothing could be a greater misfortune than such a fate. ["Hear, hear!"] He had the courage of his convictions; and, although he believed the Repeal of the Union would be a great misfortune, he should prefer the Repeal of the Union itself to leaving Ireland to be "bally-ragged" and "chucked" backwards and forwards between the two great Parties in England. In regard to this question, he had been alarmed more than he could express at the tendency he saw to make Ireland the sport of English Parties; the greatest offenders in this respect were not the Members of the Whig Party, nor of the Liberal Party, nor of the Conservative Party, nor of the Party opposite (the Home Rulers); but they were the English Radical Party who sat below the Gangway. It was not that Irish politics had so much interest for the Radical Party as that they were a means to ulterior operations; and, therefore, he expressed his individual opinions irrespective of the good opinion of the Radical Party in England—great as was his respect for its Members—with which he invariably acted on religious and educational questions. Respecting another point, he said last year that he was no great believer in the sanctity of leases. The justification of the Bill of last year was that there was said to be rack-renting; but what proof had there been that there was less under leases than under annual rents? He had never been able to see that there was anything in a lease which necessarily took it out of the purview of the law. Of 10 farms five might be let on lease and five not; they might be intermixed; and they were to say to the leaseholder, because he was supposed to be in a better position than his neighbour before the passing of the Act, that that was to be an argument for putting him afterwards in a presumably worse position. It was natural that that should cause dissatisfaction among leaseholders, and that they should complain of having been dealt with differently from others; and he thought they should be placed on an equal footing with them. He did not see any great reason for objecting to something being done with regard to improvements; but all these questions were thrashed out last year *ad nauseam*, and he asked hon. Members opposite, whether they really thought Her Majesty's Government would be justified within six months in re-opening all these questions? ["Yes, yes!"] He must say he did not. He was bound to say that he could not see at all how the whole of this complicated question was going to be thrown again on the floor of the House, and still more so in regard to that other question, on which he frankly acknowledged he differed from hon. Gentlemen opposite. The Improvement Clauses had, he thought, been dismissed last year in a manner which satisfied those Gentlemen. Since then Mr. Parnell—he mentioned the hon. Member by name as he was not allowed to take part in this debate—had spoken on this subject, and had used the phrase "prairie value." [*Cries of* "John Bright!"] He understood the phrase was used by Mr. Parnell in reply to the right hon. Gentleman, and not disowned, as a fair description of what the hon. Member proposed. There was in the clauses of the Bill a translation of "prairie value;" for if its Clauses 4 to 8 were passed, "prairie value" would be an accurate description of the worth of land to the landlords. Now that, as it seemed to him, was the very proposition that had been said by the Prime Minister to contain the doctrine of public plunder. ["No, no!"] If hon. Members opposite could show that he had given an unfair description of those clauses, let them do so, and he would at once withdraw what he had said; but it certainly was his opinion that those clauses, drawn as they were with great ability and great clearness, were deliberately intended to compass that object at which the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster had hinted when he used the words "prairie value." The hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy), in his most ingenious speech, would have led the House to believe that all these clauses aimed at was to put right a little matter touched upon in the decision in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath;" but in truth their effect would be far greater. It was true that the last sub-section of the 5th clause did touch the point mentioned by him in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath"—namely, the decision that the time of enjoyment of improvements was, in certain cases, to be taken into consideration against the tenant in ascertaining his rent. If that sub-section had stood alone, he was quite willing to grant that there would have been a good deal to be said on both sides, because it was at least open to argument whether a tenant holding at a low rent, for, say, five years, had by that low rent been compensated for his improvements? But, taking Clauses 4 and 5 together, he would ask anybody who had read the Bill whether it did not go much beyond this? If it had merely been confined to this point, it would not have been necessary to go beyond the last sub-section of Clause 5. Then, again, they had Clause 4 offering a definition of improvements; and by the 1st and 2nd sub-sections of Clause 5, the presumption in regard to improvements was entirely altered. They had a provision in regard to the rent of a holding during a statutory term, which was undoubtedly intended to make the doctrine in Clause 5 still clearer; and, lastly, they had the declaration respecting title by occupancy, in which it was said to be practically the same thing as occupancy by title. All these clauses, taken together—and they must be taken together—would leave the landlord the happy possessor of something rather less than the "prairie value" of his land; and the House, if it made this change at all, ought, at least, to do so with its eyes open. Do not let them believe they were merely remedying a little injustice done by the decision in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath." He (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) had no wish to discuss that case; but he wished to enter his protest against the course taken by the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) in bringing individual cases before the House. Why did the Prime Minister object to the Committee of Inquiry by the House of Lords? Was it not because the Sub-Commissioners were to be examined in regard to their judicial decisions? But, at least, those persons would have had an opportunity of answering on any of the facts mentioned. What the hon. Member for Wexford did was, without Notice to anybody—to come down to the House, bring up cases, give figures and facts, and then assert that there had been gross injustice, that millions of property had been confiscated, without the persons whom he implicated having an opportunity to reply to him.

Mr. HEALY: I did so because the Prime Minister, in consequence of a previous Question put by me on the subject, said that he would watch the operation of the law, and would go into specific cases. That was a direct inducement to me to notice this case.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he did not know what justification the hon. Member might have had; but it was a most inconvenient course. If that sort of thing was to be continued for the benefit and enlightment of the Prime Minister, it did not seem to him that Public Business would make any progress that Session. He had no wish, however, to follow the hon. Member's example, except to say this—that he hoped the House would reserve its judgment in regard to the various allegations against the Sub-Commissioners. In so far as the Bill raised the question of the conduct of the Sub-Commissioners, the best answer was that given by the Government, that they must take time to see how the Sub-Commissions worked. Having heard a great number of violent attacks made both by the landlords and the extreme portion of the tenants against these Sub-Commissioners, he was glad to express his own opinion that he believed they had done their best to fulfil honestly a very difficult task; and even if they had, but without evil intention, done injustice, he recollected one thing that was clear—namely, that it was the first duty of a Member of Parliament to refrain from questioning judicial decisions. Those gentlemen whose names had been of late so often brought forward in that House and "elsewhere" ought, until they had been shown to be wrong, to have the presumption of every doubt in their favour. In any case, if their decisions were wrong, they could be carried by appeal before the Head Court. He must now say he was sorry for having trespassed at such length on the attention of the House; but he felt that upon that Irish Land Question he occupied a disagreeable position. He must say this, although he should be showing himself a peculiar person, that he had very little sympathy indeed either with the views of Her Majesty's Government upon the Irish Land Question, or with the views of a large number of his Radical Friends; and if he were to express his own reason for having limited sympathy with their views or positions, he should tell them, speaking with perfect frankness, that it was because he believed there was, in regard to this question of Ireland, a very great want of knowledge amongst a great number of Members of that House; and, although he felt that the Government had had a most difficult task, and had done their best to perform it—although nothing would induce him to join in the clamour that had been raised against his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland—and although he felt that the Government had acted most wisely in simply accepting that portion of the Bill which related to arrears, and stating that they would not allow all these tenure questions to be re-opened, yet, he equally firmly believed what he said last Session, that the problem of Irish government was getting more and more difficult, because they had removed all those props and supports one by one on which the whole theory of Irish government rested, and last year they broke the last and most important of them—the power and influence of the landlords. Without entering upon matters of controversy in regard to the Irish landlords, what he did wish to insist upon, and what he did with the utmost respect urge upon the Government was, that they must realize, or else facts stronger than they would wish would make them realize, that the problem of Irish government was now entering upon a totally new phase, that they must form some distinct plan of policy as to what they intended in Ireland, and what their views were. At all events, they could not go on drifting. His theory was that the Government in regard to Ireland was not, perhaps, altogether a united Cabinet, and that for that reason they were to a certain extent inclined to drift. The patriotism of all Parties alike was necessary and ought to be united in trying to find some solution of this Irish Land Question, which lay at the root of all government. He felt convinced, however, that that solution would not be found by shutting their eyes to obvious facts and plain warnings. That was his contention in regard to the point which he urged just now, when he said that he utterly differed from the Radical Party, because he heard them say every day that they were for the most drastic legislation against Irish landlords—["No, no!"]—and at the same time they were strongly opposed to the repeal of the Union. There was a certain amount of difficulty in reconciling these different opinions. In thanking them for the attention with which they had listened to him, he could only say that they ought to realize the gravity of the situation, and not to suppose that they could settle the question by calling out "No, no!" whenever an independent Member, perhaps of peculiar views, called attention to inconvenient facts in the House of Commons.

Mr. SEXTON said, the noble Lord opposite (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice), who had just addressed the House with remarkable ability, had described himself as a peculiar person. He (Mr. Sexton) could only say, in answer to it, that he must confess to a wish that there were more peculiar persons of his type in the House of Commons, for, whatever might constitute the peculiarity of the noble Lord, he was, at any rate, a thoughtful politician, and spoke not particularly under the influence of sentiment, but rather approached the type of a cold and logical doctrinaire. When such a Member expressed himself on that particular question of the political state of Ireland in so manly and straightforward a manner as that which distinguished the noble Lord's utterances that evening, he (Mr. Sexton) felt they had fallen in with a remarkable sign of the times, and in the utterances of the noble Lord they (the Irish Members) saw the herald of the coming time when they should no longer trouble the House of Commons with Irish questions. He (Mr. Sexton) hoped his hon. Friend the Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) would never have to encounter a more severe charge than that made against him by the noble Lord. Because, what was the objection made by the noble Lord when he spoke against his hon. Friend? It was that he had brought forward specific cases of grievance. His (Mr. Sexton's) experience of the House of Commons was not long; but it was long enough to satisfy him—and he would take the liberty of reminding the noble Lord upon the point—that the ordinary charge brought against Irish Members was that they indulged too much in general complaints of grievances, and devoted themselves too little to exact and specific facts. He was sure the noble Lord, on consideration, would see, if his hon. Friend had committed a fault at all, that it was, at all events, a venial fault, and one into which he had been led by the accusations so frequently made against Irish Members. He (Mr. Sexton) took what was, perhaps, the most remarkable feature of that speech, the declaration of the noble Lord that he would prefer to see the Repeal of the Union granted than that Ireland should always be "shuttlecocked" between the great Parties of the State as the most creditable utterance of an English Member in that House within recent years; and he took his stand beside the noble Lord in thinking, that of all the Parties which formed the component elements of that House, the Radical Party had shown itself least moved by permanent political principle, and most by Party requirements, and mere considerations of the convenience and comfort of the moment. He must confess that, in one respect, the speech of the Prime Minister was to him an agreeable surprise, and it was especially so, when he considered it, not from a practical, but from a sentimental point of view. He felt that the satisfaction with which that speech was received would be derived infinitely more from the tone of the right hon. Gentleman's language than from its substance. The Irish Members had been so often made the target for his denunciation and scorn, attempts had been so often made to stigmatize them as persons who favoured, if they did not actually promote, outrage and crime, that it was a mental luxury to find the most eminent authority in the House deeming them once more within the pale and brotherhood of human nature. They (the Irish Members) were always ready to recognize and to reciprocate even a small admission which, like that, need not be regarded as any special compliment. On the part of the Irish people and the Irish Members he claimed for them that it was not in their nature, and it was not their desire, to be violent or troublesome, or even uncivil, unless on desperate provocation. Therefore, he should endeavour to follow the initiative set in the first instance by the hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond), and followed by the Prime Minister, as regarded the tone of the remarks he should make use of; but, in the first place, he was bound to note that they were discussing the Bill in the absence of its principal promoter. They owed that Bill, which, upon the admission of the Government, was drawn with so much care, so much judgment, and so much moderation, considering all the circumstances of the case, to the initiative of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). They owed it to the manliness and nobility of spirit which had led that hon. Gentleman, forgetting in his prison cell the personal sense of injury and all feeling of resentment, to submit from that cell, where he was suffering unjustly the penalties inflicted under a coercive law, to the judgment of the House that most moderate and reasonable proposal. He and the Party of which he was the accredited, honoured, and recognized Leader, had been charged with a desire to perpetuate disorder in Ireland; one of the most grievous, and, at the same time, most baseless charges ever made against any Party, and more particularly theirs. But, as his hon. Friend the Member for New Ross had said, that Bill was their reply. No speaker on the Treasury Bench presumed to describe it as anything but just, and, considering the circumstances of their position, a moderate Bill; and when he said that that Bill had proceeded from the hon. Member for the City of Cork, whose presence in the House would be no injury or loss to it, and would be a great gain to the public interest, he offered a most conclusive vindication of his Party against any charge which had hitherto, or might be hereafter, made coupling that Party with the perpetuation of disorder in their country. The hon. Member for the City of Cork, presenting that Bill by the hands of his Colleagues, conveyed to the Members of that House a request, amounting to a command, to say nothing which would interfere with the application of remedial legislation, or even exasperate the present situation in Ireland. The Prime Minister had avowed that his object was to narrow the field of the debate; but in one respect, so far from narrowing the field, he widened it by volunteering information on a subject which they did not introduce, and on which they did not feel any need of information. The right hon Gentleman said that one of the elements of the Irish case was the preservation of law and order, and that, upon an early day, the Government intended to offer further proposals. Their (the Irish Members') experience of the Government during its two years of Office, and the inferences that they had drawn from that experience, had not led them to think that the Government would be slack in the preservation of law and order. They felt that the Government would be always up to the level of the occasion, if they did not exceed it; and, therefore, they would have been content if the Prime Minister had actually narrowed the debate, and had not offered them information of which they had no need. The main aspect of the Premier's speech, however, lay in his declaration that that Bill largely opened the Lease and Tenure Clauses of the Act of last year, and in his further dictum that the Tenure Clauses were not to be disturbed. If he could feel that that declaration sprang out of a sense in the Premier's mind that the Tenure Clauses had proved ineffective for their purpose, or out of a sense that any system of dual proprietorship of the soil in a country where the landlord and tenant classes had not one social or political feeling in common, and where no ties of affection had distinguished them in the past, if he could feel that the Premier's refusal to disturb these Tenure Clauses arose from his sense of impossibility of having any dual proprietorship in the soil in Ireland, he would be content with the refusal. Further, if he thought that the Premier forebore to deal with the Tenure Clauses because he felt that the Land Question could only be settled by a peasant proprietary, he could have regarded the right hon. Gentleman's refusal as adequate and wise; but there was little doubt the Premier's unwillingness to deal with the subject arose rather from a parental affection for his legislative offspring—arose rather from the hope, which, even in his mind, must now be almost a despairing hope, that the Tenure Clauses might eventually be made to work. He (Mr. Sexton) could understand the unwillingness of the Prime Minister thus early to interfere with the work of his own hand; and he would be unworthy of the position of a public Representative, if he did not make allowance for that part of human nature which in a Statesman led him to approach too late the reformation of his own work. But he (Mr. Sexton) denied the sanctity of any Act of Parliament. The proper moment for amending an Act of Parliament was the moment it was proved to be ineffective; and the earlier they proceeded to the work of necessary reformation, the more effectually did they fulfil their legislative duty, and the better would it be for the public interest. As to the Tenure Clauses, how stood the case with regard to leases? He had no sympathy, to say nothing of patience, with the most unmeaning superstition which made hon. Members cling to the theory of freedom of contract in Ireland. No such freedom existed. The noble Lord opposite (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice), with a frankness which he (Mr. Sexton) could not too much admire, admitted that the pressure of rack-renting was probably as severe on the holders of leases as on the tenants from year to year, and obviously must be so. It was notorious that leases which, in England, were considered as some concession, were, in Ireland, engines for extracting money from the tenants in the shape of fines, and for imposing the most onerous conditions. If it were the landlord's interest or whim to rack-rent his tenants from year to year, why should he forbear to do so with those on whom he had imposed leases? In short, they were ingenious engines of oppression. The House had interfered to save the tenant from year to year, because his contract was purely verbal; but what equitable difference could there be in the eyes of a reforming Legislature between injustice perpetrated under a parole agreement—an agreement by word of mouth —and injustice perpetrated in ink and sanctioned by sealing wax? In 99 cases out of every 100, the free-will of the leaseholder had not been exercised to safeguard his rights. He found from the Parliamentary Return just issued, that only 1,400 leaseholders applied to the Land Court to have their leases voided. On a moderate assumption, there were 80,000 leaseholders who did not come within the operation of the Land Act, and of the 1,400 who applied, only 72 had their leases broken. Yet the Government and the House were deluding themselves with the fond idea that they could hope for tranquillity in Ireland, while they left 80,000 leaseholders to be, as the noble Lord aptly expressed it, centres of disaffection throughout the country. Any man who considered the question calmly and dispassionately must see that it was idle and futile to hope for any permanent good from any settlement of the Land Question which left 80,000 leaseholders to feed upon their sense of wrong. He further held that on the question of improvements, their claim to reform the Land Act was already amply established. The case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath" was plainly overturned and destroyed by the natural effect and interpretation of the Healy Clause. The noble Lord appeared to attach a strange interpretation to the expression "prairie value" of land. Now, that expression did not mean the value of waste land or land commonly known as prairie; it was the value of land when in a state of pasture, which included lands in various degrees of fertility. Their claim was that whatever was added after the land had passed from the landlord to the tenant belonged to the tenant, and that no length of time during which he had been enjoying his own improvements could ever entitle the landlord to have the property in those improvements transferred to himself. By the judgment in "Adams *v.* Dunseath," however, it was declared that the length of time during which a tenant had been enjoying his improvements might operate to destroy his right of property in them, and, if the landlord had forborne to exact an increased rent, that fact might be counted in his favour. As a matter of fact, however, it would be safe to assume that landlords in Ireland had generally exacted as much rent as they could conveniently get. Then, as regarded the question of a peasant proprietary and the Purchase Clauses, the right hon. Gentleman, in dealing with the subject, evaded a most important part of the Land Question, because he said a Motion would presently be offered from the other side of the House. Instead of saying that, however, he had better have made a declaration on the subject that day. It seemed to him (Mr. Sexton) that a game of "hide-and-seek" was being played by the two great Parties in the House. The Ministerialists and the Opposition Party were competitors in their plagiarism of the Land League policy. They had both assented already to the 1st article of the Land League policy, and they were both now trembling on the verge of a plunge into the 2nd article; but the Prime Minister, before he committed himself to any statement upon the subject of the establishment of a national purchase scheme for the tenants of Ireland, was anxious to hear what could be said by the right hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench (Mr. W. H. Smith). He (Mr. Sexton) would have thought that a Statesman of the right hon. Gentleman's sure and long-proven power of initiative, and being at the head of a great majority in the House, would have scorned to wait till he had heard what his opponents had to say; but that he would have come down to the House, and, recognizing that the purchase system must be the ultimate solution of this Land Question, would be prepared to anticipate his opponents, and instead of waiting for an opportunity to "dish" them after they had declared their views, would have had the frankness to declare at once what he himself intended to do. To show the urgency of the "purchase" scheme, he need only refer to a Parliamentary Return lately issued, as being one out of several grounds upon which it might be pressed. According to that Paper, 76,000 applications had been made to the Court; 4,000 cases only had been dealt with, and he challenged contradiction when he said that the Courts, as an almost universal rule, kept above the level of Griffith's valuation. Moreover, since the speech of the Prime Minister, two months ago, in which he said that the largest reductions would be made in the cases first heard, this significant result occurred, that the reductions had become more meagre and less adequate to the necessities of the case than they were before. Griffith's valuation included all the improvements made by the tenant up to 30 years ago; and he (Mr. Sexton) need not say more to convince the House that by the ruling of the Sub-Commissioners in fixing these judicial rents, the improvements of the tenants were now being confiscated, the judicial rents which tenants were being called upon to pay being rents fixed upon their own improvements. Would any Member of the House say that such a settlement could permanently pacify Ireland? The noble Lord opposite (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) said that if the Healy Clause and the doctrine of improvements were pushed to their logical conclusion, the landlords would not be left anything worth having. He (Mr. Sexton) did not feel constrained to contest in any great degree the contention of the noble Lord; but if the improvements effected by the tenants were of such a character that to allow the tenants to assume property in those improvements would be to reduce the landlord's interest to nothing, surely this was proved—that the continuance of a dual proprietorship in Ireland was impossible; it proved that the position of the landlord was untenable; it proved that if morality was to be courageously applied to his position, he must starve; and, therefore, that the only logical escape from the difficulty was that the system of dual proprietorship should cease, and that the landlords must be paid off, or find themselves in a condition of beggary. He would pass to another very singular fact. He had said that 4,000 cases had been heard by the Sub-Commissioners; and how many had been appealed against? One thousand four hundred had been appealed against, and of those 1,400 appeals the Court of Appeal had decided 195. But, what was a singular fact with regard to these 195 decisions? An undeniable fact was this—the Chief Commissioners, in their judgments, had kept so close to the figures of the official valuators, as to adopt them almost entirely. On what principle did the official valuators proceed? They proceeded on the principle of ascertaining the present fair letting value of the farms; and the consequence was that there had been, in the Court of Appeal, a complete confiscation of the occupancy right of the tenant, and of his entire property in his improvements. Bad as the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners had been, they were good and liberal compared with the final decisions of the Court of Appeal. It was absurd to think that rents fixed on those principles could satisfy the farmers of Ireland. The facts he had submitted showed the urgent necessity for the adoption of the "purchase" scheme, and the abolition of the system of dual proprietary. The only question on which the Premier gave them a positive answer was upon the question of arrears; but he (Mr. Sexton) confessed that in the right hon. Gentleman's promise he saw little cause for congratulating his country. No language that he could use could convey to the House his sense of the importance of the terrible question of arrears. There were 500,000 tenants in Ireland who had not applied to the Land Courts at all, and of the number who had applied 10,000 had not their cases heard, and years must elapse before they could have them heard. What was happening in Ireland in the meantime? One hundred thousand tenants were in arrear, and they were being evicted, or intimidated, under threat of eviction, from seeking the protection of the Land Courts. He knew, indeed, of numerous cases in which tenants who had gone into the Court had since been coerced to withdraw from it under a threat of that kind. This was a proof that the withdrawals of which the Prime Minister had made so much had thus, in many cases, been negotiated under duress. The furious and shameful riot and carnival of eviction never had such free way in Ireland as at the present moment. The saddest document he ever saw was the last Return of Evictions for the quarter ending 31st March. It showed that even the fell licence of last year had been exceeded. It showed that in three months 7,000 persons had been turned out on the highway. Of those, 4,000 had been denied even the poor privilege of caretakers; and now the chosen lieutenants of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland were beginning to develop their new policy, by refusing to allow the Land League to spend the funds at its disposal in providing these poor people shelter in the shape of huts. To what were they to be condemned? To wander over the country, to drift into the lanes and slums of the adjoining towns, to have no hope and no heart, to be given up to the counsels of wretchedness and despair, and to end their days in misery and starvation. How much time was to elapse before the right hon. Gentleman would perfect his policy? Delay in settling this question would tend to an increase of crime in Ireland, and he warned the Government to waste no time on this question, for every day was acting against the interests of peace and order in Ireland. He wished he could think the promise of the right hon. Gentleman was something more than words, It was so carefully hedged around, it was such a marvel of *diplôme*, it was so judiciously guarded by plausible conditions and by subtle references to future development and contingencies, that he, seeing, on the one hand, that miracle of phrase and the marvel of judicious and careful statesmanship, and on the other the terrible fact of the eviction of thousands of families, together with their state of despair, and the hunting policy pursued by the magistrates of the right hon. Gentleman, greatly feared that the policy which he contemplated, depending upon so many contingencies and taking so many months for its completion, would not run as fast as the evils which must inevitably follow from the conduct of the landlords of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman must be satisfied that Irish opinion was in favour of a settlement of the question of arrears by a compulsory plan. No other plan would settle it. He (Mr. Sexton) told the House frankly, with regard to those arrears, which never had any foundation in morality, and which the poor tenants who were liable for them expected would have been wiped out by the Land Act of last year, that to expect those poor creatures, already overloaded, to consent quietly to pay them in yearly instalments in addition to their judicial rents, was more than human nature could expect. The arrears must be settled by a gift, if settled at all. If there was any moral to be drawn from the action of the landlords of Ireland in anything that had hitherto occurred in connection with the question, it was that any law depending upon voluntary action on their part would be a dead letter. There must be compulsion, or there would be no practical effect. He did not think the evicted tenants would feel that that promise made to-day by the Prime Minister afforded any reason for their hoping anything would come of it. The right hon. Gentleman had touched upon so many conditions that he might retreat from his promise without much difficulty, for, in the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, six omnibuses could drive through the passage which he had left for escape. He hoped, however, the Government would apply themselves to this terribly grave question of arrears. Upon the whole, he was obliged to say that, although the Government complimented the hon. Members of the Irish Party upon the moderation of their Bill, and on the judgment which had distinguished the manner in which they submitted it to the House, he was afraid that was all they had guaranteed to them as their reward. It was said that virtue had its own reward; and certainly the Irish Party could only console themselves with that reflection, because any external reward in the speech of the Premier he had sought and failed to find.

Mr. SHAW said, he did not agree with the hon. Member who had just spoken (Mr. Sexton) in the very hopeless conclusions which he had drawn from the speech of the Prime Minister. He believed the Prime Minister meant what he said when he spoke of the question of arrears as one demanding their immediate attention. Of course, his language was guarded—and very naturally so, because he (Mr. Shaw) supposed it was possible the right hon. Gentleman had heard the speeches of several of the Irish Members on the subject, and he rather thought no two of them had agreed on the subject. ["Oh, oh!"] Very likely the Prime Minister had several proposals on the subject before him. He (Mr. Shaw) wished to say that he also heartily agreed in the expressions already used as to the moderation of the Bill, considering the names of the Gentlemen who were inserted on the back of it, and their position and antecedents. He did not approve of some things in the Bill; but he would announce, without hesitation, his intention of supporting it if it went to a division. It touched the most important points in the Land Act of last year which required amendment. He entirely agreed with the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Sexton) in his view of the urgency of this question of arrears. It was, to his mind, at the very foundation of the possibility of the settling of this Land Question, and not only was it at the very foundation of the settling of that question, but at the very foundation of the settlement of the social state of the country. Reference had been made to circulars; but he thought, as a rule, crime could not be traced to them. He thought, as a general rule, crime in Ireland was to be traced to local causes, and those local causes, in nine cases out of ten arose from eviction, which the people thought and believed in their hearts to be cruel and unjust. Therefore, if the House in its wisdom could in any way stop these evictions, many of which had been cruel, he believed it would go an immense way to stop the crime in the country. With regard to arrears, he did not care to express his views until the Government proposal was before them. His own opinion was that very likely they might be able to make some mixture of the two principles. They might be able to put such inducement before the landlords that there would be no difficulty whatever. In settling the question of arrears, he trusted the Government would take the landlords into consideration, as he was quite sure that in many respects there was no class of men, except the poor unfortunate evicted tenants in the country, deserving of more sympathy than many of the landlords in Ireland. These arrears seemed to the landlords the best possible hold they had over the tenants in order to enable them to get anything like a fair settlement; and they could not expect them all at once to throw over the arrears. In fact, they must induce them, by liberal means, to come in and settle this question. He hoped they would, to some extent, put money in their pockets. The question of purchase was also an important one. He was quite sure no one would derive more advantage and relief from the purchase of their estates than many of the landlords of Ireland themselves. Many of them, he believed, were in a most distressed condition. They were men of the worthiest character, men with large families, not brought up to industry in any way, or who had now nothing but misery and want staring them in the face. He was not one of those who said that landlords should be banished. He believed there always would be landlords in Ireland, notwithstanding the sentences they had earned from the hon. Gentlemen opposite. He believed the people of Ireland would eventually be the best judges themselves as to whether they should be tenants or purchasers. He would give them every facility for the two things, and they might trust to their own shrewdness to determine what they considered best for themselves. He did not see why the Irish Party—by which he meant not alone the hon. Members opposite, but the Conservative, Whig, and rational Home Rule Members from Ireland—could not take up this question and other questions that were really demanding settlement, and produce some feasible plan among themselves, and not place themselves in the hands of English Parties, who would deal with them for their own purposes. They could settle the three great points—the question of arrears, of purchase, and of leases. He did not profess to understand the legal question; but there were many hon. Members who would do so. Then there was another important point. When acting on the Bessborough Commission, he (Mr. Shaw) never found a single farmer anywhere in Ireland — either North, South, East, or West—who put forward the principle that the landlord was not to get anything from the increased value of the land; they all stated that was what was called the unearned increment—he did not know whether they understood it—of the land belonged fairly to the landlord. He believed, however, it was entirely against the spirit of the Land Act to give the landlords the greatest part of the improvements of the land, and if the decision about which so much had been said upset that principle—he did not know whether it was against its letter; but, no doubt, the legal Gentlemen connected with the Government would be able to give their attention to the matter as quickly as possible, and endeavour to remedy it. He, however, believed the landlords of Ireland would not demand the major part of the improvements effected by the tenants. But, leaving that aside, there were the three great points which could be settled by the Irish Members together, and they ought to meet together and settle these things. He would here take an opportunity of referring to another matter, entirely of a personal character. He thought it was only right to say that the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Macfarlane) had said that he (Mr. Shaw) had complained because the Chief Secretary for Ireland had not consulted him on Irish questions. He might practically say that he never complained of anything of the kind. On the Land Question, and on Bills of a similar character, the right hon. Gentleman had often consulted him; and he had never hesitated, whether consulted or not, to let him know his own opinion on such matters. But he must say that both the right hon. Gentleman and the Prime Minister always received his views with the greatest kindness and consideration.

Mr. MACFARLANE said, that he said that he understood that both the hon. Gentleman and the hon. Member for Mayo (Mr. O'Connor Power) had complained of not having been consulted on the subject. He begged to withdraw the statement.

Mr. SHAW said, that was with reference to another question concerning Ireland, upon which the Government had never consulted him, because they had a very shrewd notion of the kind of advice he would give them, and that it would be unpalatable. He had always been opposed to the policy of repression in Ireland, which he believed to be entirely unnecessary, and an incentive to the evils existing in that country. The sooner the Government returned to common sense in that direction the better would it be for the peace of the country; and, until they did so, they would never arrive at the results which they desired.

Mr. GIBSON said, that the debate of that day had naturally been looked forward to with considerable interest and anxiety, not only from the intrinsic importance of the Bill introduced by the hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond), but also because it was distinctly and ostentatiously put forward that the Prime Minister would make an important communication to the country and the House as to the methods of government to be pursued in Ireland as regarded the landed institutions of the country. In consequence of that expectation, the House at 12 o'clock presented an unwonted appearance in respect of the number of hon. Members present. The general expectation to which he referred was arrived at largely from the Prime Minister's own language used in that House on more than one occasion within the last 10 days. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to that day as the period when he would give an explanation, and make matters plain as regarded the intentions of the Government; and other Cabinet Ministers had also, in "another place," lately made clear statements that they would not at present go into the matters under discussion, because these matters were to be dealt with fully that day by the Prime Minister. In these circumstances, therefore, when he (Mr. Gibson) came to the House, he, in common among other persons, felt much interest and anxiety as to the probable nature of the communication to be made. He was bound to say that he thought they might have a statement clear and distinct as to the policy to be pursued in the administration of the country. They also expected some clear statement as to what was to be done with reference to the land topics referred to that afternoon. But, while he recognized to the full the extremely conciliatory feeling and courteous manner in which the Prime Minister had addressed the House, he could not but remark that his statements were indefinite and vague; that they were not distinct; and that the right hon. Gentleman had not availed himself of the opportunity which had fallen to him to make a clear and comprehensive statement about many of the matters upon which public attention had been directed. The right hon. Gentleman had postponed everything to a more convenient season, which all knew, on the highest authority, meant a time which might never come at all. Law and order was a question of extreme urgency and importance, and certainly things occured from day to day, and from hour to hour, which did not allay the anxiety felt on that point; and yet the Prime Minister had put those questions by for discussion on an occasion which he did not promise should be given, and which was an unknown quantity which he did not define, and then the right hon. Gentleman proceeded to state, not his own, but four important points which had been raised in the interesting speech of the Member for New Ross. Having mentioned those points, the right hon. Gentleman had touched on three of them, not giving any final opinion, but postponing them for consideration in the future. As to the last point—the fourth—that which dealt with the arrears, he (Mr. Gibson), had certainly expected that the right hon. Gentleman had reserved it till the end, for the very purpose of making some definite and distinct statement. On the contrary, when the right hon. Gentleman had come to deal with the question of arrears, putting it into plain English, all he had said was to ask different parts of the House, different Members of the House, to furnish the Government with their views, or, to use his own words, to furnish the Government "light and aid" on the subject. The topics presented for the Prime Minister's consideration were some of the most important and interesting that could well be imagined. They were not new topics. They were not novel, for they had been presented and thrashed out in every variety of form for two months past. In these circumstances, the House and the country, he thought, had a right to expect some intimation of opinion from the Government. First take the Purchase Clauses of the Bill before the House. That question had been raised in the most distinct form. He (Mr. Gibson) expressed no opinion upon the precise and distinct form in which the question was dealt with in the two clauses which the Prime Minister had stated were carefully and well-drawn clauses. The proposals embodied in those clauses were argued temperately and with much force by the hon. Member who introduced the Bill. But the Prime Minister had not given a single vestige of intimation of what his opinion was on these clauses. All the right hon. Gentleman had done was to admit, with some reserve of caution, what everybody thought was notorious, that the present clauses did not work at all. An admission of the kind, although interesting and showing advance in the right hon. Gentleman's mind, contributed nothing towards the solution of the matter. The Prime Minister had said it was an allowable subject to discuss, and a matter requiring consideration, and added that he would say nothing more, as he did not desire to prejudice the Motion of his right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith). He (Mr. Gibson) ventured to say that the right hon. Gentleman's words erred somewhat on the side of caution; but caution might wander sometimes near the confines of cowardice, and he thought when the Prime Minister was brought face to face with an important public question in a Bill, on a day which he had deliberately himself selected as the occasion on which to make a statement, although he might have reserved the discussion on the details, it would have been reasonable that he should have said something which would show the working of his mind. He wished to make his acknowledgments to the hon. Member for New Ross for the friendly references he had made to Irish landlords, which, knowing the hon. Member's political attitude, he was glad to welcome. The hon. Member had said, what was a notorious fact, that there were thousands of landlords who were treading on the confines of ruin; and he hoped that whatever changes might take place under the Purchase Clauses, the landlords of Ireland would not, as a class, leave the country. His (Mr. Gibson's) belief was—and he had stated it before, both in the House and out of it—that if increased facilities were given under the Purchase Clauses in the Bill before them, and if they were made to work fairly, instead of remaining a dead letter, like those under the Land Act, the landlords, as a rule, would sell their tenants a portion of their estates, and in many cases would retain their mansions and home farms and live in the country. Those topics the Prime Minister had passed by in a manner which he (Mr. Gibson) would not criticize, although he regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had not said either less or more. As regarded Ireland, that was not the time for a man to use vague and doubtful language, that could be interpreted in a variety of ways, according to the hopes and fears of those who heard and read. It was a time to say either "Aye" or "No" to proposals submitted for consideration. It was not only kind to the people to do so, but it was the best and wisest policy, if you meant to do anything at all. All the Prime Minister had really in substance said was—"I cannot assent to the proposals of the Bill, and I will not give it a second reading. On the other hand, I am not prepared to say that there is not something to be said on the subject of leases;" or, as he had said on the 24th of March—"There is considerable reason for some amendment of the law in respect of leases." He would admit, the right hon. Gentleman said more on the 24th of March than he said to-day; but, at the same time, he ventured to suggest whether it would not have been wiser, under all the circumstances, to have said something more or something less? As it was, just enough had been said to create excitement and agitation which would probably be difficult to allay, without, at the same time, giving any satisfaction. Then there was the question of what was known as

Healy's Clause, which the Prime Minister had spoken of as of great, but not overwhelming, importance. He (Mr. Gibson) would not go into the history of that clause, though it was a curious one. It was, however, idle to say that that clause, or any construction put upon it, could be at variance with the original intentions of the beneficent framers of the Bill, for it formed no part of their original scheme—it was never dreamt of until the Bill had nearly left the House, and then it was handed in in manuscript by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the then Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Law) at the last moment. He would only say this much —that hon. Members below the Gangway, who had criticized Healy's Clause and the decision upon it in the case of "Adams *v.* Dunseath" had not presented the question with their usual accuracy, and anyone would see that the importance of what was done in this particular case on the subject had been ridiculously exaggerated. What had been done by six Judges to one was obvious common sense and fair play, and it was this—in the Act of 1870 there was a clause which said that in a tenancy from year to year in existence before 1870, the Court, in awarding compensation for improvements, would be at liberty to consider the time the tenant had enjoyed the benefit of improving the land he held, and the benefits that had been conferred upon him by his landlord. There was also a provision in the Act of 1881 which said that the two Acts in regard to this matter should be read together. The obvious consequence was that the definition of improvements in the Act of 1870 governed that of 1881, introducing the qualifications he had referred to in the earlier definition for the purposes of the Act of 1881. Now, all that the decision of the Court of Appeal did in that matter was to hold that that particular class of tenancies should be subject, if the Court thought proper, to the just and moderate qualification which he had just mentioned. He wished to contrast, without going into details, the way in which the Prime Minister dealt with suggestions made on the part of landlords with the way in which he dealt with suggestions on behalf of tenants. It had been mentioned, over and over again, that the decisions of the Land Courts had been at variance with the express undertakings of Ministers in that House as to what would be the effect of the working of the Act. What had the landlords been told when they represented the case to the Government? They were told that Ministers had only given their impressions of what the result of the Act would be; but that they had not guaranteed what the result of judicial considerations might be. They said they had no control in the matter. That was the way in which landlords were dealt with. But when it was suggested to the right hon. Gentleman, on the part of the tenants, that the decrees, not of the Commissioners, but of the highest Court in Ireland, were contrary to the intentions of the framers of the Act, the Prime Minister said at once that the decision was contrary to those intentions, and that it would be necessary carefully to watch the decisions in order to decide whether the Government would do anything in the matter. He (Mr. Gibson) thought, considering the circumstances, that was a matter calling for observation and criticism. He passed it by, however; but he would say that when the Prime Minister had censured others so strongly for presuming to suggest that an inquiry might be made in certain circumstances into the judicial working of the Act, it was rather a strong measure for himself to use language that, he confessed, if it did not amount to a reflection, at all events threw a doubt upon the highest Court in Ireland as to a judicial determination it had come to. It was more than that. There was something dangerous in the ambiguity of the Prime Minister's answer, when he said that he would observe the construction which would be put upon that decision by the final Court of Appeal in Ireland. Did not what he said suggest that the interpretation of the Court was a false one, and, if false, should be amended? and did it not suggest to the Assistant Commissioners to put no construction at all on it—the Assistant Commissioners, he would remind the House, being gentlemen appointed only for a year, who were not called upon to give reasons for their decisions. They had only to hold their tongues to do pretty much what they liked. That line of observation on the right hon. Gentleman's part was calculated to lead to complications and confusion in Ireland.

It led the farmers to believe that they would get more by holding out; it led agitators to believe that they had only to use terrorism in order to get what they were agitating for. As he had said before, on this question the right hon. Gentleman had said too much or too little. The Court of Appeal should be treated either as the final Court of Appeal, or the Government should promptly bring in an amending Bill. When a decision was given by the highest Court in Ireland, the Prime Minister was bound to bow before the decision in silent assent; or, if he thought that the decision called for observation, it must not only be an observation, but should fructify in legislation. It ill became a Minister of the Crown to throw doubt upon the administration of the law, unless he was prepared at once to amend it. The Prime Minister had said he would reserve the question of arrears. He thought that the shadow of the right hon. Gentleman's speech had influenced all who had spoken, including his hon. Friend the Member for Cork County (Mr. Shaw). There was the same call for "light and leading" in the hon. Gentleman's oracular utterances. Everyone felt that it was a question of vast importance. He thought the word generally used on the subject was "supreme urgency;" and, bearing in mind that the Prime Minister had promised to consider the question during the Easter Recess, and that, in consequence of that promise, the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson) had put down his Question for Monday, and that then that hon. Member was told that Wednesday was the day when the Prime Minister was going to make a statement, he was bound to say that nothing could be more admirable than the courtesy and demeanour of the Prime Minister, who had waited for "light and leading," instead of giving the House something which might be criticized. What had the Prime Minister said of the question to be settled? Only something in the nature of a platitude—"It demanded our practical consideration." Of course it did. Then "the Government would legislate upon the matter at an early date, if the House would tell them how." The Prime Minister then had laid down three conditions which ought to be fulfilled by all right-minded legislators who approached the question. First, they were to be impartial. He (Mr. Gibson) hoped they were all impartial. He could only speak for himself. It was to be in accordance with the opinion of the Irish people. He could not speak for the Irish nation, which was rather like the letter x, which stood for an unknown quantity. Then, all dealing on the matter should be effectual. That was like telling them an Act of Parliament should be an Act of Parliament. Then, all action in the matter would have to be either voluntary or compulsory. That might be true enough; but it all depended upon the terms of the compulsory legislation. If he was to be compelled to accept good terms, he was the man for compulsory legislation. But if the terms were bad, he ought to be allowed some choice in the matter as to whether he would accept them or not. When the right hon. Gentleman said—what was perfectly true—that this Bill was drawn upon the compulsory system, would it not be reasonable, when the creditor had given time to his debtor, that he should have some voice in the matter? Would it, on the other hand, be reasonable to expect a creditor to voluntarily cancel part of his debt? At all events, he should like the right hon. Gentleman, when he had made up his mind on the matter, to give the House some reason why the voluntary element should not, in some shape or form, enter into the arrangement. It might well be that, bearing in mind that while some of the arrears had accumulated during three, or four, or five years, while others had arisen during only one or two years, there was some scope for the voluntary element in some cases, while the compulsory element might possibly, to some extent, be applied in others. Everything, however, would depend upon the nature of the plans which the Government intended to present to the House. He had been thinking a great deal over the right hon. Gentleman's speech; and when he said that the Bill being drawn upon compulsory lines, the grant under it would take the form of a gift instead of a loan, as a gift was peculiar to the compulsory system, he (Mr. Gibson) altogether failed to understand what there was in a gift which was inconsistent with the voluntary element. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman, when he came to speak on the question, would enlighten them on the point. Then, with regard to the sources whence the grants were to come, the Prime Minister did not say that he was pleased: but he said that he was not surprised that it should be proposed that the grants should come from the Surplus of the Irish Church. That, however, was a serious consideration, for it must be borne in mind that the Church Surplus could not last for ever, and that, to use an expression of the Prime Minister, it was within measurable distance of its end. He (Mr. Gibson) found, on examination, that the assets of the Irish Church Fund now amounted to from £1,800,000 to £2,000,000; and it was a serious thing, bearing in mind the many claims of a more enduring character that might be made upon the not very large residue of that fund, to appropriate a very large part of it to what the Prime Minister himself had termed a temporary purpose. In his opinion that surplus should be applied to something more durable and more calculated to insure the lasting prosperity of the country. Turning to the general question, he wished to point out that the main difficulty of dealing with the Land Question in Ireland was the block of litigation in the Land Courts; and if the compulsory system were put into force with regard to arrears, the amount of that litigation would be enormously increased, for they would have in every case what might be a separate lawsuit, and as many lawsuits as cases. If they told the landlord he must submit to the cancelling of a certain percentage of the arrears as bad debts, they could not possibly prevent a landlord, when brought under the compulsory element, from going into Court with the view of showing that the defaulting tenant was perfectly able to pay the whole of the arrears. The result would therefore be that for so many cases of arrears there would be so many fresh lawsuits, in which the tribunal would have to be satisfied of the tenant's incompetency to pay the arrears. He did not say that it was so in every case; but there were a vast number of cases in which the tenant could pay if he would, or in which he would pay if he were allowed to do so, although there were others, of course, in which he, unfortunately, could not pay, whatever his desire on the point might be. It was a very important element, therefore, for the House to consider that, in agreeing to these proposals, they might be sowing the seeds of a vast variety of complicated and very serious lawsuits. With regard to the proposed tribunal, he regretted, as he had said before, that no plan with regard to it had yet been submitted to the House by the Prime Minister. He was of opinion that it was the duty of Her Majesty's Government to submit a plan to the House in reference to it. It was a matter with which no one but the Government could deal; it was not possible for a private Member, nor for any series of private Members, to deal with it. He was, therefore, strictly within his right when he said that the Government were bound to submit a plan to the House with regard to this tribunal. When that plan was submitted to the House, it ought to be fairly and moderately considered on it own merits. Looking at the proposals as a whole, there was one danger to which he wished to draw the attention of the House. It was the serious and terrible danger of demoralizing the Irish tenants by teaching those who had been honest and brave, and had paid their rents, that they had needlessly sacrificed themselves, and those who had been dishonest and cowardly that they had been gainers by their dishonesty and their cowardliness. The other clauses of the Bill he did not intend to allude to—not out of want of respect to the authors of the Bill, but because that had already been efficiently done by the noble Lord the Member for Calne (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice), and also because he had preferred to deal with the important questions referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. It must, of course, be a matter of grave disappointment and regret to the Prime Minister to find that this discussion was taking place, and that the House should be making a searching criticism into the working of every part of the Land Act only five or six months after it had become law. That such should be the case could not be pleasant to the right hon. Gentleman, and was no cause for congratulation. The Prime Minister, in asking the House to pass the Land Bill, had stated that it could only be justified by the special circumstances of the case. He (Mr. Gibson) thought, however, that there was more truth in the observation that had been made with regard to that Act, that the only excuse for it would be its success; and that excuse was certainly not forthcoming. The noble Lord the Member for Calne (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice), in his very interesting speech, had warned Her Majesty's Government against the danger of drifting; and he (Mr. Gibson) could only repeat that warning. At some time or other the Government would have to speak plainly and distinctly, instead of postponing these questions for consideration on future days, which might be next week or many days off. How to deal with the Irish crisis was absolutely the question of the day. He ventured to think that no Government could deal with that question which did not use plain and distinct language. He believed that if the Government were actuated by a steady purpose and by a resolute courage—if they were prepared to carry out that purpose through evil report and through good report, if they were not dismayed by unpopularity nor disheartened by ingratitude—and if they applied themselves to restore law and order, that, when they had succeeded in restoring law and order, they might then hope to see also restored in Ireland peace, contentment, and, after a time, loyalty.

COLONEL **COLTHURST** said, he wished most especially to say a word or two on the subject of leases. As far as arrears were concerned, he had every confidence in the statements of the Prime Minister; but he could not help wishing the right hon. Gentleman to have expressed himself more positively on the subject of leases. He did not expect him to have promised to deal with them that Session; but he was in hopes that the right hon. Gentleman would have admitted more frankly and positively that there was a question to be dealt with. In his (Colonel Colthurst's) view it was the next most important question to arrears in connection with the Land Act, and he hoped the Government would make up their mind as to the necessity of taking it up. It was most especially important, as far as regarded the county he represented (Cork), where, out of 43,000 tenants, there were 19,000 leaseholders; while, in the whole of Munster, they were in similar proportion. One man out of every two in County Cork considered himself injured, and that he was not receiving the benefits of the Land Act. A very large number of these leaseholders, no doubt, paid higher rents than they would as tenants. This he could only account for by the intense desire that existed on the part of the occupiers in Ireland to get security upon any terms against a continual increase of rent; and he believed that many of the men who were now complaining were not in any way forced to take leases. On the contrary, they themselves offered to pay fines, and pressed the landlords to grant them leases. He could not agree with the clauses proposed by his hon. Friend (Mr. Redmond), for he did not believe that the leaseholders wished to retain their leases, and at the same time to have their rents revised. They would be perfectly satisfied to go into Court and prove that the rent was excessive; and, if they succeeded in their proof, to be made present tenants. As far as he understood the wishes of the farmers in the South of Ireland, this was what they desired. He hoped the Prime Minister and Her Majesty's Government would consider this question, feeling satisfied it was a far more important one than that involved in the decision of "Adams *v.* Dunseath." It was second only in importance to the question of improvements, and until it was settled it was impossible for the Land Act to work satisfactorily.

MR. T. A. **DICKSON** said, he was unwilling to allow the Bill to be read a second time without, on his own behalf and on behalf of some other Members from Ulster, expressing his opinions regarding it. If the Bill went to a division, they would all vote for its second reading. They believed its proposals, speaking generally, were just, moderate, and fair; and they believed also that if the Land Act was to work smoothly and satisfactorily, it must be amended on the lines laid down in the Bill. He could well understand the reluctance of the Government to re-open the question so soon after the passage of their Act; but it should be remembered that the same arguments were applied to the Land Act of 1870, although its defects were pointed out soon after it passed. The result of not re-modelling the Act, as soon as its defects became apparent, was seen in the agitation of 1879 and 1880, which culminated in the Land Act of 1881. He had intended to refer to the block in the Land Courts and other subjects; but time was running short and would not permit. As regarded the subject of arrears, to which, therefore, he would confine himself, he had had a Question on the Paper for five weeks; and seeing that the House appeared to be agreed that it was a matter of vital importance, when the Prime Minister made a statement on that subject, he and other hon. Members from Ulster hoped it would have been more explicit and satisfactory than it was. So far as he was aware, they had derived very little information from the statement which the right hon. Gentleman had made that day, and had no adequate idea as to how or when he proposed to deal with the subject. The Arrears Clauses of the Act had hopelessly failed, because the landlord and tenant were compelled to go jointly to the Court to obtain the loan; and because another most unfair provision was that the landlord was bound to become security for the loan. The result was, according to the last Return, that only £1,000 of arrears had been applied for on behalf of 128 tenants, and only £500 had been granted. The average rent in those cases was £8, and they had been settled by the payment of 10*s*. in the £1. There was no use talking about the state of the country, and the Government could not expect that peace would be restored to Ireland so long as during the last three months you could have 1,300 families evicted, representing about 7,000 persons. The evicted man was an enemy, an angry and a dangerous man, not only dangerous in himself, but more especially so in the members of his family, who might not be so easily restrained. They were told that these evictions did not really take place as represented, that the tenants were generally restored as caretakers. No doubt they were; but, as a magistrate, knowing what went on in Petty Sessions, he (Mr. T. A. Dickson) could say that their tenure was only temporary, for in a few weeks or months they were again put out under a Petty Sessions decree. He saw in an Irish paper, a few days ago, particulars of 34 evictions recently carried out on the Marquess of Sligo's property. Their average rent was £6 10*s*.; the average arrears less than two years, total amount of arrears due being only £220; and yet, for want of that sum, and through the Arrears Clauses not operating, 192 persons were cast out. He had a letter from an Ulster tenant which put the whole difficulty concisely and pithily. The tenant, on behalf of himself and others, wrote—

> "The landlords are turning many out; but we got our fair rents fixed on December 8th. My valuation was £9 10*s*.; my old rent £22 10*s*.; my new rent £12 10*s*.; but all this was no good. The landlord got writs, and evicted us all on January 4th. We got a form from Dublin for the arrears; but the landlord would not sign his name. We put our interest in the farms up for sale; but no one would buy, as the landlord told them not to buy until the time for redemption had passed, and the landlord then bought himself. What are we to do? We are to be thrown out on the 4th January, after having paid rack rents for years. We do not want to wrong the landlord; but we pray you to ask the Members of Parliament to get us time to pay the arrears."

There was another great evil, which was that, though a tenant might have a fair rent fixed, he still had the arrears hanging over his head. The fact of the arrears kept hundreds and thousands from applying to the Land Courts. The tenant could not apply with the burden of arrears hanging over his head. If he did he was threatened with a writ, and he knew that eviction would follow. He believed that the extent of the arrears were vastly exaggerated. There were 200,000 tenants in Ireland of £4 valuation and under, and 200,000 more between £4 and £10 valuation. The average valuation of 400,000 tenants was £5, and the average rent £7. In the 128 applications for relief under the Arrears Clauses, the average rent was £8, and the average arrears a year and a-half. He had no hesitation in saying that £1,500,000, or even less, would settle the whole question of arrears in Ireland. He thought it was the duty of the Government to devise at once a practical plan for dealing with arrears. He differed with that portion of the Bill which proposed the settlement of the arrears in the shape of a gift to the tenant. Nothing could be more immoral or more demoralizing. What would the Bill do for the tenant who paid his rent last week? What would it do for the honest, struggling, thrifty tenant who, up to the present time, had paid every 1*s*. of his rent, and was not in arrears? The very man with whom he sympathized! It was impossible to deal with the question in the way of a gift. This

Bill proposed that the Land Commissioners should ascertain the amount of arrears due by the tenant, and thereupon decide as to his capacity to pay; but look at the enormous amount of work that that would put on those gentlemen. It would make them a tribunal to try the insolvency and the honesty of every tenant who applied to them. He was opposed to the proposal, because he believed it would be impracticable and impossible. He was willing to do anything to relieve the tenants from the arrears now hanging over their heads; and if the Government would bring forward a broad and just measure that would deal liberally with the question, he was certain they would receive the support of all sides of the House. It would do more to solve the great difficulty that now existed, and restore peace to the country by increasing public confidence, than any other plan which had been brought before them.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Justin M'Carthy.*)

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I do not propose to oppose the adjournment of the debate; but I hope it will be understood by the House that it does not mean adjourning for further consideration the very important and practical subject brought before us. I am especially alluding to the question of arrears. I agree with my hon. Friend who has just spoken (Mr. T. A. Dickson) that it is possible that the amount of arrears may be, to some extent, exaggerated; but there is no question that it is a very urgent matter; and I must also say its urgency is not diminished, but increased, by being brought before the House. And though the Prime Minister made no definite statement as to when he would be able to take the matter in hand, hon. Members must not suppose that the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) was right in assuming that we did not mean to take it in hand; but I think all hon. Members must be aware that, in the present state of Public Business, it is difficult to name an exact day for the plan which it will be our duty to submit. But we do intend to bring forward what we consider to be a solution of the question as soon as we can with any consistent regard to other matters before the House. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), in his interesting and, I may say, rather amusing speech, found a little fault with us that we did not disclose our plan today. It is not very often the custom—I do not know that it was the custom of the right hon. and learned Gentleman's Colleagues to state the Government proposal in a discussion on another Bill. He also seemed to think we were to blame for wishing to obtain the opinion of Gentlemen connected with Ireland; but we have often been told that we did not sufficiently seek to obtain their views. The right hon. and learned Gentleman was determined, so far as he was concerned, at any rate, not to give us much of suggestion as to what he thought on the matter. I do not think that the House generally, or the country, will blame us for trying to take the opportunity of this debate to-day to ascertain how this question is looked upon from different sections of the House. If I may compare so important a matter with what has happened in regard to my own position, I would remind the House that I have been sometimes found fault with because I have consulted the Irish Members, and again I have been blamed for not having consulted them. In the same way, we have to-day been blamed for asking the opinion of the House of Commons, whereas we have often been blamed for not having done so. I must admit that what has happened to-day has been very helpful in the consideration of the question. I think we have clearly ascertained that this matter of arrears is one that may be approached without any very strong Party feeling, not merely between the two great Parties, but between the Government and the two sections of the Opposition. Moreover, it is a question that may be approached without creating any angry feelings between different classes in Ireland, because it concerns the landlord quite as much as the tenant. All this is a very satisfactory gain to have got from the discussion. May I go a little further, and say that the whole tone of this debate is hopeful, as I consider, for the government of Ireland? Not merely the mode in which the subject has been brought forward, but the way in which it has been treated, makes me hope that the difficulties which beset the Government and this Parliament, and beset the country, and rather especially beset myself, may diminish if all Irish questions be approached and debated in the reasonable manner in which this question has been debated. Perhaps I may be allowed, before I sit down, to correct one or two misapprehensions with regard to the figures relating to the decisions of the Land Court. The block in the Land Court is, no doubt, considerable; but hon. Members must not suppose that the Business is not proceeding with more rapidity than they seem to be aware of. I shall put on the Table of the House to-day a Return which shows that, instead of the number of cases disposed of being nearly 4,000, as the hon. Member for Sligo alleges, there are 8,600 disposed of in the Land Commission Court, and 1,784 by the County Court Judges. Thus, there are more than 10,000 cases disposed of, and what is of importance is this—that the rate at which they are being disposed of is increasing month by month, and very considerably. There were disposed of in January 1,681, in February 2,416, and in March more than 3,000. I also believe that the appeals will be heard much quicker than hon. Gentlemen imagine. One chief reason why appeals have not hitherto been heard has been that the Land Commissioners waited for the result of the very important appeal to which so much allusion has been made to-day. I do not mean to say it will not be some time before all the cases are disposed of; but the increase in the rapidity with which they are being dealt with is likely to continue, and the number of cases settled by the intervention of the Land Court, without actual litigation, will grow larger every day. I am glad to take this opportunity of stating that the Land Commissioners are issuing an Order, which I hope will be generally known throughout Ireland, for it will tend to considerably increase the speedy settlement of the cases. They have come to the conclusion to let it be known throughout all parts of Ireland that if the landlord and tenant are willing to take the decision of a valuator sent down from Dublin, and to make that the ground upon which the judicial rent shall be fixed, they will send down such valuators. This would enable the judicial rent to be obtained without taking up time and expense in litigation. They hope, and I have the hope, that that will still further promote the rapidity of business. With regard to the Motion for Adjournment, I will merely say again that if hon. Members are able to bring it forward again, I will be very glad to take part in the discussion, which I hope may prove as useful as on the present occasion; but in consenting to the adjournment, the Government do not mean that we feel it is not our duty to take up ourselves, as soon as we possibly can, this question of arrears, and submit our views to the House.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER said, he was very glad that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had assented to the adjournment of the debate; but he regretted that he had not given any pledge on the part of the Government providing a day for a future discussion. Everyone must admit that not a particle of the time of the House had been wasted on this occasion; and he (Mr. O'Connor Power) could only say, for himself, that while he was disposed to criticize some of the details, he should certainly seize the opportunity of voting for the second reading. He would respectfully appeal to the right hon. Gentleman and the Government to fix a day for the resumption of the debate, especially as the appeal of the Prime Minister for a declaration of Irish opinion had been effectually answered. They had had such a declaration, and upon that, he thought, they might hope that, when the Government next took up the question, they would be able to make a definite announcement on every important point.

Mr. BIGGAR said, that, before the adjournment was agreed to, he should like to suggest that it would be desirable for the Government to state that, pending the bringing forward again of this question of arrears, they would cease to give special assistance in cases of eviction. If they continued to give special assistance by police and soldiers in the evictions of tenants who were unable to pay their arrears, the public in Ireland would doubt their *bona fides* in the matter. On the other hand, if they gave that assurance on that point there would be great satisfaction in Ireland. Without such an assurance he did not think the Irish people would have the slightest confidence in the action of the Government.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, that as the debate was to be adjourned, and as the Government had not offered any particular day for its resumption, it might, after all, turn out well that no certain day had been fixed; for he trusted the result would be that Irish Members on both sides, without distinction of Party, would utilize the time between now and the renewal of the debate by taking council together, and following the Scotch precedent—sinking all questions of Party and try and put together a body of practical proposals that could be presented to the Government representative of the united opinion of Ireland. He believed that such a proposition would be supported by the public opinion of England, and that it was not hostile to the wishes of Her Majesty's Government. The Prime Minister invited every kind of assistance in the solution of this most difficult problem; and he trusted that every Irish Member, whether advanced Home Ruler or less advanced Home Ruler, Conservative or Liberal, Member for Ulster or Member for Munster, would take the suggestion to heart during the next few days, and present an example of the Irish nation united on the most important question that had ever come before the House of Commons.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY said, that, for his part, he had the greatest desire that the counsels of the Irish Members should be united, so as to produce an impression on the Government on behalf of the Irish tenant; and nothing should be wanting on his part to respond to the hon. Member for Dungarvan's (Mr. O'Donnell's) appeal, especially as that appeal pointed to the payment of rent, while it was the advice to pay no rent that had been one of the causes of the difference between that side and this. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] He believed they were at one on the question of arrears, and on most of the points dealt with in the Bill, although not entirely. But as to utilizing the opportunity of the next few days in a practical spirit, he thought the hon. Gentleman and his Friends would find none more eager and zealous to aid in the solution of the question than the Members who represented the old principles which were defined by the late Mr. Butt.

Mr. GORST said, he had no desire to interfere with the unity of the Irish Members; but if the solution of the question of arrears was to be in its payment by British taxpayers, some of the Representatives of the English constituencies would have something to say on the subject.

Colonel NOLAN said, he agreed that it would be a good thing if the Representatives of the different sections of the Irish Party would combine in order to place their views upon the subject of arrears before the Government. In the case of its being fulfilled, he hoped that the Government would give the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), the hon. Member for Tipperary (Mr. Dillon), and the hon. Member for Roscommon (Mr. O'Kelly) the opportunity of joining in the debate.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

BANKRUPTCY BILL.—[Bill 37.]

(*Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Gorst, Sir Edmund Lechmere.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he was perfectly willing that it should be referred to the Select Committee to which the other Bills relating to the Bankruptcy Law had been committed. He would move the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Dixon-Hartland.*)

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, that he should offer no opposition to the second reading of the measure, as, with a few alterations, to most of which he saw no objection, it was in principle a copy of the Government measure of last Session.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 27th April, 1882.

MINUTES.]—*Sat First in Parliament*—The Lord Hopetoun, after the death of his father.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Army Alternative Punishment (68), *negatived.*

Third Reading—Metropolitan Commons Supplemental * (38); Army (Annual) (65), and *passed.*

ARMY ANNUAL BILL.—(No. 65.)

(*The Earl of Morley.*)

THIRD READING.

Order of the Day for the Third Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3ª."—(*The Earl of Morley.*)

THE EARL OF LONGFORD said, he wished, before the Bill was disposed of, to be allowed to express a hope as to whether a better system of distribution of Army prize money—if ever such an occurrence should again take place—could not be instituted by the authorities at the War Office. He might point out that certain Army prize money had been in dispute for something like 20 years, and he hoped that his noble Friend would give attention to the subject.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 3ª accordingly, and *passed.*

ARMY (ALTERNATIVE PUNISHMENT) BILL.—(No. 68.)

(*The Lord Denman.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD DENMAN, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, its object was to enable those soldiers who had become liable to imprisonment, if asked to say that they would rather submit to being flogged, that they should have the option. It was known to their Lordships that at Petty Sesssions defendants had the choice of being tried summarily, or being sent to the Quarter Sessions for trial there. The convicted soldier would have an option, as was the case where a fine was imposed, with the alternative of imprisonment, notwithstanding the words "other than flogging" in Clause 4 of the Army Act, 1881. The Bill would enable the administrators of the Act of 1882 to sentence any convicted soldier to a punishment according to rules made by the Secretary of State for War, coupled with the choice, instead of imprisonment or hard labour, of the punishment of more or fewer lashes, according to the gravity of his offence and the sentence passed upon him, such lashes, in every respect, to be in accordance with his act, and never exceeding 25 lashes. When he was at Eton he was promised £50 a-year from his father for every year in which he should escape flogging; but though he was seven years there, and during half of the last year, from being in the sixth form, no longer liable to be flogged, yet he never escaped corporal punishment for a whole year. He (Lord Denman) did not consider this punishment a disgrace to school boys; but he recollected, with disgust, seeing a soldier for theft receive 300 lashes in Windsor, in 1823, and afterwards saw the same man in the ranks of the Grenadier Guards, with his coat turned, as the completion of his sentence. For his own part, when he was a boy he would sooner have endured the pain of the extraction of a double tooth than the agony of a flogging. He believed the reduction of the amount of corporal punishment to be most salutary, and that if this Bill became law it would have a beneficial effect. He had received little encouragement; but if the Bill were read a second time he would appoint the Committee for Monday next.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Denman.*)

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, that, on the part of the Government, he could not assent to the second reading of the Bill. He would remind their Lordships that the question of the abolition of flogging in the Army was fully discussed recently, both in their Lordships' House and in "another place," and he could not consent to the re-opening of the controversy. If the Bill were passed, it would be attended with great inconvenience, and he hoped the House would not entertain the proposal of the noble Lord.

On question, *resolved* in the *negative.*

House adjourned at a quarter past Four o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 27th April, 1882.

MINUTES.]—New Member Sworn—Edward James Stanley, esquire, *for* Somerset County (Western Division).

Public Bills—*Ordered—First Reading*—Tramways Provisional Orders * [141]; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders * [142]; Documentary Evidence * [143].

Second Reading—Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) [21].

Select Committee — Civil Imprisonment (Scotland) * [19], *nominated.*

Committee—Report—Commonable Rights [23]; Judgments (Inferior Courts) [44]; Places of Worship Sites [97].

Considered as amended—Roads Provisional Order (Edinburgh) * [139].

QUESTIONS.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—LIMERICK GAOL—PUTTING UNTRIED PRISONERS TO WORK.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that the Governor of the County of Limerick Prison is in the habit of compelling prisoners to work who are simply returned for trial (as instanced in the case of the twelve prisoners returned for trial from Bruff in November last); and, if so, if such is done with the sanction of the Prisons Board, or on the individual authority of the Governor of the Prison?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, he would answer the Question in the absence of his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland, which was due to urgent business. It was not a fact that untried prisoners in the County Limerick Prison were compelled to work.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said, he would call the special attention of the right hon. and learned Gentleman to certain cases.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, that if the hon. Member would supply him with instances he would have an inquiry made; but he thought the hon. Member would find he was mistaken.

THE NATIONAL DEFENCES—CHATHAM DOCKYARD.

Mr. W. H. JAMES asked the Secretary of State for War, If the report in the Naval and Military intelligence of the "Times" of April 17th is correct, that an immense fort for the protection of Chatham Dockyard, the garrison, &c. is to be commenced forthwith on the main road between Chatham and Maidstone; and, whether, in addition to this fort and another already under construction at Birstal near Rochester, several others are to be constructed; and, if he will state what are the grounds of these special military defensive propositions?

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to my hon. Friend, I have to state that the Royal Defence Commission, in 1860, recommended the expenditure of £500,000 on the works required for the eastern land defence of Chatham. In 1872 these works were settled, and were to consist of a fort and its accessories at Birstall, another at Horstead, and a third on Darland Hill. It was also then decided that these works should be constructed by convict labour, at a reduced expense to the War Department of £200,000, and the Home Department erected a convict prison for this purpose. The Birstall works are in progress, the main fort being two-thirds completed; Horstead is just commenced, at an expense of £45,000; but nothing has been done beyond the acquisition of the necessary land at Darland Hill. As to the ground for these defensive works, I can only refer my hon. Friend to the Report of the Royal Commission.

Colonel STANLEY asked if some of the fortifications were not being built by convict labour?

Mr. CHILDERS replied, that they were all being built by convict labour.

Mr. W. H. JAMES said, that he would take the earliest available opportunity of moving a reduction of the Vote relating to those fortifications.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA—FREE EMIGRATION.

Mr. Alderman W. LAWRENCE (for Sir James Lawrence) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, At what period of the year 1869 the Government came to the decision that no obligation rested on the Imperial Government to send out free emigrants to Western Australia; if he is aware that on 5th July 1869, Mr. Monsell, then Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, stated in the House of Commons that the Government had undertaken to send out a free emigrant for every convict received by that Colony, and that although the Legislative Council of Western Australia were of opinion that the number of free emigrants still to be sent out at the expense of this Country to exceed 3,000, he considered only about 1,800 to be due; and, if he will have any objection to the production of Copies of all Correspondence upon the subject with the Governor of Western Australia?

Mr. COURTNEY: I find that Lord Emly did not speak of the undertaking to send out free emigrants as absolute—it was subject to certain conditions; and the 1,800 probably due to the Colony were to be sent out only if these conditions were fulfilled. An inquiry, to which Lord Emly referred, was made by a despatch of the 26th of July, 1869, and the result was adverse to the existence of the necessary conditions, and the undertaking became inoperative. Much of the Correspondence on the subject is of a confidential character, which could not conveniently be produced.

RUSSIA—PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he has received any confirmation from Her Majesty's Consuls in Russia of the outrages, which are stated by the Russian papers to have been committed during the present month, upon the Jews in that Country, and especially of the statement that at Balta 15,000 persons have been rendered homeless, forty seriously wounded, a large number of women and girls violated, and infants thrown into the river; whether he will lay upon the Table any Reports that may have been received from Her Majesty's Ambassador and the Consuls in Russia on the subject; whether he has seen a suggestion, made in a leading German paper, that it is the duty of Europe to send a collective note to St. Petersburg, demanding that Russia shall discharge the common obligations of justice and humanity towards the Jews; and, whether, inasmuch as the course hitherto pursued by Her Majesty's Government with regard to the outrages in Russia has failed to bring about a cessation of these outrages, any steps will now be taken with a view to carrying out the suggestion referred to?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, the British Vice Consul at Odessa, who has visited Balta since the outbreak, reports that one Jew was killed and many badly wounded; that there were three alleged cases of violation of women, of which one was undoubtedly true; that no children were killed, and that the value of the property destroyed was about 1,000,000 roubles. At the time of his visit the authorities were energetically endeavouring to ascertain who were the guilty persons. The Vice-Consul's full Report has not yet been received; but when it arrives there will be no objection to laying it before Parliament, with other despatches on the subject. I have not seen the article in a German paper referred to by the hon. Member, and no such suggestion has been made by Germany or any other Power.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS asked whether the reports published in the Russian papers did not give the number of persons rendered homeless at 15,000, and that a large number of women had been outraged?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I can only state I have not seen the Russian newspapers, and I can only go by the Vice Consul's preliminary Report. A fuller Report is coming home. The Vice Consul did not say that 40 persons were seriously wounded. His words were —"One killed, many badly wounded;" and then the exact words which I have quoted with reference to the outrage on women.

CUSTOMS—PENALTIES FOR SMUGGLING.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If it is correct that where sailors have been convicted with smuggling the owners of the vessels in which the smuggling has been conducted are liable to penalties in addition to those inflicted on the sailors; and, if it is the case, that even where the owners have been admitted by Her Majesty's Customs to be entirely free from complicity in the acts of the sailors they have not been fined?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Sir, the law provides that any vessel with prohibited goods shall be forfeited.

But this is seldom strictly enforced. In cases where the offender is a person in authority, either the ship is detained, or a deposit of money is required, where the detention of the ship would cause inconvenience to the trade or the public. On release of the ship or repayment of the deposit a fine is generally imposed, with the view of causing owners and masters to take due precaution, not merely that there shall be no complicity, but that every effort shall be used for the prevention of concealments on board vessels.

GIBRALTAR (RELIGIOUS DISSENSIONS)—DR. CANILLA.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, If he will give a return of the names of the persons arrested, committed, and sentenced at Gibraltar for the events which accompanied the installation of Dr. Canilla as Vicar Apostolic, together with the charges made against them and the terms of their sentences, and of any representations made by inhabitants of Gibraltar on the subject; whether the Governor of Gibraltar has refused to acknowledge the existence of the Junta of Lay Elders of the Roman Catholic Community, though that body has been recognised since the possession of Gibraltar by this country, and has been confirmed by a decree of the Privy Council, and whether he has, in consequence, transferred to Dr. Canilla, or to any other person, the custody of the Roman Catholic temporalities hitherto administered by the Junta; and, further, whether Her Majesty's Government will take any steps, and, if so, what steps, to restore to the Roman Catholic Community of Gibraltar the tranquillity which has been recently so much disturbed?

COLONEL COLTHURST asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, with reference to the Question of the honourable Member for Portsmouth, Whether his attention has been called to the opinion of the Attorney General for Gibraltar to this effect:—1. That the appointment of a Junta or Board on the 12th August last was invalid; 2. That the Junta nominated in 1863, since when no lay members have been elected, did not possess any right to the Church of St. Mary or adjacent buildings; 3. That the draft ordinance of 1876 transfers the churches not to bodies or Junta but to trustees (five in number) comprising the Vicar Apostolic and Vicar General; and, whether it would be possible for Her Majesty's Government to give effect to such opinion?

MR. COURTNEY: Yes, Sir; the Return will be given. I am not aware that the Governor has refused to acknowledge the existence of the Junta, or that he has transferred to Dr. Canilla or any other person the custody of any temporalities hitherto administered by the Junta. I believe some question has been raised as to the legality of a recent election to the Junta; and, indeed, it appears in the Papers presented that the Attorney General has expressed an opinion that that election was invalid, as stated in the Question of my hon. and gallant Friend; but with reference to his further Questions and the Question of the hon. Member for Portsmouth, I would repeat what I have said on a former occasion—that it is not in the power of the Governor to divest the Junta of any legal right. If the custody or administration of anything has been taken from them to which they are entitled, they can assert their claims in the Law Courts, as was done 40 years ago. Tranquillity has now remained for some time undisturbed.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—MILFORD POST OFFICE.

MR. LEAMY asked the Postmaster General, Whether the office of Postmaster at Milford, county Cork, was recently held by Mr. Mathew Murphy, millowner and shopkeeper, at present imprisoned under the Coercion Act, and that since his arrest, which occurred about six months ago, and up to the 29th of last month, the office has been under the charge of his sister, Miss Murphy; whether, on the 29th of last month, Miss Murphy was informed that she could not be allowed to continue to conduct the office, as she was not a householder, and that since that date there has been no post office at Milford; whether Miss Murphy conducted the post office to the satisfaction of the authorities; whether the real reason for refusing to allow her to continue to conduct it is the imprisonment of her brother on suspicion; and, whether he approves of the course taken by the local postal authorities in the matter?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, in reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that Miss Murphy cannot be appointed to the post office at Milford because she does not fulfil the necessary condition of being a householder. The reason why the office has been closed is that no one who is eligible is willing to take it. If Miss Murphy can qualify herself by becoming a householder, I shall be willing to appoint her, and to continue her in the office, so long as she conducts the office properly.

ARMY—STAFF APPOINTMENTS.

Colonel ALEXANDER asked the Secretary of State for War, If he can state why Officers who have not passed the final Staff College Examination are appointed to the Staff contrary to the Queen's Regulations and to the detriment of those who have qualified in every respect?

Mr. CHILDERS: The hon. and gallant Gentleman's Question contains two assumptions—first, that officers have been appointed to the Staff contrary to the Queen's Regulations; and, secondly, that those Regulations require that officers appointed to the Staff should have gone through the Staff College. In this he is mistaken, as, by the Regulations, an officer may be appointed to the general Staff of the Army if he be "of proved ability on the Staff in the field." I know of no officer on the general Staff of the Army below the rank of lieutenant colonel who does not fulfil these conditions. The Regulation does not apply to officers of higher rank.

Colonel ALEXANDER gave Notice that he would take an early opportunity of calling attention to a recent violation of the rules governing the appointment of officers to the Staff of the Army.

NAVY—THE SHIPBUILDING PROGRAMME.

Captain PRICE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the ship-building programme, which he has asked the House of Commons to sanction, is sufficient to provide, at the completion of that programme, an armoured fleet fully equal in numbers and fighting strength to those of any two European Powers, or superior in these respects to any single Power?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, the essential feature of a shipbuilding programme is the number of tons to be built in a given year, and it cannot be said that any one year or another will provide a fleet of a certain size as is indicated in the hon. Gentleman's Question. For three years past the amount of tonnage built has been increasing steadily, and the Admiralty would not hesitate to increase it still further, if it appeared to them necessary, in order to maintain the supremacy of Great Britain at sea. As to the relative strength of our own and foreign Fleets, I put forward the view of the Government last week in a speech of an hour, and the hon. Member criticized it, if I recollect right, at about the same length. There are so many considerations, which must all be taken into account, that I could not undertake to repeat what I then said within the limits of an Answer.

ROYAL PASSENGERS—THE "ALBERT VICTOR" CHANNEL STEAMER.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the public will not be charged £40, in the usual manner, for the conveyance of the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh from Boulogne to Folkestone on the 18th in the "Albert Victor;" and, whether, in view of the consequent neglect by Railway Companies of the comfort and safety of the public, he will consider whether this system of payment for special packets for the conveyance of distinguished persons should be more cautiously adopted?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Sir, the orders for special packets for distinguished persons are given by the Admiralty; but I have no reason to doubt that the usual payment will be made in the case referred to by my hon. Friend. The system now in force was adopted some years ago as a more convenient one than that of providing a ship of the Royal Navy; and, as far as I am aware, no complaints have arisen with respect to it until the late unfortunate mishap. I will communicate with the Board of Trade and Admiralty as to the necessity for making any alteration in its details for the protection of the public.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—THE REVENUE.

Mr. W. H. SMITH (for Sir Stafford Northcote) asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury for some explanation of the two following items in the comparative statement of the Estimate of Revenue for 1882-3, and of the Receipts in 1881-2:—Estimate for 1882-3, Stamps (exclusive of Fee, &c. Stamps), £11,145,000; Exchequer Receipt in 1881-2, £11,385,000. Estimate for 1882-3, Miscellaneous (inclusive of Fee, &c. Stamps), £4,235,000; Exchequer Receipt in 1881-2, £5,011,020?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Sir, two changes have been made this year in the method of stating the Revenue. First, receipts realized by the Army and Navy Departments, which before this year were paid into the Exchequer, will this year be applied, as shown in the Estimates, under fixed regulation, in diminution of the Votes of those Departments. This measure, of course, diminishes the amount of Miscellaneous Receipts to be paid into the Exchequer. Secondly, the Chancellor of the Exchequer presents the Revenue in two parts—1, produce of taxes; 2, receipts, not taxes, properly so-called. Fees levied in Courts of Law and other Departments form part of the receipts of the year. Formerly these fees were received in cash; but, for sake of convenience, they are now, for the most part, collected by means of stamps. The Treasury does not consider these fees as taxes in the ordinary sense of the word, and proposes, therefore, to bring them to account henceforth as Miscellaneous Revenue, so that the Account, laid before Parliament, may show distinctly the two kinds of Revenue. The first measure diminishes the amount of Miscellaneous Receipts to be paid into the Exchequer. The second increases that head of Revenue, diminishing the Stamp Revenue by a corresponding amount.

POLICE (SCOTLAND) — DISTURBANCES IN THE ISLAND OF SKYE.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Lord Advocate, Is it true the police sent from Glasgow to Skye were supplied with revolvers; and, if so, under what Statute are civil officers at liberty to carry arms?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): No, Sir; the police sent from Glasgow to Skye were not supplied with revolvers. They had no weapons other than their ordinary bâtons.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—PRISONERS DETAINED UNDER THE ACT—P. AND W. M'QUINLAN.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the cases of Patrick M'Quinlan and William M'Quinlan his brother, now confined in Limerick Prison on suspicion of being accessory to an attack upon a dwelling-house, have been recently under his notice; whether he is aware that both men have characterised the charge as false; whether a Mr. Brosnan, arrested on the same charge and at the same time, was discharged after four months' detention, whereas these young men have been in prison for twelve months; whether he is aware that the younger, Patrick, had recently returned from college, and was about to present himself for his examinations; whether application was made in January for permission for him to go up for examination, and whether any reply was sent to that application, and whether he will now be permitted to present himself; and, whether he has any special reason for detaining these boys?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, the cases of the two M'Quinlans were reconsidered on Friday last, and the decision arrived at was that they could not be released at present. They may have characterized the charge as a false one; but that did not necessarily make it so. As to Mr. Brosnan, he was discharged last August on a sufficient undertaking. Patrick M'Quinlan applied last January for permission to go up for a Civil Service examination, but was informed that His Excellency was not able to accede to his request. There are sufficient reasons, in the opinion of the Government, for the detention of these two persons at present.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PRISONERS UNDER THE ACT—ARMAGH GAOL.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a Letter in the "Freeman's Journal," of April 22nd, signed by Mr. Nicholas H. Devine, recently a suspect in Armagh Gaol; whether it is a fact, as stated in that Letter, that Mr. Devine, when suffering from an attack of inflammation of the lungs, was removed from the ordinary cell which he inhabited to one fifteen feet by thirteen; that in this cell three other suspects were confined with him for eighteen out of every twenty-four hours; that the cell contained four beds and the furniture necessary for four men, and was used for sleeping and dining in; and, whether better provision will be made for hospital patients in Armagh Gaol?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, the Chief Secretary for Ireland has seen the letter referred to in this Question. The statement in that letter about Mr. Devine's illness in Armagh Prison is quite incorrect. He never suffered from inflammation of the lungs while in detention under the Protection Act. The remaining portions of this Question were, I am informed, fully answered on the 20th of March in reply to the hon. Member, and I have only to add that there is ample hospital accommodation in Armagh Prison.

Mr. REDMOND said, that portion of his Question which had not been answered before he would like to have answered now, with reference to Mr. Devine being confined for this time in a cell of these dimensions.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, he would inquire.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARRESTS IN CO. TIPPERARY.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that about six months ago five men were arrested under the Coercion Act in the neighbourhood of Cashel, county Tipperary, all charged with the same offence; whether four of these men have been released, the only one remaining in custody being Mr. Michael Ryan Wall, at present in Naas Gaol; and, whether he will now order his release?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Four of these men have been released. Mr. Ryan, his sobriquet being, I believe, Wall, is still in detention; but his case is now under His Excellency's consideration.

IRISH FISHERIES—FRENCH FISHING VESSELS.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Reports have been made of violation by French fishing vessels of the three-mile limit on the coasts of Clare and Kerry and in the estuary of the Shannon; whether any and what steps are to be taken to secure the observance of the Law; and, whether the Irish Government will consult with the Admiralty, with a view of obtaining the presence of a gunboat, as suggested by Reports of the Irish Fisheries Commission, to protect the rights of Irish and British fishermen on the Irish coast?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): This Question relates to the action of French fishing vessels on the Irish coast. The Inspectors of Irish Fisheries have drawn the attention of the Government to alleged violations by these French fishing vessels of the provisions of the Fisheries Convention, and the Irish Law Officers will be consulted in the matter.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, whether it was not the fact that during two successive years, when the Estimates were discussed, the attention of the Government was called to this very question?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, he did not know. He understood it turned upon the construction of an Article of the Convention.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—LONGFORD WORKHOUSE.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that on Wednesday the 12th instant a large number of persons applied for relief at the Longford Workhouse, stating that they had been evicted from the estate of Lord Granard; whether the spokesman of the applicants was a young man named Fury, who had been imprisoned as a suspect, and was but lately released; whether Fury stated that his father, one of the evicted, was eighty years of age, and complained that they were all in great distress; whether Fury has since been re-arrested; and, whether he can state the reasons for his re-arrest?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, it is the fact, as stated in the Question of the hon. Member, that a number of persons on the 12th instant applied at Longford Poor House for relief, stating they had been evicted from their farms on Lord Granard's estate; and their spokesman was a man named Fury, who had not been arrested under the Protection Act, but had been committed for trial for firing into a dwelling-house. He stated that his father was 80 years old and in great distress. The relieving officer visited these persons, and found half of them not destitute, and those whom he considered destitute refused relief in the poor-house. I am informed that these tenants owed from three to four years' rent, and that an offer was made to stop the ejectments on payment of one year's rent and costs. Fury had two holdings; on one, I am informed, four years', and on the other five and a-half years' rent was due. On the 17th of this month James Fury was arrested under the Protection Act on suspicion of posting threatening notices.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ENNISKILLEN GAOL—MR. J. P. QUINN.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he is aware that Mr. J. P. Quinn, suspect, confined in Enniskillen Gaol, who has been allowed the use of a well-lighted room in the hospital, in order that he may carry on certain work in which he is engaged, has been refused permission to receive his visitors in his room, although such permission is given under similar circumstances in Kilmainham; whether he will order the prohibition to be withdrawn; or, if not, whether he will state the reason for his refusal; and, whether he will state the reason for Mr. Quinn's removal from Kilmainham to Enniskillen Prison?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, Mr. Quinn was allowed to use a room for writing in; but there is no reason why an exception should be made in his case as to visits. The inquiry is inaccurate in suggesting that there is any prohibition to be withdrawn; there is no prohibition; these are the ordinary rules for the government of the prison, and these must be observed. The hon. Member will see that, on grounds which have been stated formerly to the House, I cannot give the reason which influenced the Government in removing Mr. Quinn to Enniskillen.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—PRISONERS DETAINED UNDER THE ACT —MR. P. ARNOLD.

MR. EDWARD SHEIL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will consider the case of Mr. Patrick Arnold, of Gormanston, in the county of Meath, who has been confined in Armagh since January 2nd last; whether Mr. F. Tullam, his neighbour, who was arrested in December 1881, has not been released; and, whether, under the circumstances, he will direct that Mr. Arnold be released from prison?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, Mr. Tullam has been released, and Mr. Arnold's case is at present under His Excellency's consideration.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARMS LICENCES.

MR. EDWARD SHEIL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that Mr. William Gogarty, of Clondalkin, has been refused a licence to carry arms; whether the licence was refused on the ground that he had been a member of the Land League; whether Mr. Gogarty did produce a certificate signed by two justices of the peace, as required by the Arms Act; and, whether under the circumstances Captain Keogh, R.M. was justified in refusing a licence?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, the facts are not quite accurately stated in the Question of the hon. Member. Mr. Gogarty brought an informal certificate to the licensing officer, who requested him to bring a proper one, which he never did. Under these circumstances, the Resident Magistrate, who was the licensing officer, was justified in not granting him an arms licence.

MR. EDWARD SHEIL: Would the right hon. and learned Gentleman state where the informality was?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, he was not able to tell exactly; but the Arms Act required certain specified requirements to be complied with, and in case any of them were omitted the licence should be refused.

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS—RIVERS CONSERVANCY AND FLOODS PREVENTION BILL.

SIR BALDWYN LEIGHTON asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is the intention of the Government to proceed with the Rivers Conservancy and Prevention of Floods Bill on Friday; and, if not, whether it could be arranged that it should not be again put on the Paper without some serious intention of proceeding with it, seeing the inconvenience caused to the large number of Members interested in it by such a course?

MR. HIBBERT, in reply, said, that the Rivers Conservancy Bill had been put down, not for Friday next, but for Friday, the 5th of May; but, in consequence of a Motion which stood for that day, he thought it very improbable that the Bill would be brought forward on that occasion. He entirely sympathized with the view of the hon. Baronet as to the inconvenience caused to Members by putting down a Bill for a day on which it could not possibly be brought on; and he trusted that his right hon. Friend at the head of the Local Government Board would put down the Bill for a future day when it could be considered.

EJECTMENTS (IRELAND)—THE RETURNS—THE CIVIL BILL COURTS.

MR. GIBSON desired to ask the Attorney General for Ireland a Question of which he had given him Private Notice. In a Return of Ejectments in Ireland issued that morning, it had been shown in the case of the Superior Courts how many Orders of Ejectment had been issued, and how many had been carried out. But in the case of the other Courts only the Orders issued had been shown; but not whether they had been carried out. He would like to know whether his right hon. and learned Friend could see his way to amend the Return, or to issue a Supplementary Return, showing in how many cases these Orders of the Civil Bill Courts had been carried into effect?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, he understood that the form in which the Orders of the Civil Bill Courts were carried out was introduced by the late Government, and had been persisted in up to the present time. But if it were practicable he would endeavour to supply what his right hon. and learned Friend asked for, as the request was exceedingly reasonable. It was desirable, of course, to show what proceedings in the Inferior Courts had ripened into eviction, as well as those in the Superior Courts.

SOUTH AFRICA—ZULULAND.

MR. R. N. FOWLER asked, Whether the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies could give the House any information as to the statement in *The Daily News* as to the serious condition of affairs in Zululand?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, I have seen the statement in *The Daily News*, dated the 25th, and to-day I have received a telegram from Sir Henry Bulwer, dated the 26th—one day later—in which he merely refers incidentally to a demonstration at Natal by the ex-King's brother. Evidently he does not attribute to it the importance which one would attach to *The Daily News* telegram.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—PRISONERS DETAINED UNDER THE ACT —MR. T. RYAN.

MR. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether Mr. Thomas Ryan, of Two Mile Borris, County Tipperary, is still detained in Clonmel Gaol, while Mr. Fanning, in the same locality, arrested at the same time and on the same charge, has been released; and, what reason there is for Mr. Ryan's continued detention?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, Mr. Fanning was released on the ground of ill-health. He was attacked by fever and removed to the hospital. As soon as the doctor certified that he was fit to travel, His Excellency ordered his release. His Excellency has reconsidered Mr. Ryan's case, but cannot see his way to order his release at present.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—TELEGRAMS TO CORONERS.

Mr. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether, when cases of suspicious deaths occur, the police are in the habit of sending telegrams for the Irish coroners free of charge; and, if not, whether the police will be instructed so to do?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, the only telegrams which the Constabulary are authorized to send free are those which relate to the Constabulary Service. No case has been made out to the Government for extending this to telegrams for Irish coroners.

STATE OF IRELAND—THE POLICE AT CAPPOQUIN.

Mr. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a statement in a Waterford paper that, on the occasion of the rejoicings for the release of Mr. Parnell at Cappoquin, the police interfered, and the head constable drew a dagger and held it up before the people; whether, on the Rev. Mr. Casey cautioning him, the head constable said that the clergyman was inciting the people to attack him; whether the Rev. gentleman reported the circumstances to the sub-inspector, and what has been the result of the inquiry; whether daggers, such as that alleged to have been displayed by the constable, have been served out to the Irish Police Force; if not, whether the Government approve of the display of this weapon by the constable, when his regulation sword was available; whether, if the statements are denied, the Government will grant an inquiry thereinto; and, whether, on the evening in question, a sub-constable was stationed at the door of the house of Mr. Michael Fitzgerald, general merchant, thereby deterring many people from entering his shop on business; and what justification there is for such a proceeding?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, I am informed that the account of this transaction, which has been furnished to the hon. Member, is exaggerated. The constable, on the occasion referred to in the Question, seeing an explosive alight near a dwelling in the main street in the town of Cappoquin, went to put it out with a sword-cane which he had in his hand. While doing so the cane became detached from the sword; but the constable at once replaced it. The Rev. Mr. Casey then came up, and remonstrated with the constable for extinguishing the fire, and told him he was exciting the people. The constable respectfully replied that it was his duty to put out the fire, and if there was excitement it was due to the interference of the rev. gentleman. Next day the rev. gentleman called on the Sub-Inspector, and complained to him of the constable. The Sub-Inspector, in reply, told him that he thought the constable had only done his duty, but that he would inquire into it. He did so, and found no further step called for. Of course, no daggers are served out to the police, nor was any dagger displayed on the occasion referred to. No sub or other constable was placed at Mr. Fitzgerald's door, nor was anyone deterred from entering his shop on business.

Mr. HEALY: I beg leave to ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman whether sword-canes have been served out to the police; and whether the Government approve of their use, since ordinary swords have been placed at the disposal of the police?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): No sword-canes have been served out; and I should think that they are very much a more harmless weapon than the ordinary swords.

MOTION.

PARLIAMENT—GLOUCESTER WRIT.

RESOLUTION.

Mr. LEWIS rose to move—

> "That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown to make out a new Writ for the Election of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the City of Gloucester, in the room of Thomas Robinson, esquire, whose Election has been declared to be void."

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Sir, I rise to Order. On a previous occasion I had it in my mind to move a new Writ for the borough of Northampton. When I communicated that intention to the authorities of the House, with the view of putting on the Paper a Motion to that effect, I was informed that if I did so my Motion would not have precedence of the Orders of the Day. I observe that the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) has put on the Paper a Motion of which he gave Notice, that he intends to move for a new Writ for Gloucester. I would ask you, Sir, whether, in the circumstances, that Motion has precedence over the Orders of the Day?

MR. SPEAKER: The Motion of the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) is in pursuance of a Resolution of the House, passed on the 10th of February last, declaring—

> "That in all cases where the Seat of a Member has been declared void on the ground of Bribery, no Motion for the issue of a new Writ shall be made without two days' previous Notice with the Votes, and that such Notice be considered before Orders of the Day and Notices of Motions."—[3 *Hansard*, cclxvi. 470.]

MR. LEWIS said, he begged to thank the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) for another effort to teach the House its business. The hon. Member had more to do with election proceedings in that House than any other hon. Member during the present Session; and he should have thought the hon. Member was aware that this Sessional Order had been passed in order that the House might not be taken by surprise in the issue of Writs for vacancies occasioned by corrupt practices. In introducing that Motion he should be able to convince the House, he thought, that it involved a great Constitutional question; and he apprehended that upon no light ground, and in no indirect manner, would the House allow the rights and privileges of electors to be interfered with largely or destroyed, but would take care to deal with them in a regular and legal manner. At the present time no fewer than eight constituencies and 14 Members were affected by the extraordinary conduct of Her Majesty's Government. The election for the borough of Gloucester took place more than two years ago. In the summer of 1880 an Election Petition was duly tried, and under it Mr. Robinson, one of the Members, was unseated. Before the expiry of the Session of 1880 the Attorney General, in pursuance of the Report of the Election Judge, moved for a Commission of Inquiry. That took place in the autumn and winter of 1880. The Report was presented as long ago as March, 1881. He apprehended that it was the duty of the House to take care that there was no undue delay in the matter. Instead of that, what course had been pursued? From March until August no step was taken. Late in the Session, in August, a Bill was introduced to prevent the issue of the Writ in any of these boroughs until eight days after the commencement of the present Session. After this Session commenced, two or three weeks were allowed to elapse before any notice was taken of the incriminated boroughs. It was not until several Questions had been put to Ministers that the Bill was produced. He then gave Notice with reference to the second reading of the Bill. The question, he thought, deserved the close attention of the two Ministers against whom charges had been made in connection with the Cities of Chester and Oxford affected by that Bill. It was reasonable to expect that every expedition would be used with respect to this Bill. One would have thought that the two Cabinet Ministers would have desired to take the earliest opportunity of showing how unmerited were the charges that were made against them. But that was not the course pursued by the Government. When he put a Question on this subject to the noble Marquess, the answer he gave was that he cared nothing for the suggestion made as to the conduct of his Colleagues; but he admitted that the question, affecting the constituencies, was a very serious one. That took place a week ago. What was the conduct of the Government next day? Instead of proceeding with the Disfranchisement Bill, they put down the Parliamentary Election Expenses Bill—a Bill of a kindred, but general character—and entirely overlooked and evaded the question at issue in the other Bill. He thought there must be some reason in the background for this course. Turning to the question raised by this Motion, what were the precedents with reference to matters of this kind? He would quote the cases of Beverley and Bridgwater. Three months after the Report of the Commission was presented a Bill for the disfranchisement of the boroughs was presented to the House, and on the 6th of May it was read a third time. This was very different from the course which the Government was now pursuing with regard to Gloucester. He maintained that anyone who had read the whole of the Commissioners' Reports could have come to no other conclusion than that a very grave case had been made out for two responsible Ministers of the Crown to answer. [The ATTORNEY GENERAL dissented.] The Attorney General shook his head; but let him bring forward the Disfranchisement Bill, and then they would discover the truth of his allegations. What he wanted was an opportunity of showing what had been the conduct of the President of the Local Government Board.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) rose to Order. He wished to know whether the hon. Member's language was relevant to the Motion that a new Writ be issued for Gloucester; whether, in fact, he could go into matters in no way connected with that City or its Representatives, and make charges against persons who had no connection with it?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member ought to confine himself to matters relating to the Gloucester Election.

MR. LEWIS said, he was not surprised that upon that occasion, as upon every other, the hon. and learned Gentleman should attempt to evade the issue which he had raised. [*Cries of* "Order!" "Withdraw!"]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not attending to my directions.

MR. LEWIS said, his point was that the City of Gloucester was at the mercy of the Government, and that its rights were likely to be seriously jeopardized and infringed. His chief object, however, in bringing forward his Motion was to guard against the possibility of its being said later on that the delay of the Government in dealing with the constituency had not been made the subject of protest. He would only further point out that of the 5,381 electors of the City of Gloucester, only one-third were at all involved in the Report of the Election Commissioners. He begged to move that a new Writ be issued for the City of Gloucester.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown to make out a new Writ for the Election of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the City of Gloucester, in the room of Thomas Robinson, esquire, whose Election has been declared to be void."—(*Mr. Lewis.*)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that the hon. Member did not appear to seriously propose the issue of the Writ; but there were many Members in the House who had a strong interest in the City of Gloucester, and he had no wish to anticipate the discussion which must arise. He would, therefore, only remind the House that the Commissioners had reported that corrupt practices extensively prevailed; and it was, therefore, impossible to consent to the issue of the Writ. There must be a discussion of the matter, and it was most unfair if he made any statement which could not be discussed in detail. He did not think there were many hon. Members who would wish to see a new Writ for Gloucester immediately issued. The hon. Member for Londonderry, as he understood, wished to press the Motion as a Censure on the Government for not having hurried the Disfranchisement Bill forward. The Motion before the House was, however, a very indirect mode by which to accomplish that object. The Report of the Commissioners was not in the hands of the Government until the month of April last year. The Government had to consider carefully what should be their action in the matter; and it was not till a comparatively late period of last Session that they had so shaped their policy as to present it to the House. At that time, however, a communication from the Front Opposition Bench was made asking that the Bill should not be discussed at the end of the Session in an empty House. He did feel that every matter in the Bill should be very carefully discussed, and, in consequence, the Bill was not introduced. All he could say was that there would be full opportunity given for the discussion of the Bill; and he was sure the Prime Minister would take care that no attempt should be made to pass the Bill in the absence of Members who might wish to discuss it. Before sitting down, he desired to say a few words about the charges which the hon. Member had brought against the Home Secretary and the President of the Local Government Board.

MR. LEWIS: I rise to Order, Sir. At the instance of the Attorney General, you prevented me proceeding one step in the direction in which the hon. and learned Gentleman is now proceeding. I beg to ask if he is in Order?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) wished to refer only to a matter to which the hon. Member had been allowed to refer—namely, the reasons adduced by the hon. Member for the delay in the production of the Bill. According to the hon. Member, the delay was accounted for by a desire on the part of the Government to evade unpleasant charges. Nobody had brought any charges against his right hon. Friends except the hon. Member. There were no charges against them in the Report of the Royal Commission; and because the hon. Member chose to imagine certain charges, were they going to dislocate the Business of the House? He wished, however, that the hon. Member had made his charges in the presence of his right hon. Friends, instead of choosing a day when they were absent to state to the public that grave charges were brought against them in those Reports.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he was of opinion that the hon. Member for Londonderry was, to a certain extent, justified in the course which he had taken, since the Government had unquestionably been guilty of undue delay in formulating in a Bill their proposals for the treatment of the boroughs against which charges were made. Now, however, that a Bill had been introduced, it would not be reasonable to ask the House to issue a new Writ for any one of the boroughs to which the measure would apply. At the proper time he hoped to be able to prove that the best way to deal with the case of Gloucester would be by examination before a Select Committee. He would only say with regard to what had fallen from the Attorney General that, as he himself admitted that Her Majesty's Government decided last year that it was not right to proceed with a Bill of this nature in the closing week of the Session, they would take care not to proceed with a similar Bill at a similar time of the Session this year. It was not the wish of anybody affected by this Bill, as far as Gloucester was concerned, that it should be defeated by delay. What they asked was that the Bill should be fairly discussed, and that a judicial decision should be arrived at with regard to it. He would be very glad if the Government would name a very early day for the second reading, and then assent to his Motion for a reference of the Bill to a Select Committee, not for delay, but purely for investigation, and a decision on the subject could be thus taken before the conclusion of the present Session.

MR. THOMAS COLLINS said, he thought the Bill dealing with these seven boroughs dealt with them too leniently, rather than too severely. It would be well, in his opinion, that before discussing the Corrupt Practices Bill in Committee, the Government should propose the second reading of the Bill dealing with these seven boroughs. If they did not, they would be liable at any time to have Motions brought forward for the issue of Writs for these boroughs. He hoped that before long Gloucester would be wiped out as a constituency.

MR. MONK said, the Report of the Judges had been in the hands of the Government for upwards of a year; and, therefore, it was only reasonable that Members should ask the Government to take some steps with regard to the measure affecting these boroughs. He had not had any communication with the hon. Member for Londonderry with regard to the Motion he had brought forward. He felt certain that the Motion was merely a peg on which to hang a speech with regard to the conduct of Her Majesty's Government. He had not complained of the course pursued hitherto by Her Majesty's Government; but if this Bill, which his constituents were anxious to have considered, were further delayed, he thought they would have a right to complain very much. All they asked was that Gloucester should be put in the same category as Oxford and Chester. He had a decided opinion that when the Bill was brought on he would be able to make out a good case for the constituency he represented. He hoped the Government, before the end of this week, would give an assurance that no further delay should take place in moving the second reading of the Bill.

BARON DE FERRIERES said, he could assure the House that it was generally felt in the country that Gloucester had been very unfairly treated in this matter; and he trusted that the question would be disposed of on its merits at the very earliest opportunity.

MR. LEWIS, in reply, said, the Attorney General, no doubt, thought that, in accordance with the practice of his master, he should throw contempt upon the suggestions he (Mr. Lewis) had made. He understood the hon. and learned Gentleman complained that he selected a day for making an attack on his right hon. Colleagues when they would be absent. He gave Notice of this Motion a week ago. He had not the least notion that any Members of the Government would be absent; and, at the present moment, he was wholly unable to explain the absence of the Home Secretary, or of the President of the Local Government Board. He read his Notice in the hearing of the Government two or three weeks ago. After the words of the Attorney General, he had no option but that of taking an opportunity for vindicating himself on Thursday next, and showing ground for what he had done. He had, by this discussion, gained one of the objects of his Motion, and he begged leave to withdraw it. ["No, no!"]

Question put, and *negatived.*

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES) BILL.—[BILL 21.]

(*Mr. Attorney General, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Chamberlain, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Solicitor General.*)

SECOND READING. ADJOURNED DEBATE.

[THIRD NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [24th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

And which Amendment was,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "considering no corruption has been proved to exist in the larger town constituencies, or in any county constituency, it is inexpedient to adopt such uniform restrictions and punishments as will render the fair conduct of an election in a great constituency perilous and penal,"—(*Mr. Robert Fowler,*)

—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

MR. CALLAN said, that when, on Tuesday last, he addressed a few observations to the House, the time was so limited that he could not condense his observations within it. There were only a few minutes intervening between the time at which he rose and the hour at which the House by its Rules adjourned the Sitting—10 minutes to 7 o'clock. He had no wish whatever to delay the passing of the Corrupt Practices Prevention Bill. On the contrary, as an Irish Member, against whom these practices militated, it was his wish and his interest, in common with those with whom he usually acted, to promote any fair and well-considered measure for the prevention of corrupt practices. Now, his justification for so prolonging the discussion would, he was confident, be proved this evening by the number of Members who were anxious to address the House, and by the adverse opinions which had been formed since their attention had been directed to this ill-drawn, ill-considered, crotchety, and ill-advised Bill. Before he entered into the merits of the Bill, he thought it right to direct attention to a matter somewhat personal to himself. At one time he thought it was almost due to the House as well as to himself that he should bring it forward as a matter of Privilege. It would be in the recollection of the House that upon a Vote in Supply exception was taken by the Irish Members to what he then alleged to be a corrupt practice on the part of the Government with respect to certain Scotch newspapers, more especially as regarded one newspaper, the proprietor of which had a seat in this House. His remarks were unpleasant, and he had no doubt they were unpleasant in a peculiar sense to a Scotchman, because it interfered with his pocket as the owner of a newspaper, and he had had his reward. But he (Mr. Callan) had had his reward. He found the next day an article, to which he should presently direct attention, in *The North British Daily Mail,* which was owned by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), not as a sleeping partner, but as an active proprietor, who wrote, inspired, and suggested the articles which appeared in that paper, and who was lately a very active agent in proclaiming in its columns that the attempted assassination of the Queen was due to an Irishman. It was owned by a Scotchman who could have availed himself of the privileges of a Member to make his complaint if any other Member had acted in a manner unworthy of his position. It might be well to recall the circumstance that last Monday night he crossed the floor of the House and went to the Attorney General on the Treasury Bench, which he did not like to approach, because one was there nearer to corruption the nearer he approached it. He asked if the Attorney General would consent to the adjournment of the debate if he moved it, and he was met at once by the reply—"No; I will go on with this Bill to-night." A Member of the Fourth Party moved the adjournment of the debate, and, after some discussion, that was acceded to. The next day there was a debate on the Budget, and at an unexpectedly late period of the day the discussion of this Bill was resumed. At a quarter to 7 o'clock he rose, as he said, to exercise his right to speak upon this Bill. He certainly was not accessible to the blandishments of the Home Secretary, who made the appeal to the Alderman the Member for the City of London to withdraw his Amendment. Now, this Scotch newspaper, *The North British Daily Mail*, wrote of him—

> "At a quarter to seven, in response to an appeal from Sir R. Assheton Cross, Mr. Alderman Fowler withdrew his Amendment to the measure, and the question of second reading was about to be determined when Mr. Callan intervened and, actuated by a spirit of malicious mischief——"

He had a right to his opinion, and he would not quarrel with him for that; but he made a substantive charge, for he added—

> "And a deliberate design to obstruct the Public Business of the country, wilfully talked out the Bill."

He (Mr. Callan) had never made a Motion or seconded one in that House of an obstructive kind, and in that he had disagreed with many of his Friends with whom he usually acted. Having said this much, he should treat this charge with the contempt he treated all that emanated from ill-conditioned Scotchmen. Turning to the Bill before the House, the most remarkable feature of it was that, while it enlarged all the penalties, it contained nothing limiting the character of agencies, which was a question of the utmost importance. When the Attorney General was drafting this Bill he ought to have borne in mind the principles laid down by Baron Dowse in deciding an Election Petition in which he (Mr. Callan) was interested. In his decision the learned Judge held him (Mr. Callan) scatheless. He said he came out of the trial in an honourable and straightforward manner, and with clean hands—observations which were altogether absent from the decision of Mr. Justice Groves in deciding a Petition in which the Attorney General himself was the respondent. In Baron Dowse's judgment, which was a very able one, he distinctly laid down that there was a difference between illegal treating and treating openly and corruptly. At the trial of the Drogheda Election Petition, in 1869, Mr. Justice Keogh, who was a notorious Election Judge, declared Mr. Benjamin Whitworth to have been guilty of corrupt practices under the Act, and he was disqualified for sitting for Drogheda from that cause. Mr. Whitworth swore that he had not been guilty of any illegal practice, and that, on the occasion in which the learned Judge held he was guilty of undue influence, he merely acted with the view of preventing persons being intimidated. The hon. Member for Drogheda was a Gentleman who would not be guilty of illegal practices; but if it had not been possible at the time of his election to review the decision of the single Election Judge, the decision of Mr. Justice Keogh against him would, under this Bill, have prevented Mr. Whitworth from ever sitting for Drogheda. Turning to the case of the present Member for Tyrone, he noticed that that Gentleman (Mr. Dickson) was elected for Dungannon at the last General Election, and was unseated under circumstances of great unfairness. A friend of his induced a bibulous voter living in Belfast to take a journey to Scotland, and agreed to pay his expenses, including his whiskey bill. Under the term of agency this circumstance was brought up against the hon. Member, and he was held to have been guilty of a corrupt practice, and compelled to pay the whole cost of the proceedings. If the present Bill were to become law, the result would be that he would be for ever disqualified from sitting for that borough. Was such a provision fair or considerate? The Attorney General had introduced another unfair and absurd provision with respect to the hiring of rooms for the use of candidates. According to the Bill, if he (Mr. Callan), during an election, endeavoured to obtain the most convenient house in the borough, knowing that the Returning Officer would be likely also to seek it as a polling booth, he would be guilty of corrupt practice. This was certainly giving a monopoly of convenience to the Returning Officers. The effect of it would be this. If he, knowing the county Louth thoroughly, endeavoured to obtain the most convenient rooms in every large town for his committee-rooms, as he most assuredly would do, he would be guilty of illegal practices, because the Returning Officer might also desire to obtain the most convenient rooms for polling booths; and, according to the 13th section, a person guilty of illegal practices would be incapable of ever again seeking the representation of that borough or county. Accordingly, for seeking his own convenience, he might be rendered incapable of ever sitting for Louth. Surely the Attorney General for England could never have read this absurd clause, although his name was on the back of the Bill.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he was unwilling to interrupt the hon. Member; but he requested him to read that section accurately. He would see his assumption was not correct.

Mr. CALLAN: Very well; take for granted that it was so. Still he argued that, under this Bill, if he, in the village of Louth, which contained only a few houses, took the most convenient lodging during an election—and he always did take the most convenient lodgings—he would be debarred from ever again sitting for the county Louth. Was not this a ridiculous offence visited with an outrageous penalty? He would caution hon. Gentlemen against ever giving up a county for a borough constituency. He did so on one occasion, and it certainly was a most unwise proceeding, for all small boroughs were corrupt. He sat for a small borough from 1868 till 1870; but he had no hesitation in saying that that small borough was hopelessly corrupt; and, though he managed to retain his seat for that borough in 1874, he was defeated in 1880 by corruption of the basest kind. In 1875, the House appointed a Select Committee to inquire into the operation of the Corrupt Practices Election Act of 1854 and the various other Acts on the subject. That Committee consisted of men of great eminence, among those being Mr. Cubitt, Mr. Gibson, since then Attorney General for Ireland; Mr. Herschell (now Sir Farrer Herschell), Mr. C. E. Lewis, Mr. Lowe, who had since gone up to those high regions where the "weary are at rest;" Mr. Rodwell, Mr. Spencer Walpole, and others. Having sat from the 18th of March to the 28th of May, the Committee reported; and they recommended that every Election Petition which alleged corrupt practices against the sitting Member or his agent should be tried by a tribunal consisting of two Judges of the Superior Courts, and that no Member should be unseated, nor should any person be declared guilty of corrupt practices, except under a joint decision of the Judges. In 1879, effect was given to the Report of that Committee. Sir John Holker, then Attorney General, said that a Select Committee had recommended that the tribunal for trying Election Petitions should be composed of two Judges; that he was himself of opinion that a tribunal of three Judges would be more satisfactory; but there was not a sufficient judicial staff to admit of the latter arrangement. The House, after debate, agreed without a division to change the law, and two Judges were appointed for trying those cases. He now asked whether any representation had been made by the English Judges intimating to the Attorney General that it was desirable to revert to the practice of trying those cases before a single Judge? Unless some safeguard were introduced into this Bill in Committee—if, indeed, the measure ever reached that stage—it would be a Bill to intimidate candidates from coming forward at elections, and to disqualify those who ventured to come forward. An eminent Judge who had tried Election Petitions during the last two years in Ireland said that the Legislature had wisely provided that there should be two Judges sitting together for the trial of all those cases, and that, speaking for himself, it did give great assistance to Judges to be associated together in dealing with those most serious and difficult cases. That was the opinion of an impartial authority; and he challenged the Attorney General to produce the opinion of one single Judge justifying that proposal, which, he thought, was deliberately framed for the purpose of rendering still more unsafe the position of Irish

Members, who were dependent on voluntary effort, and who were not returned, like many English Members, through the exertions of paid agents or by the influence of the Caucus. As to the 8th clause, which prohibited the engagement of committee-rooms at public-houses, he would say that in his county there were 10 polling stations, and at six of them you could not get a room of adequate size, except at a public-house; therefore, the effect of the clause would be to preclude a candidate having a committee-room at all. Perhaps it might be suggested that huts might be erected; but then Mr. Clifford Lloyd might be sent down to prevent that being done. Unless Ireland were excluded from the Bill, he was sure it would not be passed this Session, not even if the *clôture* were carried. The suggestion that the object of the Bill was to reduce the expense of elections was contradicted, so far as the Attorney General was concerned, by his conduct in 1875 in regard to the Parliamentary Elections Returning Officers' Bill. In compliance with the request of Members of the House, the word "Ireland" was cut out of that Bill—he believed in deference to Irish Members; but in the month of August, when the Irish Members were away, a friend of his, who was now dead, re-introduced the word "Ireland" in Committee, for the express purpose, by extending that Bill to Ireland, of preventing poor men from standing for Irish constituencies.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY said, he objected to so gross an imputation being made without any evidence.

Mr. CALLAN maintained, however, that it was true, and said that in the course of the debate on the Bill of 1875 the present Postmaster General declared that it would increase the costs of Returning Officers by 100 per cent. As an illustration of how the Bill would operate in the matter of agency, he would mention an incident in his own experience. During his election a young man volunteered to act as one of his agents, and he appointed him to attend at the Ardee polling booth on a Friday morning. On the previous Monday this young man gave a friend a glass of whiskey, and their conversation having turned on the then approaching election, this was cited at the Petition trial as a case of treating. The person, however, in reply to Mr. Baron Dowse, who asked if that glass of whiskey induced him to vote for Mr. Callan, replied—"No amount of whiskey would induce me to vote against Philip Callan." Yet under this Bill this act of the agent would have unseated the Member, and disqualified him from sitting again for the constituency. There was no one in favour of the Bill; he could not believe that even the Attorney General was, except on the assumption that he intended never to present himself to an English constituency again. It was an ill-considered and crochetty measure; and unless it were greatly amended, or Ireland were excluded from its operations, it would be opposed in every shape and form.

Dr. CAMERON said, he rose to answer some very unwarrantable remarks made in regard to himself. The hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) commenced his speech by stating that, some time ago, in a discussion in Committee of Supply, he had taken exception to what he then alleged to be corrupt practices on the part of the Government with respect to certain newspapers, more especially with regard to one Scotch newspaper, the proprietor of which had a seat in that House. The hon. Member went on to say—

> "His remarks were unpleasant, and he had no doubt they were unpleasant in a peculiar way to a Scotchman, because they interfered with his pocket as the proprietor of a newspaper."

The hon. Member continued—

> "*The North British Daily Mail* was owned by the hon. Member for Glasgow, its active proprietor, who wrote, inspired, and suggested what appeared in it, and who was one of the active agents in inserting in the columns of that newspaper that the attempted assassination of the Queen was by an Irishman."

The hon. Member went on to say that he had had his reward, and had accused him (Dr. Cameron) of having in revenge written an account of a scene the other night, attributing to him misconduct in having maliciously moved the adjournment of the debate. Now, he (Dr. Cameron) was almost ashamed to trouble the House about the matter. He could not pretend to be particularly indignant at it; but it might be that his skin was abnormally thick. It did not affect him much; but when he found charges of corruption made against him repeatedly——

Mr. CALLAN: I beg pardon. I made no charge of corruption against the hon. Member. I charged the Government with having unfairly given advertisements to Scotch newspapers, no doubt for purposes of corruption.

DR. CAMERON, continuing, said, that the hon. Member remarked that that touched him (Dr. Cameron) in his pocket, and that it was peculiarly unpleasant to him as a Scotchman. He did not feel troubled about these things. His skin might be abnormally thick. He did not rise even now to protect himself, although he was quite aware that if a sufficient amount of dirt was thrown a certain amount would stick; but what he wanted to do was to soothe the feelings of the hon. Member for Louth, who was of remarkably fragile honour.

MR. HEALY: I rise to Order, and to ask whether it is in Order or Parliamentary for one hon. Member to say of another that he is of "remarkably fragile honour?"

MR. SPEAKER: An expression of that kind is certainly not Parliamentary, and I call on the hon. Member to withdraw it. I did not interpose during the observations made by the hon. Member for Louth upon this personal matter, because he wished to make a personal observation to the House; but I think I ought to have said to the hon. Member, as I now desire to say to the hon. Member for Glasgow, that while the House was very indulgent with regard to personal explanations, they should be limited as much as possible.

DR. CAMERON said, that in using the expression he certainly had not used the proper word. He withdrew the expression, and he thought "tender" would have been the better word. The whole of the hon. Member's charge against him from beginning to end was a farrago of nonsense. He was not responsible for the composition and distribution of those bills in which M'Lean, the assassin, was represented as an Irishman. He had not given a second thought to the charge of corruption levelled against himself, for he did not imagine that anybody believed it. He had even forgotten that the hon. Member for Louth was the Member who had made it. He knew nothing of the statement of which the hon. Member complained, until that Member had read it to the House; and had the same statement been made concerning himself, it would not have ruffled him in the slightest degree. The hon. Member knew something of journalism. He had had something to do with it, and he must know that in the case of every journal the work was done by many different hands, and that to attribute this or that to any one individual was preposterous. It certainly would have been the last thing that would have occurred to him to attempt to annoy the hon. Member in such a way as he had suggested; and he rose to appease the hon. Member, who, when he was irritated, had to resort to such disagreeable courses as made him a very terrible foe. On one occasion his tender honour had been touched by something said by the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry), and he had endeavoured to intimidate him by threatening language in the Lobby of the House. On another occasion an unfortunate reporter, who had somehow wounded his susceptibilities, had been obliged to seek protection in the public Courts. He had no desire to provoke so terrible a wrath, and he begged to assure the hon. Gentleman if he had given offence he did not mean it. He certainly had not offended him in the way he had pointed out to the House. He had nothing whatever to do with the matter. He thought the accusation too absurd to obtain credence. He perfectly forgave the hon. Member, in the heat of the moment, for having used the language against himself; but he would appeal to him now that he was calm—he would appeal, if he might use the expression, from "Philip drunk to Philip sober"—to withdraw the charges he had made against him.

MR. THOMAS COLLINS said, he regretted that the Government had not introduced this Bill into the House at an earlier period of the Session, so that it might have been sent to a Select Committee of experts skilled in the law of elections. He believed that it was the general wish of hon. Members in all parts of the House that a Bill dealing with corrupt practices and limiting the expenditure at elections should be passed. There was no body of men who were so interested in the reduction of expenditure at elections as hon. Members. While that was the general feeling on both sides of the House, they should be careful not to legislate in advance of public opinion. If a series of Draconian regulations were passed against which the opinion of the community revolted, more harm than good would be done in the suppression of corrupt practices. This Bill involved few principles for discussion on a second reading, but contained many matters of detail fit to be discussed in Committee. Still, there were certain questions, rather of principle than of detail, to which he wished to refer. The payment of travelling expenses to voters was a matter which required to be discussed in the House. He did not think that any alteration in the law making the payment of such expenses illegal would affect the practice. The friends of candidates would place their carriages at the disposal of voters, and the only result would be that less expense would be occasioned to the candidate. That, however, would be a great improvement. He thought that the 3rd clause of the Bill, by which a candidate once found guilty of corrupt practices was not allowed to sit for 10 years, was very harsh. That clause was, he thought, very much in advance of public opinion. If legislation went beyond what was legitimately demanded by public opinion, the result would be that the law would be discredited, and juries would refuse to convict. In his opinion the principle of the clause was right; but the disqualification ought not to extend beyond seven years. It would be much better that the House, before going into Committee, should have a general knowledge of the scope of the Bill before they proceeded to consider it in detail. Therefore, he suggested the desirability of sending the Bill to a Committee of experts. Then, again, he strongly objected to Clause 16, as to the nomination by the candidate of an election agent. Why should a candidate be put to that expense? Dnring his own election he had himself selected his own clerks and his own committee-rooms, and any other candidate might do the same. He hoped to see the day when every candidate would do without an agent altogether. These were, no doubt, all questions for Committee, and were details which must be dealt with before the Bill could become law. Then, as to the number of Judges, he thought one would be quite sufficient. The Judges had acted more strictly of late years, and he had hopes an Election Petition would soon be altogether unnecessary. The Bill bristled with difficulties, and, at all events, ought not to pass through the House, except concurrently with some measure dealing with the peccant boroughs. If it should be passed in its present shape he anticipated that it would ultimately either have to be repealed, or become a dead letter through juries refusing to convict, and public opinion considering that it went beyond the necessities of the case.

MR. RYLANDS said, he was clearly of opinion that the Bill demanded on the part of the House the most serious consideration, and that, moreover, without reference to Party; and, therefore, he could not complain of the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) having moved the adjournment of the debate. He thought the House was agreed on two points—first, that the present state of things was unsatisfactory, and, therefore, the Attorney General was justified in introducing this measure; and, secondly, that the Bill, however well-intentioned it might be, erred on the side of extreme stringency, and that, if passed in its present form, it would be likely to defeat its object, and give rise to new evils that possibly might be as objectionable in a public point of view as those which were deplored at the present moment. The pitfalls were so many, and the penalties so severe, that men of honour would be deterred from risking their character by becoming candidates, or becoming the agents of candidates. Indeed, one highly influential gentleman, well known in the political world, had already told him that if the Bill passed in its present form he should tell the agent in his borough that he should never stand again. That man, perhaps, was too nervous; but no one wished to expose himself to the risk of degradation in the eyes of his fellow-countrymen. If these severe regulations were carried, and if honourable men refused to stand, there would still be plenty of candidates to be found among men who had no fear of consequences. This objection applied with still greater force to the case of agents. Good men would not become agents at all at such a risk, and the result would be the introduction of a lower class of men altogether. It might be well worth while for a party to corrupt an agent, and so to get rid of a local candidate; but to do that would be to punish the victimized employer in the most cruel manner. There were, however, such people as carpet-bag politicians, who would come forward in sufficient numbers, and for whom no penalties would have any terror. Thus the Bill would infallibly lower the character both of candidates and of agents. Then, as to the proposed maximum to be spent at elections, what was easier than to evade the provisions of the Bill by subscribing money to local clubs, whose officials would work gratis, or to Joint Stock Companies, who would undertake the management of elections? The hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis), for instance, might conceivably be at the head of such a combination, and would be sure to make it a great success; and they on the Liberal side of the House would certainly try to do the same. However, speaking seriously, such a course would be a dishonourable evasion of the Bill, though, as the penalties of the Bill were so severe, the offenders would most likely have the sympathy of the public. Again, he need hardly say that the different size of boroughs made it quite absurd to fix a rigid maximum scale. He desired, of course, to keep down expenditure, and would support any Bill that would have that effect; but he could not vote for particular provisions which were sure to be evaded. The cost of elections was to be cut down by all means; but how could the Attorney General prevent the expense incurred by candidates in nursing constituencies? Soon after the General Election of 1874 he heard in the course of conversation that a friend of his had lost his seat by not sufficiently nursing his constituency. At Bridport it was a matter of common belief that the constituency determined to eject its late Member for that very reason; and he was told that the present Representative of that borough was not nursing it either, and that, unless he took a very different view of his duties, the House was likely to lose his services after the next Dissolution. If a Member for a middle-sized town did not support excellent institutions, moral and religious, or refused to subscribe to cricket and other clubs, he would certainly lose his seat. What he would urge upon the Government was to have larger constituencies, in order to check this strain upon the pockets of candidates; and if they had larger constituencies, and a re-distribution of seats, it would strike a fatal blow at bribery and corruption. He believed the spread of education would also do something, and that it would be of the greatest possible advantage to require from a Member that the return he should make of his expenses was an absolutely true statement. He was in favour of election inquiries being carried on by two Judges. To go back to one Judge would be a retrograde step. He should vote for the second reading of the Bill, because he was willing to aid the Government in checking expenditure. At the same time, he was glad to hear that the Attorney General was willing to listen to suggestions as to its amendment, in certain respects, in Committee.

Mr. ONSLOW said, he cordially agreed with most of the remarks which had been made by his hon. Friend who had just spoken. A speech more damaging to the Bill had not been made by any hon. Member. He was glad that the House generally was agreed that some Bill should be passed to meet the great evil of corruption, for anything more scandalous than the recent disclosures could not be conceived. His hon. Friend the Member for Burnley thought that the remedy was to be found by enlarging the constituencies. He doubted that very much. He believed that County Members spent infinitely more *pro ratâ* than those who represented boroughs, and that if the country was parcelled out into large constituencies, a greater amount would be expended in nursing them—he did not say corruptly—than was done at present. Moreover, if constituencies were enlarged, the same class of voters would still be liable to corruption, as no one would dream of disfranchising the voters, even though a particular borough might become absorbed in some general scheme. There was no foundation for the charge of obstructing the Bill. Since he had obtained a seat in the House, there was no measure introduced which deserved more careful consideration. That the Prime Minister should throw down such a Bill on the Table was no reason why they should accept it without discussion. As it was a measure which touched everyone who in future should try to represent a constituency, it was imperative on Members to indicate on the second reading their reasons for objecting to certain of its provisions. The feeling was almost universal that something must be done. The minds of all men had been startled by the disclosures which had been made with regard to certain boroughs. Every right-minded man must come to the conclusion that the Government of the day would not be doing its duty if it did not try to remedy the evils then brought to light; and, he believed, both political Parties were anxious that something should be done to wipe out this great blot upon our electoral system. One great good in the Bill was that it would make candidates look after their agents. He believed that a great deal of corruption had been owing to the candidate not making better inquiries as to what his agent was doing, and also many candidates were often careless about their own personal expenses during the election. Therefore, any Bill which threw a greater onus on the candidate would be useful. But Clause 4, if passed in its present shape, was so stringent that it could never be carried out. Who was an agent? Not merely the particular person employed for the purpose, but any committee-man. At the time of a General Election, not only gentlemen well known in the borough, but working men wished to be put on the committee. They thought it an honour; and was an honourable man determined to carry on the election purely to lose his seat and to have his character blasted for life by the foolish act of one of these persons? They might have one of these committee-men turn traitor, and for £500, or even for £5 or £10, do something which would ruin the reputation of a candidate for ever. He did not believe that corrupt practices took place so much in public-houses as in other places. By the 8th clause of this Bill, candidates were prohibited from holding committee meetings in these houses. If this Bill passed as it now stood, it would be illegal for anyone to hold a committee meeting in Westminster Palace Hotel, or at any Provincial hotel of local reputation; but it would be almost impossible to get any other meeting place in many localities. Why deal with the publicans in a way different from that in which they dealt with any other portion of the community? If they were to allow no more committee meetings in public-houses, why should they permit them to be held in eating-houses. It was well known that beer was not the only article of corruption. He knew that chops, beefsteaks, and groceries of all kinds had been used to corrupt people and get their votes. It was very hard upon the publican, in places where there was no other house to meet in, to make it illegal for committees to be held in his house. He could not understand the principle on which the personal expenses of a candidate were limited to £20. In 1874 the elections in boroughs were over in some places in a week or 10 days. In 1880 the borough elections were not over for nearly a month. But under this Bill the personal expenses of a candidate would be limited to £20, no matter for how long the contest lasted. It was quite evident that such a rule as this would be evaded; in fact, it would be utterly absurd. He also objected to the proposal that the documents should be kept open for inspection for 12 months after the election. That, he believed, would only tend to heartburnings and local ill-feeling; but, irrespective of bribery and treating by voters of a particular locality, there was abundant proof, from the evidence taken before the Commissioners, that the worst cases of corruption were in those localities to which strangers were sent to what was called "assist" at elections, and most of those emissaries were sent by the so-called Birmingham League; and he regretted to observe that there was no provision for putting an end to organizations of that character. If the Conservative Party employed such an agency as that, he should feel and speak just as strongly against it. He thought it was a grossly immoral Association. It had been used—or, at all events, gentlemen connected with that Association had been sent down—purely for the purpose of corrupting boroughs in different localities. ["Oh!"] Hon. Gentlemen said "Oh!" but he asked them if they had read the Evidence in the Oxford Election Petition, or the Evesham Petition? He said there was nothing in this Bill which would stop that Caucus system, either on the one side or the other; and if they did not put some clause in the Bill to prevent outsiders going down to corrupt constituencies he could only say this—that if it were done on the one side they were sure to have a retaliatory measure on the other. God forbid that the Conservative Party should ever follow the lead of the Birmingham Caucus; but he believed if the policy of that Caucus was not stopped most effectually, there would be a counter-agitation got up upon the Conservative side, which he should be very sorry to see. They did not think it wrong in Birmingham on the day of the election, or during the election, to provide those whom they considered their workers with refreshments. He thought that was one of the dodges, if he might so call it, of the Birmingham Caucus. If the Conservavties did that, notice would soon be taken of it. He hoped the Attorney General would see his way to put a stop to the corrupt practices of this Birmingham Association. It was said that if some such Bill as this were passed they would have more working men in Parliament. It was impossible that working-men candidates could spend much money. But the money was spent. These gentlemen had large subscriptions made for them. They did not know how that money went. There could be no doubt that a great deal of their subscriptions were spent in an improper manner; and how was it possible for a working man, without any knowledge how his election had been financially conducted, to sign the form of declaration in the Schedule to this Bill? He contended that candidates should be surrounded by conditions which would exonerate them from such enormous penalties as this Bill put upon them. He hoped the Attorney General would see the way to make a practical provision of his Bill, that two Judges should be necessary for the trial of Election Petitions, and that they should never again hear of Election Petitions being tried by only one Judge. There was a great deal of good in the Bill, but there was also an enormous amount of harm. He trusted when it came into Committee, the House would give its best attention to a subject which had created a great deal of feeling in the country; and he hoped that the Bill would be dealt with altogether apart from the feelings of Party.

MR. MORGAN LLOYD said, substantially, he approved of the Bill, though he did not think it went far enough in some respects. It did not embody principles that ought to be embodied in a Bill of that kind. It contained numerous provisions against bribery and treating, and what were called illegal practices; but with regard to undue influence, it scarcely contained any provision at all. Undue influence was almost as dangerous as bribery and treating. The Ballot Act was passed with the view of preventing not only bribery and treating, but undue influence also. So far as voting was concerned, it provided a perfect remedy for the voter, because it prevented anyone from knowing for whom he had voted. But it contained no provision against an evil, which, since it was passed, had been felt very much in small constituencies, and probably in many large constituencies of this country; he referred to the practice of canvassing from house to house, a practice which seemed to be contrary to the principle of the Ballot Act. An elector had a right to give his vote, without being subjected to visits from candidates, or his employer and paid agents of the candidate to himself or to his wife, or any other person who might have influence over him, for the purpose of getting a promise that his vote would be given for a particular candidate. This practice had led to an enormous amount of untruthfulness and lying and false promises over the country. Hence they found that each candidate had promises of more than the majority of voters. The Bill would make paid canvassing illegal; but on the ground of public morality it was absolutely necessary it should go further, and make it illegal for a candidate to ask for votes. If that were done we should have an assurance that the principle of the Ballot Act would be carried out. It seemed to him that the true principle of representation was that a constituency should be enlightened, that every elector should be aware of what the question before the country was at the time, that he should know something of the merits of the different candidates, and, that being attained, he should then be at liberty to make his choice. That was not to be done by canvassing, by holding committee meetings, or by men going about amongst the electors; but it was to be done by public meetings, by the public Press, and the issue of circulars. The abolition of canvassing would also lead to the reduction of the number of agents. It would thus also prevent the practice of men coming forward and professing to act as a candidate's agents who were really emissaries from the enemy's camp. The unpaid agents of the great central associations would be deprived of their influence when none but the regularly engaged and paid agent was recognized. In that way none but the legitimate methods of influencing the electors by public meetings and printed circulars would be resorted to, and the choice of the constituency would be a fair and rational choice.

Mr. EDWARD SHEIL said, that while he could not join in the great praise which had been bestowed upon the Bill, he was unable to join in the indiscriminate abuse which had been cast upon it by its opponents. It seemed to him that the Bill contained a great deal of good and a great deal of bad. Clause 4 was objected to because of its stringency; but if they wanted to put an end to corruption it could only be done by stringent and Draconic laws. It would be found that if principals were rendered liable for the acts of their agents and punished for those acts, they would inquire with much greater minuteness into their expenses than had hitherto been the practice with elected Members. So far as Ireland was concerned, he thought the portion of this Bill relating to corrupt practices was really immaterial. Since the General Election in 1880 corrupt practices had not been proved in a single instance in Ireland; and, therefore, that portion of the Bill concerned English Members only. But other portions of the Bill concerned Ireland very closely. The portion of the Bill which referred to election expenses would, he had no doubt, be received very cordially throughout Ireland, because it tended to diminish the expenses of elections. Any Bill having that object in view would be received with pleasure in Ireland, because it was a notorious fact that at present many able and eloquent young Irishmen were prevented from entering Parliament and furthering the cause of their country because of the great expense of an election. But he wished that the maximum scale of the expenses of Returning Officers could be made a sliding scale. The scale provided might be suitable for England, but it was too high for Ireland, where the constituencies were much smaller; one of the boroughs only had 306 electors. Unless that scale were altered, that portion of the Bill would meet with strenuous opposition in Ireland. There would also be a strong objection entertained in his country to the trial of Election Petitions by one Judge only. After the General Election in 1874 there was a feeling of discontent throughout the country and in the House on the subject of the trial of Election Petitions. In 1875 a Committee was appointed to inquire into the question, and among the witnesses examined were Lords Justices Bramwell, Keating, and Hawkins, and Sergeant Ballantine, all of whom gave evidence in favour of trial by more than one Judge. From Ireland Chief Justice Morris gave strong evidence in favour of more than one Judge, and the Irish Members of the Committee were unanimously of the same opinion. The right hon. and learned Gentleman who was then Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) felt so strongly on the subject that he actually drafted a Report in favour of three Judges, but finally did not press it before the Committee. The present Bill provided only for one Judge. He confessed that if he were an English Member he should as soon have his case tried before one Judge as before two; but in Ireland he should have a very strong objection to one Judge, because appointments to the Bench in that country were very different from those in England. In Ireland they were simply political appointments, and Parliament was regarded as an indispensable stepping-stone to promotion. It was impossible that Judges so appointed should be free from Party bias and from Party feelings. Indeed, it was a notorious fact that some Judges in Ireland had proved themselves to be very strong partizans. Therefore the safeguard with respect to Election Petitions in Ireland would be the appointment of more than one Judge to try them; and in Committee, if it should be suggested, as he hoped it would, that three Judges should be appointed, he would strongly support the proposal.

Mr. GREGORY said, he was opposed to that provision in the Bill which prohibited travelling expenses to persons coming very long distances for the purpose of exercising the franchise. There were a large number of gentlemen possessing property in the counties who lived considerable distances from the polling booths, who would probably not come at all if they were compelled to come at their own expense. Many of those persons were small proprietors, who would exercise their right to vote without undue influence; but under this Bill they would be obliged to travel a long distance at their own expense, which it was very unlikely they would do. He thought if facilities were to be given for this purpose to voters in boroughs by means of ballot papers the principle should be extended to counties. He might be told that if that were done it would afford an opportunity for the creating of faggot votes; but he contended that that might easily be prevented by confining the ballot paper to persons who were well known to have been on the register for some time. He trusted that some provision of this kind would be adopted, because the Bill, in its present shape, would work injustice upon a very respectable and worthy class of voters. To come to the clauses of the Bill, it appeared to him that Clauses 4 and 6 should be considered together, both imposing penalties—one for corrupt, the other for illegal practices, and the main question was the liability of a candidate for his agents. He regretted very much that the Election Judges had gone to the extent they had in the construction of agency. They had, in fact, for the purposes of elections, reversed or abrogated the old principles of English law, which required direct evidence of agency, and laid down distinctly that a principal was not liable for acts done by his agent which were illegal, or beyond the scope of his authority. Not only did the Judges hold that a candidate was liable for all the acts of his agent, whether authorized by him or not, but they held acts of the most trivial character to be evidence of agency. But the matter did not end there; for it was held that an agent might appoint sub-agents, and that a candidate was liable for their acts also, in direct contravention of the old principle—"*Delegatus non potest delegare.*" This being the state of the law as laid down by the Judges, any extension of the penalties of it required very careful consideration now it was proposed. It should not be forgotten that the penalty was nothing less than the disqualification of the candidate from sitting for the particular constituency for the rest of his natural life. Why, this was absolutely ostracizing and casting a stigma upon him for ever. An agent might easily involve a man in this disgrace, a penalty which, he thought, could not possibly be maintained by the promoters of the Bill. He begged now to advert to the portion of the Bill providing for the trial of election cases. Under the old system, any person accused of illegal practices at an election was entitled to have the assistance of counsel or a solicitor, for the purpose of defending him; but by the words of the Bill this protection was taken away, and, in lieu of being so heard, he was to have the opportunity of making a statement. But let them look at the danger to a man, under such circumstances, being suddenly and unexpectedly called upon to make a statement before such a tribunal. There was every probability that he might let slip some unguarded or injudicious statement rendering him liable to punishment. Under the old law, so far from being placed in such a position, he had abundant opportunity of considering how he was to frame his case, and could employ, if need be, that agency and assistance in his defence which was open to the meanest defendant in this country—namely, that of counsel, or of some thoroughly competent and properly qualified legal adviser. All this was taken away in the present Bill. He earnestly hoped that the Attorney General would be induced to give way and restore this safeguard, which existed in the old law. Again, as framed at present, the Bill permitted persons to make the most dangerous statements against others, who had no opportunity of examining or cross-examining them; and who, too, might be accused of some illegal act and placed upon their trial. Machinery was put in motion, by the 32nd clause, which he could not help thinking would have a most dangerous tendency. They should remember, too, that the tribunal to deal with all these matters was to be a solitary Judge. It was undoubtedly true that there was the option given to persons indicted for corrupt practices to elect to be tried by a jury; but that did not apply to illegal practices. Those who were deemed liable by the Public Prosecutor to be charged with illegal practices might be brought before a single Judge, without a jury, and their case summarily dealt with. It appeared to him that there was great danger in much of this as leading in the direction of the French system of interrogation. On the whole, the Bill, he thought, would have a tendency to considerably mitigate the heavy expenses of elections. So far as his experience went, the great expense of an election lay in the employment of canvassers, the conveyance of voters, and the cost of printing and advertising, matters which were all dealt with by the Bill. With respect to the general question of corruption and bribery, whether they could suppress it altogether was a very difficult subject with which to deal. It must largely depend upon local circumstances, upon the disposition of the people, and the habits of the electoral body. In his opinion, the franchise had been carried too far, and the consequence was that, in legislating on such a subject, they had to deal with a mass of people who did not at all regard it in the light in which it was intended; people to whom the political principles involved had no object or interest whatever. All they thought about was what they could get by their exercise of the franchise. Deal with the subject as they might, he did not believe that, having got into this stratification, they could effectually eradicate corruption and bribery. Candidates and agents might be rendered liable by the Bill; but the corruption of many of the lower classes was a totally different thing, and they must not forget that by such measures as were proposed they might deter and exclude gentlemen of high repute and character from undertaking to have any connection with an election. He ventured to say that no man of position and professional standing would venture to incur the risk to which he would be exposed in the conduct of an election if this Bill became law. He trusted that the Bill would be carefully considered and revised in Committee, and that the points which he had drawn attention to would be duly weighed and discussed.

Mr. DAWSON said, he objected to the Bill on the point of details as affecting England, and objected to it *in toto* as applied to Ireland. With regard to details, he quite agreed with the last speaker that it would exclude from that House every man who had a respect for himself and his political reputation, while it would crowd the arena of politics with men of the very lowest political calibre. He was astonished that a Bill containing such penal consequences should be brought forward by a Liberal Government. He feared very much it showed that there was amongst them a very low estimate of the political character of the country. He could not affirm from any experience of his that it was necessary to bring in such a Bill as this was. There was no definition of agency given in it; there was no limitation of agency; no one was safe in this transaction. It was quite possible, under a Bill like this, for a dinner party, or any similar assembly of honourable men, to be regarded as treating, if it was proved that some of those present, without any malice, happened to express approbation of a particular candidate. He did not exaggerate when he said that a case of the kind was possible, because the trial of the Bradford Election Petition disclosed this—that voters who agreed among themselves that the present Chief Secretary for Ireland ought to be supported said among themselves that they would go into a neighbouring public-house and discuss the matter over a glass of beer. They were all his friends. If that was done under this Bill the right hon. Gentleman would be deprived of his seat, and that House would be deprived of one of the greatest ornaments it contained. ["Oh!"] It would be deprived, at all events, of distinguished Ministers. In former Bills on this subject, the word corrupt was the governing word which leavened the whole subject, and Judges quoted that word over and over again—in fact, it was the whole *gravamen* of the matter. What was the reason for having the word "corruption" out of the Bill? No doubt any man guilty of corrupt practices thoroughly deserved to be punished; but if that word were omitted, the most innocent might be overtaken by punishment. Baron Dowse, in his judgment at the trial of the Louth Petition, said that a man's guilt entirely depended upon the wilful intention of the person committing the act in question—intention must be proved; and people must not be entrapped and punished for acts they did not intend. There was another point of which Members from Ireland had cause bitterly to complain—the reversion to the one Judge system. They knew what they had suffered from one Judge in Ireland at an Election Petition. It would have been impossible for the law to have been so travestied as it was in the notorious "Galway Judgment" if another Judge had been sitting with the Judge that tried the Petition. They knew that so great was the opposition to having one Judge trying Petitions that the law was changed in that respect; and Judge Harrison, in his Charge in the Louth Petition, said he was not more pleased with any feature in the case than with having associated with him a learned Colleague, who could corroborate what he said, and give him the benefit of a joint judgment. Now, however, a return to the former system was proposed; and he assured the House that, small as was the respect often paid to judicial decisions, it would be infinitely less if that decision were the work of one Judge. He could not understand such a measure coming from a Liberal Government — from a Government of progress. The Government seemed to have adopted a course of retrogression. The present Government, instead of being a Government of progress, seemed to have abandoned their natural policy, and to have gone upon a system of retrogression, which would bring them back from the path of liberty, he feared, into the paths of tyranny and oppression. As he had said, he objected to this Bill as affecting England upon the details to which he referred; but he objected to it *in toto* as unnecessary for Ireland. The *raison d'être* of this Bill was that in five or six towns in England they had done what they should not have done; but in Ireland there was no occasion whatever for such censure as the Bill would impose. Candidates in Ireland had been accused of being actuated by the basest motives in pursuing their political career, but hardly ever of bribery. He had often observed at the end of beneficial and remedial enactments the phrase "this Act shall not apply to Ireland." He looked in vain for it on the present occasion. Ireland could not spare those measures of liberty and justice which were denied to her; but she could spare the present measure, which was altogether unnecessary for the country.

BARON DE FERRIERES said, that the chief difficulty lay in dealing with canvassers. They always were the most zealous of the persons engaged in electioneering work. And it was almost always through them that acts of bribery were committed. They went from house to house, and it was upon these visits that hints were given about the rent being in arrear, and this or that wanted, and then the bribery took place. The *honorarium* of the agent also did not seem to be alluded to in the Bill. If these matters were not already provided for, he thought that some Amendment should be introduced dealing with them.

SIR GABRIEL GOLDNEY said, he was reluctant to join in the chorus of disapproval which had greeted the Bill; but he could only imagine that the Attorney General had been unable, on account of his professional labours, to attend to the Bill himself, and had left it to a draftsman in consequence. He had read many Bills in his life, but he had never been so frightened by one before, because it was impossible for anyone who had any respect for freedom of action to concur in its provisions. The penalty of anyone who, under its 1st clause, was found guilty of unduly influencing a voter, was exclusion from the representation of the borough for ever, from Parliament for 10 years, and a fine of £500. The Bill seemed to be drawn with the idea that every candidate and every election agent was to be looked upon as a criminal, or as a man who was purposely endeavouring to counteract the law, and to do something that was to be regarded as an offence. The Bill said that no person should be engaged to act as an agent, a clerk, a messenger, or to render service in any capacity whatever, except one, for which payment was authorized by the Schedule, and that the person engaging or employing him should be guilty of an illegal practice. It was almost impossible that any man having the least self-respect, or holding any position in the Legal Profession, would accept the post of election agent if that Bill, or any Bill like it, became law, so as to subject himself to the penalties to which it made him liable. If such a man accepted the appointment of agent for a sum, say, of about £100, he would run the most serious risks. For example, if he failed, through no wilfulness or corrupt intent, but from the ignorance or negligence, perhaps, of a clerk to render an account within a specified period, he became by the Bill guilty of an illegal practice, and an illegal practice was turned by another section into a corrupt practice, which would render him liable to two years' imprisonment, with or without hard labour, and a penalty of £500.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) explained that, in the case supposed by the hon. Member, the person would not be liable to the penalties that attached to a corrupt practice, but only to those attached to an illegal practice, which were much lighter.

Sir GABRIEL GOLDNEY said, that, if that was really so intended, it ought to be made clearer in the Bill when they got into Committee. As the measure was drawn at present, he repeated that it would be extremely difficult to get any man of position to act as election agent—a result that would be exceedingly unfortunate, not only for candidates, but for the general community. But that evil might possibly be averted if material alterations were made in the Bill before it became law.

Major O'BEIRNE said, he would support the Bill; but he objected to the clause reducing the Election Petition Judges to one, and hoped the Bill would be altered in that respect.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, that no one who had read that Bill carefully could fail to see that it was as important a measure as could be brought forward in the interests of that House and of the constituencies. The hon. and learned Attorney General had had a very difficult task to perform, because if they could judge by the position taken up on that question by the country, the public mind was not ripe at present for a measure as strong as this one. [*A laugh.*] An hon. Member below the Gangway laughed at that statement; but if the hon. Member had read the papers, and had seen the comments that were made on the imprisonment of certain gentlemen for acts of bribery and corruption, he would have perceived that the country sympathized to a certain extent with them in regard to the punishment which was inflicted on them. That was also shown by the Petitions which had been sent in on their behalf, and by the recommendations which had been made for mercy towards them. If these men had been treated with more leniency a stronger case might more easily have been made out in favour of a strong measure like that proposed. He was one who felt, and strongly felt, that something ought to be done to stop bribery and corruption, but it must be done quietly, tentatively, and carefully, so that penalties might not be inflicted upon men who might not deserve them. No one would venture to get up and say that the Attorney General had not done his best with regard to the prevention of crime in connection with elections, and in introducing his Bill he had said that it was open to amendment—and, as he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) understood, to serious amendment—in some of its provisions. That showed that the hon. and learned Gentleman felt that the Bill was a very stringent one, and knew that the Bill would be open to mitigation of the penalties it was purposed to inflict upon those who might infringe the law. When proper Amendments were proposed in Committee, with a view to the mitigation of the stringent penalties contained in this Bill, he was sure the hon. and learned Gentleman would be the first to consider them fairly, and, if necessary, adopt them, so that the penalties might be mitigated. He hoped the Bill would go to a second reading, when they would doubtless hear from his hon. and learned Friend, or from the learned Solicitor General, that some modifications would be introduced into the Bill. He had looked most carefully over the Bill; but he could not see one word that would prevent men being sent down to disturb and debauch a constituency, a thing which hon. Members knew was done in the last Election. That was a question which he hoped would be considered before the Bill went to a second reading. Then there was a matter which had already been dealt with by the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis)—special expenditure. For instance, if persons were sent down to disturb and debauch a constituency, a candidate who spent large sums of money in resisting them might, under this Bill, be found guilty of corrupt practices. If the penalties in this Bill were to remain it would be exceedingly difficult to get a proper candidate to stand for a constituency. There should be some guarantee that the candidate who sinned unwittingly should find relief under the Bill. Another point was with respect to the prohibition against using public-houses as committee-rooms. This might be right in boroughs, but if enforced in counties there would be the greatest difficulty in finding committee-rooms at all. On the general question of corrupt practices, he had to observe that there had been more corruption under the Ballot than before. Men took money from one side and voted for the other, or perhaps took money from both sides. That, he thought, was most un-English. As to the question of one Judge, he could not conceive why this was inserted in the Bill, except that the Attorney General feared there would be so many cases under this Bill that there would not be sufficient Judges to try them. If that was the case an appeal ought to be given. If there was an appeal from the Election Judge to the Supreme Court of Judicature public opinion would be satisfied, and he believed there would be less difficulty in passing the Bill.

Mr. GORST said, he desired to address to the House some observations upon the principle of the Bill. Though the Bill had met with a cordial reception, there had been a good deal of criticism, in the midst of which the principle of the Bill had been lost sight of. The principle was a novel one, for it was that corrupt practices were to be stopped by limiting the expenditure of candidates. He was not sanguine of the ultimate success of any Bill to put down corrupt practices. Experience tended to show that it would be very efficient at first, but that eventually people would find their way round it, and it would thus become inoperative. He thought it probable that, at least, for some time to come, the method of attempting to suppress corruption by putting a compulsory limit upon the expenditure of the candidates would be very effective. Much had been said upon the subject of necessary expenditure at elections; but it was a mere matter of detail. If the Attorney General's scale was not sufficiently liberal, that was a matter that could be altered when the Bill went into Committee. But the ideas that many people had as to what was necessary expenditure were simply extravagant. All that was really required was that the constituencies should have the means of amply being informed, or informing themselves, of the character, qualifications, and political views of the candidates. That was really all that was necessary to enable the constituents to exercise the franchise. Many items that usually came under the head of election expenses were not wanted at all. Take the case of the posters. What could be more ridiculous than posters announcing, for instance, "Rogers for East Somerset," when everyone knew already that Rogers was standing for East Somerset? It no doubt put a great deal of money into circulation; but it was not necessary to the conduct of the election. Then there were the ridiculous cartoons. At Birmingham, for instance, where an election was conducted as purely as anywhere, a great deal of money was spent in the last election in ridiculous pictures of Colonel Burnaby flogging a soldier. Surely that was not necessary to enable the electors to exercise their franchise. Then, again, every elector was in the habit of receiving large numbers of cards in various colours telling him for whom he should vote and the number of his vote on the Register. Then there were the bands of music. No one could say they were necessary. Then the variety of colours used in coloured fires and in adorning the committee-rooms, the carriages of the candidates, and the vehicles for conducting electors to the poll. Then the enormous number of clerks and messengers that were engaged. In most of the boroughs of this country any candidate who refused to engage the number of rooms usually engaged, or who refused to retain the number of clerks and messengers usually employed, would have a very poor chance. If the Schedule of the Attorney General were adopted elections would be conducted with much more propriety; and every candidate would find that the expenditure allowed by the Bill was sufficient to enable him to bring his character, his antecedents, and his opinions before the electors. The Bill would be of no use whatever if the Maximum Schedule were omitted. He did not know whether it was too high or too low; but he was inclined to think it was quite high enough. He wished to point out one or two matters in which he thought that expenditure would ultimately creep in, unless some provision was made. He understood that the Attorney General was prepared to bring in a corresponding Bill with regard to municipal elections; but unless that were done this Bill would be of little use. If that were not done, the result would be that the expenditure at present lavished on Parliamentary elections would be spent at municipal elections. Another matter was with respect to the expenditure incurred for what was called organization or registration. A great deal of money was spent in organization at a time when there was no immediate prospect of an election. In process of time, if that system were not checked, the expenditure would grow to most alarming proportions. Then, some provision was required in the Bill to prevent expenditure at elections by persons outside the candidate, and not immediately connected with him. He did not wish to join in any abuse of the Caucus, for he rather admired the Caucus, and it might be that there was something like it on his own side. But the Caucus clearly ought not to be allowed to spend money at elections outside the candidates. It ought to be laid down in the Bill that any third person, or any body of persons outside each candidate in elections, who should spend money among the electors, should be liable to severe punishment. While expressing his strong approval of the principle of the Bill, and his readiness to give the Attorney General his most hearty support in carrying it through the House, he must state his opinion that provision ought to be made for the enforcement of the law. Many of our laws were excellent; but the provisions for their enforcement were generally extremely feeble. In order to induce people to obey the law, severe penalties were not required, but penalties which were certain and speedy. Instead of accumulating heavy punishment, they should make punishment more certain and speedy. It was now notorious that out of 10,000 corrupt practices committed, perhaps only one was ever punished. The reason why public opinion was agitated by the punishment inflicted upon the Macclesfield and Sandwich bribers was rather due to the belief that, though the punishment was deserved, there were thousands of people in the different boroughs of the country who deserved the punishment quite as much. There could be no doubt that the Electoral Law was violated at present in the most public and barefaced manner. Bands of music and colours, which were illegal, were freely made use of, and no effort was made to stop them. It ought to be made the duty of some public official responsible to the central authority to take means to bring to justice all infringers of the law. His own idea was that the Returning Officers were the proper persons to be intrusted with the power and the duty of prosecuting all persons offending against the Electoral Law. If that power were given to Returning Officers they would be able to bring persons whom they found to be committing offences against the Election Law immediately before a justice or a police magistrate. A small punishment inflicted at once would, he believed, have more effect in checking improper practices than the uncertain and long-delayed liability to heavier punishment. A candidate might now be aware that the opposite side were treating extensively; but he could not prevent it without losing his chance of election. If he could inform the Returning Officer, and that functionary could at once prosecute the offenders, an end would be put to a great many corrupt practices, and they would have a much better chance of securing pure elections.

Mr. BULWER said, that a satisfactory incident in the discussion had been the unanimity with which hon. Members on all sides of the House had expressed their determination to put down corruption. He could not, however, help thinking that if the 600 and odd Members of the House had resolutely set their faces against corruption before they got into the House this legislation would not have been necessary. With reference to placards, he quite agreed with the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) that they were hardly necessary; but he could not concur with him in the opinion that they did no good to the Party which employed them. He might mention, for example, that when he last stood for Ipswich a strong prejudice was created against him by a disgusting placard issued by his political opponent representing him (Mr. Bulwer) as standing by to superintend the flogging of a soldier. And, in connection with this placard, ladies, said to be his opponent's friends, visited the wives of the electors, and exhorted them not to let their husbands vote for "Colonel" Bulwer, who could order the flesh to be torn off a soldier's back. He was not aware, until he heard the hon. and learned Member for Chatham, that these vile productions emanated from Birmingham. They must keep in mind that this was a strictly penal Act, with provisions so stringent that many candidates would be unwittingly caught within them. Some of the consequences of very venial offences were absurdly severe, and seemed to point to insufficient consideration and care in framing the Bill. One clause provided that all the personal expenses of a candidate beyond £20 should be paid through his agent; and he presumed that any sums for personal expenses beyond £20 would have to be deducted from the £250 which was fixed as the limit of the general expenses.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) wished to explain that there was no limit at all to a candidate's personal expenses. The object of the clause was simply to insure that his personal expenses beyond the limit of £20 should appear in the accounts.

MR. BULWER said, if that were so, he had no further criticism at present to make on the clause. There were many other clauses open to the strongest objection; but, although this was not a convenient opportunity for detailed criticism, he could not pass over the section which provided that a gentleman who lost his seat in consequence of an illegal act done by some person, of whom he knew nothing, and whom, perhaps, he might never have seen, should be disqualified from representing the constituency for 10 years; the proposal was so monstrous and so outrageous to public opinion that he trusted the House would never agree to it. Then he was averse from having these matters decided by a single Judge. He objected to single Judges on all occasions when they were to be judges of facts as well as of law. It was desirable that two minds, at least, should be addressed to the many complicated questions which arose in these cases; and he believed that any individual Judge would prefer to be associated with another, so that all the responsibility should not devolve on the shoulders of one man. While agreeing entirely in its principle, and being earnest in his desire to put down corruption, as so much depended upon the means adopted to achieve that result, he would not say whether he should vote for the Bill or not. He had not heard much said in favour of it; and if he entertained the sentiments, which the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) had expressed with such force, he should vote against the Bill.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, he desired to set the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Bulwer) right on a matter of fact, relating to the placard which represented a soldier being flogged; he would be glad to learn that there was enough talent in his former constituency to produce it there, and that it was imported into Birmingham from Ipswich. The hon. and learned Gentleman was beaten, as he stated, by an importation from Birmingham; but it was not in the form of a placard. Some of the electors of Ipswich were also of an imaginative turn of mind; and their imagination misled them when the hon. and learned Gentleman told them, with innocent intentions, that he (Mr. Collings) had gone there to fight a pure election, adding that Brummagem nickel was not equal to current coin.

MR. BULWER could assure the hon. Member that he told his late constituents—and they well understood what he meant—that, in speaking of "Brummagem nickel," he was alluding to the hon. Member's political principles.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, no doubt the hon. and learned Gentleman did so at a later date. But the people of Ipswich either preferred the Brummagem nickel, or they had a different standard for current coin. However, the placard did not come from Birmingham.

MR. ONSLOW: In my borough it did come from Birmingham.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, that might be so, for Birmingham did a large export trade, and a great many boroughs looked to Birmingham for aid, just as others looked for help to the headquarters of the Conservative Caucus in Westminster; the main difference between the two Caucuses being that it was an absolute condition with one that it should have the people at its back. ["Question!"]

MR. SPEAKER called the hon. Member to Order, and to the Question before the House.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS, in continuation, said, he desired to express his approval of the principle of the Bill, which would have the effect of stimulating legitimate political activity, and of improving political morality. This would result particularly from fixing a maximum of expenditure, because it was the idea of unlimited expenditure which led to illegitimate expenditure. During the last few years every speaker on the subject had declared that some stringent provisions were necessary; and now the application of a test to their professions would determine whether they treated the matter as one to be talked about only, or whether they were now ready to give legal effect to the opinions they had expressed.

Sir HARDINGE GIFFARD said, he believed that this was a matter on which both sides ought to speak with perfect impartiality, for the principle of the Bill, limitation of expense, was most important to both sides, and neither side could with justice reproach the other. Those who were mainly responsible for the lavish expenditure which grew into corruption had no politics whatever. Anyone who, like himself and his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General, had been extensively engaged in inquiries, whether before Committees or Judges, must have come to the conclusion that in a great number of places there had grown up a class of persons whose trade and business were to extract money from candidates on both sides, and that it was the idlest pretence that they were actuated by any political motives at all. They might desire to get a candidate in as a triumph of their trade; but if he were unseated on Petition, and the Petition involved more expense, so much the better. If that did not result in a Commission, which he admitted they did not like, but only in another election, it was simply a repetition of the means by which money was obtained from candidates, one candidate being played off against another. It was often suggested that the expenditure incurred by one side ought also to be allowed on the other; and so a very considerable outlay, that was not originally contemplated, and would otherwise have been absolutely refused, was ultimately sanctioned. In this way various forms of corruption had become customary in a great number of boroughs, and there were even counties that had caught the infection. As things were, there was something like an auction of boroughs; and even if the return of a particular candidate was certain, if the contest was conducted on purely political grounds, a struggle was frequently promoted in the interest of those who most profited by it. He regarded the attempt of the Attorney General to impose a limit on election expenses as a most valuable experiment. The Maximum Schedule had, perhaps, been conceived in a somewhat too restricted spirit; but he did not understand his hon. and learned Friend to insist on the exact figures, or to be unwilling to consider the desirability of changes in Committee. If the fixing of this maximum was the principle of the Bill, he could only say he approved it, and believed that it would be a great boon both to electors and candidates throughout the conntry. With respect, however, to some of the other clauses of the Bill, there seemed to be a confusion between illegal and corrupt expenditure. Nothing was more distinct than the old Electoral Code, under which corruption made a candidate liable to electoral penalties, while that which was illegal subjected the offender to punishment, but did not affect his seat. As it appeared to him, the Bill did not recognize the fact that the one was a question of civil disability and the other of moral delinquency. And as for the guilty candidate himself, he thought it bad policy to visit him so heavily as to make him an object of sympathy, to say nothing of those candidates whom the Bill would punish severely in spite of their innocence. Even as the law now stood, the candidate, as his hon. and learned Friend must often have felt, was frequently the person who had the best right to complain; for a man with every desire to do right might win an election by a great majority, and be unseated in consequence of the conduct of a corrupt agent. In his opinion, the present law, as far as such a candidate was concerned, was quite sufficiently severe. The impolicy of the proposed change was manifest, seeing that an honest candidate could not possibly do more than he now did to secure purity of election. But what, then, was the object of increasing the penalties? In the 4th and following clauses of the Bill, a man who had lost his seat through the corrupt conduct of his agent might never again contest that constituency. A newly-elected Member in such an unfortunate position could not, of course, be allowed to retain his seat, for he would be enjoying the benefit of the corrupt practices of his agent; but surely it would be a sufficient penalty if his disqualification were for a certain definite period, and not, as the Bill proposed, for life. As for the machinery of the Bill, as far as it was provided in the 32nd and following clauses, it was a departure from the principle affirmed by the House, that not two Judges, as at present, but one Judge, should try Election Petitions. As no one had ever complained of the existing arrangement, the plan was all the more remarkable. Without going into each part of the case, he might say that the general feeling of those who had watched the decisions of the Election Judges was that the alteration of the law had brought about the better protection of the interests of the litigants. To have two Judges would remove one of the objections entertained by the late Chief Justice of England to the trial of Election Petitions by the Judges. A Judge might have taken a decided part in politics; and, for the sake of the Judicial Bench itself, it was most important that the trial of an Election Petition should have the benefit of two minds. He believed, however, that the Attorney General would not be indisposed to accept an Amendment on this point. There was another provision which he regarded with the greatest possible apprehension; and that was that the Judge might, upon the trial of the Petition, become a Criminal Judge, and, without the intervention of a jury, proceed to try a criminal case. Such a provision was extremely objectionable in itself, and introduced a new element into our jurisprudence. It was most important, no doubt, that electoral offences should be punished at once; and he might, in passing, give an example of the serious injury which arose from the non-execution of one part of the Electoral Law. It was enacted, under penalties, that no person employed in certain capacities for hire should vote at an election. That provision had been constantly and persistently violated. Both the Attorney General and himself had been present when man after man came up, and, with the utmost effrontery, admitted that he had voted when he was a clerk or messenger of a candidate, or something of the kind, and he did not think that in one case punishment had been inflicted. That had led to serious mischief in the administration of the Electoral Law. When such an offence was allowed to go unpunished the line between it and direct bribery became extremely indistinct; and nothing tended more to debauch the whole tone and spirit of an election than the fact that, in spite of the known condition of the law, nobody had enforced it against those who had persistently disobeyed it. There was this additional reason why the punishment should be inflicted at once, that if time was allowed to go by there was very often a general consent on the part of the constituency that a veil should be drawn over what had been done and nothing more heard about it. But then the machinery provided by the Bill seemed open to grave objection. And here he would observe that the Bill did not seem to have been very carefully drawn. There ought to be some provision for a written record of a specific charge against a person placed upon his trial. But if the Attorney General would accept the suggestion that there should be two Judges, and that it should be competent for them, if they thought it necessary, to summon a jury, and that the defendant should not have it in his power to say how he should be tried, he thought it would be a great improvement on what was now proposed. But he would submit that there was no necessity for any increase of penalties against men who had committed no moral delinquency. If that was agreed to, and if, with some alteration of the machinery by which the law was to be enforced, there was a widening of the Schedule so that the maximum of expenses should be considered, not simply with reference to population, but to local circumstances and geographical position, this Bill might become the germ of a most valuable contribution to the law, and might prevent elections from being what they had been very lately in this country—simply an opportunity for a set of persons who had no politics whatever to extract money from the pockets of the candidates on both sides.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he could not feel that the evening had been wasted, owing to the valuable speech which they had just heard, and also to the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). And yet he could not help saying that there had been a great repetition of points which had been brought forward in the first debate, and also too much dwelling on matters which were better suited for Committee. Since the Attorney General had spoken, however, there had been one or two speeches in which larger principles had been dealt with. In the discussion on Tuesday, and in that which was now proceeding, almost all the speakers on both sides, and belonging to the three Parties, had admitted the necessity of some stringent legislation on the subject of corrupt practices at elections. It might be assumed that that was the general, if not the universal, opinion of the House. There was one exception in the speech which was delivered on Tuesday by the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour). That hon. Member went so far as to say that bribery and treating affected only a small fraction of the voters in any constituency. That was a strange assertion to make in the face of the startling fact which had been brought out before the Election Judges, that nearly the whole of some constituencies had been bribed —for instance, at Sandwich, where two-thirds of all the electors who voted had been proved before a Commission to have been bribed. The hon. Member for Hertford and the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow) had been united in saying that what they called corruption by the Caucus—by which the hon. Member for Guildford had said he meant certain Liberal organizations—was much worse than the ordinary forms of corruption. The latter hon. Member had referred to recent proceedings at Oxford. He was amazed to hear the hon. Member speak of that subject. He would not deal with it at any length. He agreed with the right hon. Baronet the Member for Mid Kent (Sir William Hart Dyke) that there was no use in dealing with the question in a Party spirit; but he would refer the hon. Member to pages No. 10, 11, and 12 in the proceedings of the Oxford Commission, which proved an expenditure of between £3,000 and £4,000, which came from the central Conservative organization. He hoped they would hear nothing further in connection with the City of Oxford. He was somewhat astonished to hear such statements from the hon. Members for Guildford and Hertford; because the organization, which was so ably presided over by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham, had branches both at Guildford and Hertford. He would not speak further on that subject, but join heartily in the expressions of hope on the part of the hon. and learned Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard), the right hon. Member for Mid Kent, and the late Home Secretary, that they might discuss those questions without reference to Party considerations. He thought much that had been said that evening might have been reserved for debates in Committee. The penalties were said to be too severe. No doubt seven or eight Members had spoken of the penalties as too severe, yet he would point out that the warm friends of the Bill—the debate on which had been unexpectedly prolonged—had preferred to sit still rather than lengthen the debate; and he had no doubt 16 or more Members might have spoken in an opposite sense. The hon. Members for Hertford, Mid Kent, Knaresborough, Launceston, and Burnley had dwelt chiefly on the clause disqualifying for life the candidate who had been guilty of corrupt practices. But it could not be denied that candidates, in some cases, were considered to have earned the gratitude of constituencies, which were glad to return them afterwards. That was a question for Committee; and it might possibly be considered, as had been suggested, that seven years, or two Parliaments, might be a long enough period of disqualification. But only within the last day or two he had heard a Conservative Member complain of the lavish expenditure of a candidate of his own Party in a neighbouring borough as tending to make his own expenses heavier. There was necessity for great care in that matter. The worthy Alderman the Member for the City of London, whom he saw on the Front Opposition Bench —[*cheers*]—well, it was a right, though not often claimed, of the Members for the City of London to sit on the Front Bench—had spoken of the expenses in the Schedule as too low for the case of large constituencies. He was himself, like other Members of the Government, a Member for a large constituency, and he thought that the expenses there allowed were too high rather than too low; and the hon. and learned Member for Chatham, in his admirable speech, for which he begged to tender the hon. and learned Gentleman his thanks, had concurred with him in that opinion. He could not but think that the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) spoke from a county point of view rather than from any regard for large boroughs. When they went into Committee he would be prepared to consider the representations put forward by Representatives of counties as to the necessary expenses of conducting county elections. It might be possible to make some small further allowance for what borough Members might call weak county human nature. There was next the suggestion of a drumhead court martial for the immediate trial of offenders. He thought there was a great deal in it, and he hoped it would be considered in Committee. The hon. and learned Member who had just addressed the House had made a proposal for the immediate trial of offenders before a local jury. The great difficulty would be to obtain an impartial local jury. As to the question of two Judges or one Judge, that was a point on which they were open to argument and conviction. They must not overlook the strain on the judicial strength of the country. As regarded Ireland, he had always felt that the situation rendered it necessary that they should have two Judges there. Whether they should have in England two Judges or one Judge, with the right of appeal, was a matter to be discussed. The hon. Member for Knaresborough (Mr. T. Collins), regarded this Bill as one which should be sent to a Committee of experts. Why, every Member of that House was an expert—not, he was glad to say, in the subject of corrupt practices, but in election procedure. No doubt that was why this debate had been protracted to a considerable extent. The hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) had also spoken. He should not refer to him as his hon. and learned Friend, though that had been done. He had heard him referred to as the hon. and gallant Member. Well, that only showed how great was the energy and the enterprize of his hon. Friend. The speech of his hon. Friend was certainly hostile to the Bill. The point raised, however, by his hon. and learned Friend—[*A laugh*]—threw no light whatever on the subject. He had, he found, made the slip which he intended to avoid. He hoped that the House would now draw the discussion to an end. Many of the arguments advanced would have to be repeated in Committee. He appealed to the House to allow the Bill to be now read a second time.

MR. BIGGAR said, he thought it only fair that Irish Members should offer their opinions upon this Bill, more especially as one of the most objectionable parts of the Bill was one which specially affected Ireland. He did not himself follow in the footsteps of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Louth (Mr. Callan), as giving an undecided opposition to the Bill now before the House. He himself was thoroughly convinced that it was of the very utmost importance for all the interests of these countries that elections should, as far as possible, be pure, and that elections should be carried on at as small an expense as possible. The present system of electioneering affairs he held to be of a highly objectionable nature. He was of opinion that the Schedule of this Bill fixed the maximum rate too low for the expenses of elections. The Bill contained no provision against a very objectionable form of corruption—namely, that of pecuniary aid to working men's clubs or other similar bodies. That system of corruption, he thought, was far more reprehensible than open bribery during an election, because open bribery might be detected, as it could be watched. It had been suggested that a way to diminish bribery would be to enlarge small constituencies. He thought the least objectionable plan would be to have a large number of small constituencies, and a number of large constituencies, so that the former might be within the reach of men of moderate means, and the latter within the reach of men of large means. He was glad to see some provision made against the number of messengers employed at elections. A schoolmaster had told him that on the eve of an election all his boys disappeared. He met one of them, and was informed that the lad had been engaged as a messenger by one of the candidates at a salary of 10*s*. a-day. He concurred also in the remarks made by the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) with respect to house-to-house canvassing. The worst feature of that system was the employment of hired men, volunteer canvassing being, in his opinion, legitimate; but it was perfectly impossible that the elections of an extensive county could be managed by one agent. One agent could not traverse the whole space; the proper method of dealing with the question would be to make the number of messengers allowable proportionate to the size of the constituency. Nor was the proposed method of dealing with a candidate's personal expenses satisfactory. It would enable car owners, for example, to send in their bills and charge what they pleased, the only alternative left for the candidate being either to pay or dispute the bill, which would often be unpleasant. If. however, it was made penal to furnish an extortionate account, tradesmen who now attempted to extort money from candidates would hesitate risking the whole of their debt. He quite agreed with the provisions of the Bill which prevented the sale of intoxicating liquors during the hours of polling. On the whole, he thought the Bill was entitled to the support of everyone desirous of electoral purity; but many Amendments would have to be made in Committee.

Mr. HEALY said, he was not altogether able to agree with his hon. Friend the Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) that the Bill was an admirable one. He had listened to the speech of the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Charles W. Dilke) in the hope of finding some justification for the application of the measure to Ireland; but he had waited in vain, and, so far, no case had been made out why the Bill should be applied to Ireland. After the last General Election there were only four Election Petitions in reference to Irish constituencies, and in only one of them was the successful candidate unseated—namely, in the Election for Dungannon, in which the return of the present Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson) was declared to be void. Why, therefore, the Bill, large and comprehensive as it was, should be made to apply to Ireland, he confessed he was unable to understand. There was no one in the House who was more in favour than he was of limiting the expenses which candidates had to pay; but he was of opinion that a Bill of this kind should not precede, but should follow a Reform Bill. It was after a Reform Bill, when there would be new constituencies, that a Bill of this kind would become necessary; and it would be far better, instead of introducing a Bill of 60 clauses, like this, to substitute a short Bill of one page and one clause, throwing the entire expense of the election upon the constituents themselves. He thought a good many of the Members of the House would desire that the cost of a General Election should be paid by the constituents. Of course, he could understand the reason why the constituents did not like to pay the legal expenses of their Representatives; but he saw no reason why, if they desired to continue to return Representatives, they should not be made to pay the legal expenses. It therefore appeared to him to be an extraordinary thing that, instead of bringing in a Bill of that character, the Government should desire to carry the House through the mazes of some 60 clauses of the Bill. Personally, he should not be touched by the Bill, because the expense of his election when he was returned only amounted to £20; and if a General Election were to occur immediately he did not think he need care about the cost. He was quite sure that it would be equally limited, and if it were much more he could not pay it; and, what was still more to the point, he would not. Upon this ground he was opposed to a Bill of this kind, because it was, in his opinion, a needless and a harmful expedient which he viewed with alarm. In regard to the question of two Judges, he was glad to find that the mind of the Government was open upon the subject. The Irish Judges were not over-worked; on the contrary, they were much under-worked and very much over-paid. At present they had nothing to do but to go all over Ireland haranguing the people in regard to their duty upon the preservation of law and order. If they had any real work to do they would give up these academic harangues, and address themselves to the business they were intended for—namely, the trying of prisoners. Therefore, he was glad to hear that there was likely to be two Judges instead of one. That would not even be a complete safeguard. The entire Judicature of Ireland, so far as the popular Party was concerned, was unsuitable to them. There was not a single Judge upon the Bench in their favour. Up to a recent period they had one learned Judge—Mr. Justice O'Brien—but he was now unfortunately no more, and there was not a single Judge whom he would trust upon an Election Petition involving heated political differences. When Mr. Justice O'Brien—who died a few months ago—was upon the Bench, he was a Judge of the old school, and he adminstered justice according to the abstract principles of justice; but, at the present moment, there was not a single Judge in Ireland whom, in the matter of an Election Petition, he would trust, if their political prejudices were strongly enlisted on either side. The only reason he could see in favour of two Judges was that if both of them were of opposite politics and Party partizans, the view of one would counteract that of the other. If the Liberal Ministry was in power, it was desirable that there should be a Tory Judge, and if there was a Tory Ministry in power, then there ought to be a Liberal Judge. Care should always be taken that when two Judges were appointed to try an Election Petition in Ireland they were, at least, of opposite politics. He had no trust whatever in the impartiality of Irish Judges in political matters, and the sooner the House made up its mind to understand that question the better. They were men who at an election, probably through bribery they had practised, had got a seat in the House of Commons, and they were pitchforked on to the Bench when they had served the purposes of the Government of the day. In Ireland there was nothing of the noble example occasionally set in England of appointing a Member of the Opposition to a seat on the Bench. He was obliged to admire the spirit which had induced the Prime Minister to appoint Sir John Holker—the late Member for Preston—to a Judgeship. It showed the total absence of Party feeling; and what he wanted to know was, why they could not do the same in Ireland? Unhappily, they never saw anything of the kind there; and why he approved of having two Judges appointed to try Election Petitions instead of one was, that he saw some slight additional safeguard in the matter. This was a Bill to prevent undue and corrupt influence; but it seemed an extraordinary thing that, on the eve of the second reading of a Bill to prevent corrupt practices, the Government should have created half-a-dozen Baronets for Party purposes. On Thursday they were discussing the second reading of the Bill; and on Tuesday or Wednesday he had read that a number of Members, who were only known to fame as combatants who had conducted very severe and expensive election contests, had been created Baronets. He made no imputation upon the Government, or upon the hon. Baronets themselves; he only said that the Government might have reserved the new creations until the Bill had been read a second time. He thought such a course would have been more simple, because, on an occasion of this kind, the House was apt to draw inferences; and when he came to consider the claims of these Gentlemen to the dignity conferred upon them, he felt almost inclined—using the expression applied to the Claimant—to put them in the same category as that "unfortunate nobleman." When Gentlemen with such claims were appointed Baronets, Her Majesty's Government must not complain if the House felt inclined to be a little inquisitive as to the services they had rendered to entitle them to the dignity. He therefore repeated that it would have been better and more simple for the Government to have reserved these high distinctions until the Corrupt Practices Bill had passed through the House. There was another matter to which he wished to refer—namely, the question of penalties. The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had stated that upon that point, as well as regarded the Election Judges, there was no disposition to apply too hardly the question of penalties. In Ireland what they had to fear, so far as their constituents were concerned, was that there might be a strained interpretation by partizan Judges of what was called undue influence. He desired that there might be a clear definition of the phrase "undue influence." For instance, a popular candidate in Ireland generally marched into a town and out of it accompanied by a band and banners. Perhaps there was a little disturbance, and a few windows got broken. He did not think that was an unusual event even in England. Occasionally a head got broken; and it would be a very hard thing indeed if, when such things occurred in the heat of an election, they were to hold the candidate liable for the injury done on the score of undue influence. What might happen if it were left to an Election Judge, or to two Election Judges, appointed under the Bill, unless a strict definition of the meaning of that phrase were supplied, was that the successful candidate might be deprived of his seat, even when the broken glass and broken heads were supplied by his opponents. The Judges would be asked to inspect the broken glass and the broken heads; they would at once cry out "undue influence," and unseat the Member. He (Mr. Healy) thought that would be a very strange interpretation of the Bill, and one which no Irish Member could consent to support without considerable criticism. He also objected to the proposal to prohibit the candidate who was alleged to be guilty of undue influence from sitting for the constituency. As the Bill stood, a candidate found guilty of a breach of any of the provisions of the Bill would be prohibited from sitting in the House of Commons for 10 years. Let him be prohibited from sitting for the constituency among whom it was established that undue influence had prevailed for 10 years; but it was far too severe a penalty to say that he could not sit for any other constituency at all. Why should anything that happened in Yorkshire prevent a man from sitting for Wexford? Why should a man, simply because he was alleged to be guilty of undue influence in one quarter of the globe, be prevented from sitting for a constituency in another? He had no objection to prohibit him sitting in the House of Commons for the same constituency; but he confessed that he was unable to see the justice of placing him under a general disability, because a few panes of glass had been broken by some boys he had never seen, and of whom he knew nothing. This was a Bill which laid down that all expenses in excess of a maximum should be illegal expenses, and an illegal practice. No doubt, the introduction of that clause, so far as England was concerned, would be hailed with satisfaction. But he would suggest that, if all expenditure in excess of the maximum was to be considered an illegal practice, the first thing that ought to be done would be to disestablish and disendow the Reform Club and the Carlton Club, which were the rings that interfered so greatly in these matters. He was told that if a man wanted to fight a constituency on the Tory side, he had only to go to the Carlton Club, where he would get a handsome cheque; and, if he desired to contest a constituency on the Liberal side, it was only necessary for him to go to the Reform Club. [*A laugh.*] If his allegations were unfounded, it was only his virgin innocence that induced him to make them. At all events, statements of this kind were currently made; and, therefore, instead of bringing in Section 9 of the Bill, which declared that all expenditure in excess of the maximum should be considered an illegal practice, they could bring in a clause declaring that, whereas the Carlton and Reform Clubs were reported to the House to have encouraged the dissemination of corruption hitherto, they should be in future disestablished. Then there was the question of throwing upon counties the expenses. Section 33 declared that power was to be given to the Election Court to order payment by the county or borough of the costs of the Election Petition in certain cases. His knowledge of elections was so slight that he was unable to say how the English counties or boroughs were to be made to pay the election expenses, which were to be thrown upon them by the Judge; but, so far as Ireland was concerned, he was not aware of the existence of any other machinery than the Grand Juries for providing them. Therefore, in the case of Ireland, he strongly objected to any such mode of procedure. As it was well known that the Grand Jury system in Ireland was thoroughly abnormal, he warned the Government that if they intended to make Grand Juries the means of enforcing payment of the expenses, they must look out, when they went into Committee with the Bill, for a discussion upon the Grand Jury system. The Government were themselves pledged to re-model and revise that system; nevertheless, at a time when they admitted that the machinery was inadequate or rotten, they introduced a clause in the Bill which threw heavy expenses on the counties, and empowered Grand Juries to mulct the taxpayers to meet them. He was, therefore, not prepared to consent to the Bill in its present form; and he contended that, as far as Ireland was concerned, no case had been made out for the Bill. He was with the Government in any attempt they might make to cut down election expenses; but Ireland was, so to speak, virgin soil, and Members were in that country frequently returned to Parliament free of cost. He was himself practically returned free of cost, and the expenses of his hon. Friends were exceedingly moderate. His argument was that Irish constituencies found that there was a great lack of suitable candidates to represent them in Parliament, and they were only too happy to pay the expenses of such candidates when they were found. For instance, on the opposite Benches he saw several hon. Members who would never again serve in Parliament as Representatives of their present constituencies. He referred, of course, to a class of Members who were known as nominal Home Rulers; and at a General Election it might happen that a number of candidates were required to oust these Gentlemen from their seats. In that case the constituencies would be only too willing to pay the expenses of the new candidates, in order to bring about that result. Therefore it seemed to him extraordinary that the Government should be eager to carry out their plan, seeing that the constituencies were quite willing to pay the expenses of suitable candidates. Of course, he considered the Bill only so far as Ireland was concerned. With regard to England, it was well known that the smaller English borough constituencies were notoriously corrupt. ["No!"] Hon. Gentlemen said "No!" but that was alleged; and if they were not corrupt, he would ask why the present Bill was introduced? It was impossible for him to regard the Bill as anything less than an indictment of many Members of the House; and he considered that they were called upon to plead guilty or not guilty to the indictment brought against them in this country. For his own part, he pleaded "Not Guilty;" and he objected to the introduction of a Bill which, however necessary it might be in England, was nothing but a slur upon the people of Ireland, and almost an insult upon Members representing Irish constituencies. The fact was the Irish Members had no money to throw away, and the Bill seemed to proceed on the needless and erroneous assumption that they were possessed of the wealth of Crœsus. He objected that the Bill was unnecessary, and that it ought not to be brought in for Ireland. With regard to canvassing, he thought provision ought to be made in the Bill for putting down that practice. Many persons, especially in boroughs, expected that candidates would call upon them. In former days —although the custom, it seemed, had been since done away with—he believed the candidates were required to kiss the babies. However that might be, he repudiated the necessity for the Bill in relation to Ireland, which was an electorally pure country, whose people, as he had before pointed out, were simply anxious to find men who would serve them properly in Parliament.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, he rose, in pursuance of the intimation he had given on Tuesday, to ask leave of the House to withdraw his Amendment, upon the ground that later consideration led him to believe that the question raised by it could be better dealt with when the Bill went into Committee.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked whether the Government would be able to name any particular time when the Bill would be taken in Committee? The learned Attorney General had met the objections raised to many portions of the Bill in an extremely fair and candid spirit; and it was probable that, having listened to all that had taken place in the debate, some points might have occurred to him on which he might be inclined, on the part of the Government, to make certain alterations in Committee. If that were so, he ventured to suggest that those alterations should be put upon the Paper as soon as possible, in order to avoid similar Amendments being put down by hon. Members, and thereby shorten the discussions in Committee.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, that Notice of the Committee stage of the Bill would be given as soon as possible. He would endeavour to keep in mind the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman opposite; but he thought the more convenient course would be for hon. Members to give Notice of their Amendments, and he would then endeavour to say whether they could be accepted, either in conversation with hon. Members, or by statement in the House.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he thought it would be an advantage if the Government would put down the Schedule suggested by them.

Mr. HEALY said, he hoped the Schedule would be laid upon the Table of the House next Monday.

QUESTIONS.

PARLIAMENT — ARRANGEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER asked what Business would be taken on Monday next?

Mr. CHILDERS said, on that day the debate on Procedure would be resumed.

Mr. HEALY asked if the Arklow Harbour Bill would come within the "Half-past 12 o'clock" Rule?

Mr. SPEAKER: The Bill, being essentially of a monetary character, it is excepted from the operation of the Standing Order relating to Opposed Business.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER asked if Notice would be given of the next stage of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, that, although it appeared to him unnecessary, Notice would be given of the Bill.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

COMMONABLE RIGHTS BILL.—[Bill 23.]

(*Mr. Cheetham, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Buxton.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Application of compensation money for common lands).

Mr. CHEETHAM moved to insert, after sub-section (1), the following sub-sections:—

"(2.) Any land so purchased as aforesaid for use as common land shall be conveyed to and vest in trustees upon trusts for the persons interested, such trustees to be appointed, and such trusts, and the powers and duties of the trustees, and provisions for the appointment of new trustees from time to time to be declared and provided by an order under the seal of the Inclosure Commissioners, pursuant to resolutions to be passed at a special meeting of the persons interested, convened by the said Commissioners by such majorities as aforesaid, and copies of such order shall be deposited and kept in like manner as copies of an award are by 'The Inclosure Act, 1845,' directed to be deposited and kept."

"(3.) Every appointment of a new trustee or of new trustees, in pursuance of this Act, shall be subject to confirmation by the Inclosure Commissioners under their seal, and upon such confirmation the land shall vest in the remaining and the newly-appointed trustees without any conveyance."

Amendment *agreed to,*

Mr. CHEETHAM moved to leave out sub-section (3).

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *ordered* to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 3 *agreed to.*

Mr. CHEETHAM moved to insert the following Clause after Clause 3:—

(Provision for cases where money paid by way of compensation has already been applied in the manner authorised by this Act.)

"In any case where money paid by way of compensation as aforesaid has, before the passing of this Act, been applied in any one or more of the ways authorised by this Act, a resolution may be passed, at any meeting of the persons interested, called by the Inclosure Commissioners in manner provided by this Act, by such majorities as aforesaid approving of such application, and such application shall, upon the allowance of such resolution by the Inclosure Commissioners under their seal, be deemed to have been lawfully made under the provisions of this Act; and the committee or other persons by whom such money has been so applied shall thereupon be discharged from all liability in respect of such money so applied. And the provisions in this Act contained with respect to the declaration of trusts, and the powers and duties of trustees, and the appointment of new trustees, from time to time, shall apply in every case in which such money has, before the passing of this Act, been laid out in the purchase of land."

Clause *agreed to,* and *added* to the Bill.

Remaining clauses *agreed to.*

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH moved the following Clause:—

(Exception of the New Forest.)

"This Act shall not extend to the New Forest."

Mr. BRYCE hoped the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill would assent to the insertion of the clause.

Mr. CHEETHAM assented.

Clause *agreed to,* and *added* to the Bill.

House *resumed.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

JUDGMENTS (INFERIOR COURTS) BILL.—[Bill 44.]

(*Mr. Monk, Mr. Norwood, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Corry, Mr. Reid, Mr. Serjeant Simon.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 25th April.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Interpretation of Terms).

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour) moved, in page 2, line 27, at end, to add—

"The expression 'person' shall include any party or parties to a cause in any inferior court in England, Scotland, or Ireland; the expression 'plaintiff' shall include pursuer, complainer, or any person at whose instance any action or proceeding in an inferior court is instituted, and the expression 'defendant' shall include defender, respondent, or other person against whom any such action or proceeding is directed; the exprssion 'action' shall mean the action or other proceeding in which any judgment was pronounced, and the expression 'summons' shall mean the summons or other initial writ in such action."

Amendment *agreed to;* words *added.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clauses 3 and 4 *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Jurisdiction over registered judgments limited to execution).

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) moved, in page 2, line 28, after "shall," to insert "in so far as relates to execution under this Act."

Amendment *agreed to;* words *inserted.*

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) moved, in page 2, line 32, to leave out "but in so far only as relates to execution under this Act."

Amendment *agreed to;* words *left out.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clauses 5 to 7, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 8 (Rules).

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) moved, in page 3, line 7, after "Ireland," to add—

"Provided, That the said rules and regulations shall not extend the jurisdiction of any inferior court, unless to the effect specified in section seven of this Act."

Amendment *agreed to;* words *added.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) moved, after Clause 6, to insert the following Clauses:—

"This Act shall not apply to any judgment pronounced by any inferior court in England against any person domiciled in Scotland or Ireland, unless the cause of action shall have arisen, or the obligation to which the judgment relates ought to have been fulfilled, within the district of such inferior court, and the summons was served upon the defendant personally within the said district, nor to any judgment pronounced by any inferior court in Scotland against any person domiciled in England or Ireland, unless the cause of action shall have arisen, or the obligation to which the judgment relates ought to have been fulfilled, within the district of such inferior court, and the summons was served upon the defendant personally within the said district, nor to any judgment pronounced by any inferior court in Ireland against any person domiciled in England or Scotland, unless the cause of action shall have arisen, or the obligation to which the judgment relates ought to have been fulfilled, within the district of such inferior court, and the summons was served upon the defendant personally within the said district.

"Provided, That it shall be competent to any person against whom any judgment to which this Act does not apply, as aforesaid, is sought to be enforced by registration in the register of an inferior court in England or Ireland, to apply for and obtain from one of the superior courts of England or Ireland, a prohibition or injunction against the enforcement of such judgment, and of any execution thereupon; and that it shall be competent to any person against whom any judgment to which this Act does not apply, as aforesaid, it sought to be enforced by registration in the register of an inferior court in Scotland, to apply for and obtain from the Bill Chamber or Court of Session in Scotland, suspension or suspension and interdict of or against the enforcement of such judgment and any diligence thereon, and in any such proceeding as aforesaid the unsuccessful party may be found liable in costs."

MR. WARTON thought it would be well if the phrase "unless the cause of action shall have arisen" were to read "unless the whole cause of action, &c." He need not remind his legal Friends that there were many different opinions in the Courts as to what constituted a cause of action.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, he would assent to the insertion of the word.

Amendment to proposed Amendment *agreed to.*

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, he supposed the hon. and learned Member would propose to introduce the same word throughout the clause?

MR. WARTON: Certainly.

Further Amendments made.

Clauses, as amended, *agreed to,* and *ordered* to stand part of the Bill.

House *resumed.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

PLACES OF WORSHIP SITES BILL.

(*Mr. Summers, Mr. Richard, Mr. William M'Arthur, Mr. Alderman Cotton.*)

[BILL 97.] COMMITTEE.

[*Progress 25th April.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

New Clause—

"A corporation or municipal body shall not make any such grant without the consent in writing of the Secretary of State for the Home Department, where such consent is now required by any existing Act of Parliament,"—(*Mr. Whitley,*)

—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."

MR. HIBBERT moved, as an Amendment, that the words "Home Secretary" should be omitted in order to insert "the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury."

Amendment to proposed new Clause *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, read a second time, and *added* to the Bill.

House *resumed.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

TRAMWAYS PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. ASHLEY, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under "The Tramways Act, 1870," relating to Aldershot and Farnborough Tramways Amendment, Birkdale and Southport Tramways (Use of Mechanical Power), Bristol Tramways (Extensions), Burnley and District Tramways Extension, Leamington and Warwick Tramways, Manchester Carriage and Tramways Company, North Staffordshire Tramways, and Oldham Borough Tramways (Extensions), *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. ASHLEY and Mr. CHAMBERLAIN.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 141.]

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. ASHLEY, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under "The General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861," relating to Bridlington, Broadstairs, Carnlough, Holywood, Johnshaven, Kettletoft, Penmaenmawr, Plymouth, Seabrook, Southend, Stonehaven, Weymouth, and Worthing (West), *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. ASHLEY and Mr. CHAMBERLAIN.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 142.]

DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. JOHN HOLMS, Bill to amend "The Documentary Act, 1868," and other enactments relating to the evidence of documents by means of copies printed by the Government Printers, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. JOHN HOLMS and Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 143.]

CIVIL IMPRISONMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Ordered, That the Select Committee on Civil Imprisonment (Scotland) Bill do consist of Seventeen Members:—The Committee was accordingly *nominated* of,—The LORD ADVOCATE, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. RAMSAY, Mr. ANDREW GRANT, Mr. ARMITSTEAD, Mr. MACKINTOSH, Mr. WEBSTER, Mr. EARP, Dr. CAMERON, Mr. COCHRANE-PATRICK, Sir HERBERT MAXWELL, Colonel ALEXANDER, Mr. ORR EWING, Admiral Sir JOHN HAY, Mr. JAMES CAMPBELL, Mr. COMPTON LAWRANCE, and Mr. SYNAN:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records; Five to be the quorum.

House adjourned at One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 28th April, 1882.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—*First Report* —Land Law (Ireland).

PUBLIC BILLS—*Royal Assent*—General Police and Improvement (Scotland) [45 *Vict.* c. 6]; Army (Annual) [45 *Vict.* c. 7]; Drainage (Ireland) Provisional Order [45 *Vict.* c. ii]; Metropolitan Commons Supplemental [45 *Vict.* c. iii].

EGYPT—ASSAB.—QUESTION.

EARL DE LA WARR said, he wished to put a Question to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, of which he had given him private Notice. He desired to know, Whether the noble Earl had any information to communicate to the House with regard to the truth of a Reuter's telegram declaring that Sir Augustus Paget, Her Majesty's Minister at Rome, had signed a protocol assenting to the fortification of Assab by the Italians?

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, there is now a very laudable competition to afford the public early information. The only inconvenience is that the information is not always of a perfectly accurate character. The report to which the noble Earl has alluded is absolutely without foundation.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—THE RETURN, TO DECEMBER 31, 1881.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD MONTEAGLE OF BRANDON asked the Lord Privy Seal, Whether, in the return of evictions for the year ending 31st December 1881, the number of families and persons stated to have been re-admitted as tenants was not confined to those cases where the persons evicted were re-admitted at the time of the eviction ; if so, whether a supplementary return could be furnished showing the number of those evicted during the first three quarters of the year 1881 who were re-admitted as tenants before the 31st of March 1882? He said that the Returns recently presented were ambiguous in not distinguishing the number of tenants who were reinstated at the time of the eviction and those who were reinstated before the six months had expired during which they had the right of redemption. The number of those reinstated as tenants appeared to be very small, whereas the number of those who went back as caretakers was comparatively large. He wished to know whether the Return which had been issued included those who had taken advantage of the equity of redemption they possessed and been re-admitted within six months, or whether it did not? If it did not, he desired to know whether there was any objection to a supplementary return up to the 31st of March last being issued which would include such cases?

LORD CARLINGFORD, in reply, said, he found on inquiry that the Return included all cases where the tenant had been re-admitted up to the date when the report of the eviction had been made to head-quarters in Dublin. But he believed that in point of fact the Return was confined to those cases where persons evicted had been re-admitted at the time of the eviction, and therefore he had no objection to a supplementary Return being made as the noble Lord desired.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE said, he agreed with the noble Lord (Lord Monteagle of Brandon) that these Returns were most ambiguous, and he took that opportunity to refer to the unfair and injurious statements with regard to evictions which appeared in the newspapers from time to time. A noble Lord, a friend of his, saw in the papers that he had evicted 60 tenants, whereas he had only evicted one, though he might have had a number of under tenants not known to the landlord, and whom he had no idea of evicting. Tenants in many cases would not pay their rents unless they were evicted, or proceedings for the purpose of eviction were commenced against them. They were, in fact, afraid to pay their rents ; and yet he saw the Prime Minister expressing sympathy with those who had induced them not to do so, and the tenants were now in this condition—that they knew not what further changes would be made in the law, and unless they were very honest men they would refrain from paying their rents. He would like to see Returns made of ejectments in the City of London for the same period of time as in Ireland. Unless there were a law that tenants should not pay their rent there must be evictions, whether the property they rented belonged to landlords or to the Government. The right hon. Gentleman had said he was going to put down crime; but they had had crime constantly increasing in Ireland during the whole time the present Government had been in Office ; and, with the exception of the Coercion Act, which had not succeeded in repressing crime, and a remedial measure which had also been unsuccessful, nothing further had been done, and there were no indications of what the Government were going to do. Unless, however, something more were not done in regard to the Land League crime would increase, and go on increasing, until the Government were determined to enforce law and order. No man could say what would be the result either in this country or Ireland if the present state of things continued. The country and the Press had expected that some definite declaration of policy would be made on Wednesday last; but instead of that they had only a sort of sympathizing speech with a Gentleman who had brought forward a Bill, the object of which was further spoliation of the landlord.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — THE EASTER VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT BURY said, he rose to call the attention of the Under Secretary of State for War to the report of a recent answer given by him in that House respecting the eligibility of Volunteer officers to brigade commands. He took that course because he thought the report of the noble Lord's answer did not accurately represent the principle on which the selections were in former years made, or, indeed, the principle on which they were made now. The matter was one so important to the Volunteer Service generally that no apology was needed for calling attention to it. His object was to obtain an authoritative declaration from the noble Lord as to the policy of the War Office in this particular. The custom for over 20 years had been that Volunteer officers in the senior ranks, who were duly qualified by proper acquaintance with their duties, should be eligible for brigade commands on field days, such as that held at Portsmouth on Easter Monday. As a matter of fact, numbers of such officers were not only eligible, but had actually held such commands. The noble Lord was reported to have said, in answer to a Question of his noble Friend (Lord Campbell) which had reference to the Portsmouth Review, that the principle of the appointments was that officers commanding regimental districts were appointed to the command of brigades with two exceptions; and that owing to the absence of Regular officers the commands had been bestowed upon two distinguished Volunteer officers—namely, Lord Bury and Lord Ranelagh. Now, he wished to ask the noble Earl the Under Secretary for War whether there had been any new decision, and whether Volunteer officers were no longer eligible for brigade commands; and whether he was not incorrectly reported on the occasion referred to? He quite admitted that, under ordinary circumstances, when a Regular officer had under him three or four Volunteer regiments which were affiliated to his command and naturally followed his brigade, he would be appointed as the brigadier; but where such was not the case he had always understood that a Volunteer officer, properly qualified, was eligible to receive the command. He hoped that, considering the importance of the subject to Volunteer officers generally, the answer of the noble Lord would be of a satisfactory nature.

LORD TRURO said, he thought he expressed the feelings of Volunteer officers generally when he said they were much indebted to the noble Viscount for asking this Question; and the noble Viscount, having held Office at the War Office, knew what the custom had been in regard to these appointments. In his opinion, the noble Lord the Under Secretary for War, in the reply he had given the other night, had shown a dexterity which highly qualified him for official life—a dexterity which most effectually concealed the intentions of the authorities in reference to this matter. The Volunteer Force was a peculiar one, and was the outcome of patriotic feeling; and the Volunteer officers who gave their time and their money freely in its support depended for their reward on being allowed to exercise the commands which their position and experience entitled them to hold on occasions like the Portsmouth Review. He did not remember that anything had ever been done by Volunteer officers which could be complained of—they had always properly discharged their duties. He had never seen such glaring mistakes—mistakes which had been censured on the field—as those which had been made by the Regular brigadier. On the last occasion at Portsmouth, he had seen no less than two brigades, commanded by Regular officers, for a period of one hour remain under an enfilading fire; and one of the most distinguished Generals in the Service had made the remark thereon, that there would not have been a man left alive, if either of the brigades had been in actual service. No Volunteer brigadier had ever committed such a gross and apparent blunder. It was neither just to the Volunteer officers nor expedient that they should be excluded from commands. In order to prevent Volunteer officers from commanding brigades on that occasion, the brigades which were under Regular officers were made to consist of no fewer than six regiments, instead of three. He did not wish to say anything discourteous of Regular officers. He was speaking simply as a member of the Volunteer Service, in which he took deep interest. He contended that it was inexpedient to pursue the course which had been followed by the War Office, and he could not understand their policy. Was it intended to displace Volunteer officers altogether, and to prevent them from holding the positions they had always held? Although he had held a high position in the Volunteer Force for 20 years, he had not commanded a brigade at Portsmouth; and he regretted that that occasion should have been taken to offer to him something in the nature of an affront.

The Earl of MORLEY said, he was extremely obliged to the noble and gallant Viscount opposite for giving him an opportunity of correcting any misapprehension that might have arisen with regard to the answer he had given to the noble and gallant Lord below the Gangway a few days ago. His words as repeated might have given a somewhat incorrect impression of what he had intended to convey. It was, however, quite impossible for him to pass over the speech of the noble Lord behind him (Lord Truro) in silence. The noble Lord took advantage of his position in Parliament to criticize the manœuvres at Portsmouth, which had been conducted by Regular officers of the highest rank, he himself having been serving as an officer under them. Such conduct was subversive of all military discipline. He declined to go into a comparison between brigadiers appointed from the Regular and Auxiliary Forces, and he declined to enter upon any criticisms as to the manner in which these officers had performed their duties. On such matters this House was not in a position to pronounce an opinion; they were most properly left to His Royal Highness the Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief and to the military authorities at headquarters. But he must protest against such a speech as that just delivered by the noble Lord. He must say that the course taken by the noble Lord was singularly inopportune at a time when every attempt was being made to knit the Regular and the Auxiliary Forces more closely together. In answering a Question put to him by the noble Lord behind him a few days ago, he did not intend to convey, nor did he think that his words conveyed, the impression that Volunteer officers would in future never be selected for the command of brigades. There was no new decision come to by the War Office, and no intention to issue any order which would disqualify Volunteer officers from holding commands of brigades when opportunities occurred for them to have such commands. The general rule in force as regarded the selection of brigadiers was practically the same for the Volunteers as for the Regular Army—namely, that brigades, whether composed of Volunteers or Regular troops, should, on the occasion of important Reviews, be commanded by the colonels having charge of the regimental districts to which the troops constituting these brigades belonged. There were often occasions in which there were a greater number of brigades than colonels who were thus qualified to command them; and in those cases, as he had already remarked, there would be no disqualification of Volunteer officers who were recommended for efficiency in drill by the general officers commanding the districts in which the regiments were localized; and he felt sure that His Royal Highness Commanding-in-Chief would in the future, as in the past, be ready to give every opportunity to Volunteer officers to command brigades. He thought that this would satisfactorily answer the Question of the noble Lord.

Viscount BURY said, he thought the answer of his noble Friend perfectly satisfactory; but he wished to say with regard to the remarks of the noble Lord opposite (Lord Truro) that he did not think the noble Lord was really to be considered as speaking in the name of the Volunteer Force. He had listened to those remarks with great regret, and felt sure that his criticisms on officers who were in high command on a recent occasion as well as on other occasions were such as would not have been made by many members of the Volunteer Force. He must apologize for making these remarks on the speech of his noble Friend, but he felt compelled on behalf of the Reserve Forces to do so.

Lord TRURO desired to say a word in explanation. When he made the remarks to which exception had been taken, he pointed out that he made them on the authority of a general officer of distinction, who was present on the occasion in question, and not simply as his own observation. He really did not know what there was to complain of in regard to such criticisms. The noble Earl was surprised at his taking that opportunity of bringing the matter before their Lordships. When were the Volunteers to make their grievances known? ["Order, order!"] When officers made such remarks out-of-doors they were called insubordinate—["Order, order!"]—and the only place where they could make them was in Parliament. He felt that he was entitled to give expression in the House to what he believed to be the feeling of the great body of his fellow-Volunteers. ["Order, order!"] He, as a public man, was entitled to do that, and also entitled to make their grievances known to the authorities.

Lord CHELMSFORD said, that the real question was not whether the senior commanders of Volunteer regiments were efficient as commanders of brigades, but how far their removal on parade and field days from the regiment in order to give them command of brigades would affect the rank and file of the regiment. The Volunteers did not, as a rule, come out more than once a week, and they were not accustomed to be drilled by the second in command. When, therefore, the commanding officer was removed, in order to give him a brigadier's command, the regiment was placed at a very serious disadvantage. This was felt even with Regular troops, who had more frequent opportunities of drill than the Volunteers; and a Line regiment never drilled so steadily when its commanding officer happened to be absent and the next senior took command. It would be a serious disadvantage if any rule were laid down that the senior Volunteer officers in command of Volunteer regiments should be entitled to claim as a matter of right the privilege of commanding brigades on the occasion of field days. He thought it would be far better if they were left in command of their own regiments, and that officers of the Regular Army accustomed to command brigades should be intrusted with that duty.

CLAIMS OF PEERAGE, &c.

The Earl of Milltown, the Lord Kintore, and the Lord Oxenfoord added to the Select Committee in the place of the Marquess of Abercorn, the Earl of Mansfield, and the Lord O'Hagan.

House adjourned at a quarter past
Five o'clock, to Monday
next, Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 28th April, 1882.

MINUTES.] — Private Bill (*by Order*) — *Second Reading*—Central Metropolitan Railway, *put off.*

Public Bills—*Second Reading*—Commons Regulation Provisional Orders * [117]; Patents for Inventions (No. 2) [104].

Committee—Municipal Corporations (*re-comm.*) [113], *deferred.*

Considered as amended—Commonable Rights * [23].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

CENTRAL METROPOLITAN RAILWAY BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Dodds.*)

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I rise to oppose the second reading of this Bill; and I do not take that course from any desire to interpose an obstacle in the way of the construction of any railway that would be of public utility in connecting the North and the South of this Metropolis, but I oppose this Bill in the interests of my constituents, because it proposes to deal with their property in a way which is not authorized by the Land Clauses Consolidation Act. By that Act, Parliament has thought fit to lay down certain regulations in regard to the taking of private property for the execution of works of this kind; and by setting aside the provisions of that Act, my constituents will be affected by this Bill, most of them belonging to the humble and industrious classes, but at present thriving men, and they will be compelled to appear before a Committee of the House of Commons, at a cost that may probably be ruinous to them, in order to protect interests which, as a general principle, Parliament has thought it right to lay down shall be protected by the State. I have also another objection to this Bill, and it is that it appears to be promoted by persons who can only desire to obtain these powers in order to sell them again. The reference to capital contained in the Bill states that—

"The capital of the Company shall be the capital of a limited Company at the time of the passing of this Act,"

such limited Company being a Limited Liability Company, which the Bill proposes to extinguish, and to re-adopt for the purposes of this Bill. The capital of the Limited Liability Company consists, at the present moment, of 70 shares of £10 each, and there is no security whatever that any other capital will be raised, and no evidence that capital necessary for the construction of the work, if sanctioned by Parliament, will be forthcoming. Hon. Gentlemen who are acquainted with the way in which Companies of this kind are worked, are well aware that the provisions contained in this Bill give no practical and real evidence of the *bonâ fides* of the undertaking. The promoters are persons who can have no interest in constructing the railway; but, on the contrary, their interest is only to obtain power from Parliament to construct it. Having obtained that power, they will then go to one of the Railway Companies, who will become interested, and say—"If you do not purchase these powers, or give us a contract to make this railway, we will go to somebody else, and so expose you to the danger of competition, or to a disagreeable interference with your business." Now, I think it is neither right nor fitting that Parliament should give to speculative promoters powers which can be used, and which, I venture to think, are intended to be used, in that way. In the present Bill there is no substantial Board of Directors provided, whose names would be a guarantee of the good faith of the Company, and of their *bonâ fide* intention to carry out the undertaking. If there were a substantial Company and Board of Directors, there would still be reasons for opposing the granting of powers of this description. But in this case there is nothing of the kind, and the Bill involves a very grave and serious interference with private rights — private rights that are necessary to the existence of my constituents, because, if the scheme is to be carried out as it is now proposed, it would stop up and close various important thoroughfares while the works are being constructed, such thoroughfares being essentially necessary for the traffic of the Metropolis. I, therefore, think that the House ought to hesitate before it consents to grant such powers as those which are now sought. The promoters, by a statement contained in a document which has been circulated this morning, give notice that it is their intention to abandon Railway No. 1, and also what they call a "Temporary Railway."

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners;—

The House went;—and being returned;—

Mr. SPEAKER *reported* the *Royal Assent to* several Bills.

CENTRAL METROPOLITAN RAILWAY BILL *(by Order)*.

Question again proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Dodds.*)

MR. W. H. SMITH: I was remarking, Sir, when I was interrupted, that the promoters of this measure have already informed the House that a portion of the Bill has been withdrawn; and I only wish to make one remark with regard to the portion which has been withdrawn, and that is, that it is now rendered inevitable that every yard of earth taken from the proposed tunnel which is to be constructed from Charing Cross to King's Cross should be carted through the whole of the district, to the undoubted injury of the property situated in that part of the Metropolis, and to the great inconvenience of the residents. It is asserted by the promoters that there would be very little interference with the streets. Hon. Members, however, who are acquainted with the construction of works of this character, in London, must be well aware that it is utterly impossible for the promoters, however good their intentions may be, to construct a double line of railway under the public roads without shutting up the streets and interrupting the traffic of the entire district in which their operations are carried out. In this instance the effect of such a proceeding would be absolutely disastrous to the unfortunate traders, who are most of them small traders carrying on their business in the streets which come within the line of these works. I have been speaking so far on behalf of my own constituents, and I will leave my hon. Friends who represent Finsbury to state their view of the case, so far as the interests of their constituents are concerned. I will only point out that the inhabitants of the district generally are without any remedy whatever, unless they can appear before the Committee; and, I venture to say, it is wrong to compel, at great cost, the attendance of individual traders before a Committee of the House of Commons, in order that they may defend their interests against a measure of this kind, unless it can be shown that the measure is one of absolute and paramount necessity in the interests of the public generally. I think that that cannot be shown in this case; but there is every reason to believe that this is a mere speculative measure, got up solely for private interests, in order to obtain a profit hereafter by forcing some other Railway Company to purchase the right of carrying out the works. That being the case, I trust that the House will not consent to read the Bill a second time; and I beg now to move that the Bill be read a second time on this day six months.

Mr. WHITBREAD seconded the Amendment. He said that his attention had been drawn to the Bill in connection with some of the property through which it was proposed that the railway should pass. If it had been a mere interference with the rights of property he should certainly not have resisted the second reading of the Bill; but on looking into the Bill, it appeared to him that it contained several most unusual provisions which might well make the House pause before consenting to read the measure a second time. In the first place, the object of the Bill was set out, in a circular which had been issued by the promoters, as one that was to bring the Great Northern and Midland Railways into communication with the South-Eastern Railway in the centre of London; but there was not a single word in regard to these other railways in the Bill itself, nor was there any indication in the deposited plans that any arrangement was made for communicating either with the Great Northern or the Midland Railway. The Bill was, therefore, of a most misleading character; and it was hardly just to the House that language of this sort should be used, unless the Bill really proposed to carry out the arrangement indicated. The next point was also of an extraordinary nature. The Bill proposed that the Company established under it should undertake the liabilities and responsibility of a Limited Liability Company, whereas the character of the responsibility and the nature of the agreement were not specified or set out in the Bill. He did not think that Parliament would, for one moment, consent to a Company becoming responsible for any number of secret treaties which might have been entered into by a Limited Liability Company, without the nature of the agreement being fully set out in the Bill. He did not wish to waste the time of the House; but he should like to mention one or two other points in regard to the Bill which were of considerable importance. It was proposed to construct this railway under several most important thoroughfares, and the inconvenience to the public while the streets in question were blocked would be very great; but, besides that, the Bill suspended that portion of the Land Clauses Consolidation Act which provided that when a railway took part of a house for its own purposes, it should be compelled to take the whole. The House would easily understand that, by passing up the centre of the road, the promoters might think they were going to acquire the land almost for nothing, and then if they were to suspend the Land Clauses Consolidation Act, they might imagine that they would not be called upon to pay compensation for the house property they interfered with. That was a very serious point for the consideration of the House, and it was one of the reasons why he opposed the Bill. Then again, with regard to the acquisition of land, there were five separate points within the limits of deviation under the Bill in which the plans showed that it was proposed to widen certain streets; but in the Bill itself there was no provision, so far as he could see, to guarantee that that intention would be carried out. There was no provision whatever to enable the Company to carry out any proposal of the kind; and he held, therefore, that it was not expedient to sanction a *quasi*-promise for widening the streets, when the Bill contained no provision to compel the Company to fulfil such promise. The Bill altogether was of a most misleading character; and, although he was aware of the desirability of making communications between the Railways serving the North and the South of

London, the present Bill had in it such objectionable features that he hoped the House would refuse to read it a second time.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. SHERIDAN said, the Bill authorized the construction of a short and simple line, which he should have supposed would commend itself to everyone. He believed that the proposed line would be made for such a price that it would be the cheapest line that had ever been made in this country, for its length. As he had said, it was a very short and simple line, and he could not understand the opposition which was raised to it. He certainly could not understand the motives which induced the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) to move the rejection of the Bill. The line proposed to start from King's Cross and the Midland Railway, and to go down to Charing Cross. It was not a new scheme, because the House had, on two previous occasions, sanctioned a similar proposal. The first proposal of the kind that was sanctioned was, however, so associated with the construction of new streets, that it was found impossible to carry it out, and it was, therefore, abandoned; but now the streets were arranged for differently. The Board of Works were to make the new streets, and that objection disappeared. The proposed line could be made for a very small sum of money; and the communications which it was proposed to make between other railway property would be very easy and simple. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith) said that the Bill contained no promise that this communication would be effected. He (Mr. Sheridan) could only say that the evidence disclosed this fact—that subways would be made both in regard to the Midland and Great Northern Railways; and it would be for the Midland and Great Northern Railway Companies to complete the communication with this little line, if they were desirous of having communication from the North of the Metropolis to Charing Cross. The line was a little more ambitious at first than it was at the present moment. It was originally intended to carry it from St. Martin's down Parliament Street, so that hon. Members might go from the Houses of Parliament to the North of London, instead of experiencing the delay and inconvenience now occasioned by the necessity of travelling in cabs; but the Government thought that the proposal to carry the line down Parliament Street was one which they could not sanction, and that part of the scheme had consequently been abandoned. The right hon. Gentleman opposite said that persons ought not to be allowed to make these railways as a matter of speculation. He (Mr. Sheridan) had no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman and many other hon. Members of that House had embarked in railway speculations of the same kind, and why the right hon. Gentleman should condemn a proposal to make this particular line, he (Mr. Sheridan) was at a loss to conceive, especially when a proposition of the same kind had been strongly recommended by the Parliamentary Committee which sat in that House in 1861. In that year the London and North-Western Railway Company submitted a scheme for opening up a communication with Charing Cross. The House would, therefore, see that this was no new plan. That scheme was not carried out on account of the difficulties it involved in widening the streets and constructing new ones; but, in 1863, a Select Committee of the House of Commons made a special Report, stating that any future railway communication with the lines now in existence should be made by an independent Company, and should not, as the right hon. Gentleman suggested, proceed from Companies already established. Parliament had not, therefore, authorized the Midland or Great Northern Railway Company to construct a line; but it had specially recommended that the proposal should come from independent persons. He (Mr. Sheridan) thought the Report of the Committee in 1863 was a complete answer, in that respect, to the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman. The fourth recommendation of the Committee of 1863 was that a new communication should be made between these very lines, and that it should be made by an independent Company in the nature of an case, so far as the interests of their constituents are concerned. I will only point out that the inhabitants of the district generally are without any remedy whatever, unless they can appear before the Committee; and, I venture to say, it is wrong to compel, at great cost, the attendance of individual traders before a Committee of the House of Commons, in order that they may defend their interests against a measure of this kind, unless it can be shown that the measure is one of absolute and paramount necessity in the interests of the public generally. 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Therefore, if there was anything at all in the Report of a Committee of that House, and if they were to pay any attention whatever to the recommendations of the hon. Gentlemen whom they appointed upon Committees, surely a Report of that kind was worthy of the attention of the House. The right hon. Member for Westminster said that his constituents—"the butcher, the baker, and the candlestick maker"—did not like the proposal; but he (Mr. Sheridan) should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman how many of his constituents had petitioned against the Bill? He (Mr. Sheridan) believed that none of them had done so, although there had been some Petitions praying to be heard before the Committee, which was certainly the proper tribunal to dispose of the application. Any persons who chose to oppose the Bill in Committee could be represented and defended by counsel, and would be able to call witnesses in support of their case. It was utterly impossible for the House to deal with a question of this importance in an *ad captandum* and hurried manner. He might add that the right hon. Gentleman had not truly and fairly stated the case, because, while none of the constituents of the right hon. Gentleman had petitioned against the Bill, there were 218 of them who had petitioned in its favour. The right hon. Gentleman had not mentioned that fact. He (Mr. Sheridan) thought the right hon. Gentleman ought, at least, to state his case impartially, and if he mentioned the points which told against the Bill, he ought also to mention those which told in its favour. The right hon. Gentleman was supposed to be acting in the interests of the public. This was a line which was submitted to the House in the public interests, and it was not confined entirely to Westminster, but extended to Marylebone and St. Pancras, and other parts of the Metropolis—which, however, supported the Bill. He thought the right hon. Gentleman ought to have told the House fairly that many persons connected with the Metropolis were in favour of the measure. He (Mr. Sheridan) was, therefore, justified in complaining of the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, on the ground that it was misleading to the House, and founded on assertions which were the reverse of truth. ["Oh, oh!"] He begged to repeat that they were the reverse of truth. [*Cries of* "Oh!" *and* "Withdraw!"]

Mr. W. H. SMITH asked if it was within the Rules of Parliamentary debate to say that any statement made by an hon. Member was the reverse of truth?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member (Mr. Sheridan) must be aware that a statement of that kind is altogether irregular.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, he would withdraw the observation, and say that, at all events, the statement of the right hon. Gentleman was inaccurate, and that it was the reverse of correct. The right hon. Gentleman said that there were no Directors, whereas the Chairman of the Company (Lord Bateman) was at that moment in the Lobby assisting the promoters. The right hon. Gentleman had deliberately assured the House that there were no directors; but that the promoters of the Bill were some unknown persons without a Board at all. He repeated, that Lord Bateman, the Chairman, was in the Lobby at that moment, doing the best in his power to support the second reading of the Bill. He (Mr. Sheridan) thought he was justified, under these circumstances, in saying that the right hon. Gentleman's statement was the reverse of correct. Other statements made by the right hon. Gentleman were equally inaccurate. The right hon. Gentleman said that his constituents opposed the Bill; but he did not give the House any evidence in support of his assertion, and there was not a single Petition in opposition. On the contrary, all the Petitions went the other way. The right hon. Gentleman said, further, that the line was not wanted; whereas there was strong evidence that it was wanted. The right hon. Gentleman said that the line should be made by established Railway Companies; but Parliament had already declared that it should not be made by established Railway Companies. The question really was this—the House had determined, in its wisdom, that the questions involved in such Bills should be referred to and reported upon by a Select Committee upstairs. Did the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster mean to suggest that there should now be a departure from that principle, and that the merits of such proposals should in future be discussed in the House itself? Was it in future to be laid down that every proposal for the construction of a new railway was to be considered in the House, and disposed of after 10 minutes' discussion? Was it to be laid down that in future all questions of this nature were to be absolutely prevented from going before a Committee? If the right hon. Gentleman meant that all proposals for the construction of new railways were to be discussed in the House on the second reading, he (Mr. Sheridan) would be prepared to meet the right hon. Gentleman, and, in future, to oppose the second reading of every Bill which contained power to construct a railway. Was that the view of the right hon. Gentleman? If not, what was his view? The House had declared that a Committee was the proper tribunal for the discussion of these matters. Was it a proper tribunal or not? If it was, why interfere to prevent this Bill from being properly considered and properly discussed by a Committee? If they were not to have a Committee upon it, then the sooner it was decided that all these second readings should be opposed, the better; and he, for one, would do what the right hon. Gentleman did now—namely, oppose the second reading of every Railway Bill when it came before the House. Perhaps, in these days of economy, the right hon. Gentleman considered that the best way of economizing the time of the House was to decide these questions on the second reading. But, until such a determination was arrived at by the House, he could only urge the House to allow this Bill, as one dealing with a question of great public interest, to be considered by a Committee in the ordinary way.

Mr. LYON PLAYFAIR: I hope the House, in coming to a decision upon the second reading of this Bill, will separate the merits of the subject-matter of the Bill from any defects in the Bill itself. The subject-matter of the Bill has been frequently before the House. It was before a Select Committee in 1861, and an Act, giving power to construct railway communication between the South and North of London, was passed in 1863-4. Therefore, it has already been determined by the House that communication between the North and South of London is a subject that well deserves its attention, and one that ought to be supported. But the question now is whether the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith) has a fair right to oppose the second reading, and so prevent the Bill being sent to a Committee in the ordinary way? There are some peculiarities in the Bill which deserve attention. It is almost the invariable practice in Bills of this kind to disclose various points. In the first place, it is the practice to disclose the names of the promoters of the Bill, and their names are usually mentioned in the Bill itself. There is no such mention of them in the present Bill. It is also an invariable practice to state what is the capital which is required for carrying out the purposes of the Bill; and this is clearly of great importance, because it ought to be known to those whose interests are affected that the capital provided is sufficient for the purposes contemplated. Clause 20 of this Bill says, that the capital is to be the capital of the syndicate mentioned in the seventh section who have formed the Limited Liability Company. But that capital is not disclosed in the present Bill. It can only be inferred what it is, because the sum of £40,000 is deposited, and, therefore, in all probability, the capital is £800,000. It is not, however, stated in the Bill. These are certain peculiarities in the Bill which prevents me from commending it to the House, and I cannot advise the House, under the circumstances, to send the Bill to a Committee. If the House do not accept the Bill at this moment, that would not prevent the promoters from coming here again in a proper way on a future occasion, and submitting a Bill in the regular form required for these purposes. Personally, I do not intend to support the second reading.

Mr. W. M. TORRENS wished to corroborate what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) had stated. The Bill proposed to carry a railway through a very important part of the Metropolis which was thickly crowded with dwelling-houses. It was quite true that his constituents had not petitioned against the second reading of the Bill, for they were content to leave their rights to be protected in conjunction with those of the general public. Everybody was agreed that it was desirable to have a subway formed from the North to the Centre of London; and if there was any personal feeling in the House upon the matter, the inconvenience felt from the want of such a means of communication would be calculated to induce the House to support any reasonable proposition for making it. But the case now before the House was this. At the time it was proposed to construct this line, in a district very much congested with population, there was a Committee sitting upstairs to inquire into the best means of dealing with the question of overcrowding; and yet it was proposed to construct this line and to stop up the traffic in very important thoroughfares, and to displace a considerable amount of the population without making any provision whatever for the persons displaced, or for the sanitary interests of the people who inhabited the districts affected. In order to reduce the cost it was actually proposed to exempt the project from the condition required by the Land Clauses Act—that when the underground story of a house was taken for the purposes of any public enterprize or improvement, compensation should be given for the whole of the tenement; which was only equitable as regarded private property, and wise as affecting the health of the community. He objected to the Bill entirely upon that ground; and the fact relied on by his hon. Friend (Mr. Sheridan), that the inhabitants of Finsbury and Westminster had not petitioned against the Bill, was one reason why the House, upon public grounds—and upon public grounds alone—should disregard personal motives and interests, and should hesitate very much before it sanctioned a speculative scheme so crude and inconsiderate as that now submitted to them.

Mr. SHERIDAN wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Lyon Playfair), whether the amount required by Parliament—namely, £40,000 had not been deposited by the promoters?

Mr. LYON PLAYFAIR said, he had already mentioned that a deposit to that extent had been made.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Second Reading *put off* for six months.

QUESTIONS.

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IRELAND—ABOLITION OF THE VICE REGAL OFFICE.

Mr. HENEAGE gave Notice that, on an early date, he would call attention to the present system of Administrative Government in Ireland, and move—

> "That, on political, as well as administrative and economical grounds, it is desirable that the Viceregal Court and its surroundings be abolished, and that the office of Secretary of State for Ireland, with a Parliamentary Under Secretary, be legally constituted in lieu thereof."

Mr. R. POWER rose on a point of Order. He had a Bill with the very same object for the 17th May, and he wished to know if the hon. Member was entitled to take this action?

Mr. SPEAKER said, that it was a matter entirely for the determination of the House whether it would have before it the two Bills on the same subject. If the House thought proper, it could so determine.

Mr. T. A. DICKSON said, that the hon. Member for Great Grimsby had just anticipated him by the Notice he had given. He (Mr. T. A. Dickson) had a similar Resolution ready for some weeks past on the same subject as the one the hon. Member had given Notice of, and, therefore, he would cordially support him.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—THE SUB-COMMISSIONERS—MR. HEADECH.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. J. A. Headech, who has been appointed Sub-Commissioner for Antrim and Derry, is the same Mr. J. A. Headech whose Tipperary tenants have recently applied to the Land Court at Borrisokane?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that he was the same gentleman. Eleven cases were listed. In four of the instances he was owner of the lands, and in seven he was only trustee. He (Mr. W. E. Forster) wished to take that opportunity of referring the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) and others to reports that appeared in the Tipperary papers regarding the proceedings before the Sub-Commissioners. On reading them he thought the hon. Member would admit they did not bear out his recent assertion that Mr. Headech was on bad terms with his tenants, who, on the contrary, spoke highly of him, and confirmed the impression that he was a very fit person to be appointed Sub-Commissioner.

PRISONS (ENGLAND) ACT—GAOL DIETARY.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in view of the verdict at a recent inquest at Chester, on a discharged prisoner, that his death had been accelerated by his dietary in gaol, the prison authorieties intend to modify the lowest scale, "No. 1," of local prison dietary, at least in the cases of prisoners working at hard labour at the same time?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I have no reason to believe that the dietary was in fault. That dietary was settled by an order given by my Predecessor, and founded on a careful Report of a Select Committee. In this particular case the misfortune arose from an error and neglect on the part of the medical officer, and the matter is being made the subject of a searching and careful inquiry.

LAW AND POLICE—CRIMES OF VIOLENCE.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If, considering the great number of burglaries, the perpetrators of which escape arrest, and of violent assaults by gangs of roughs and armed criminals, especially in the Metropolis and its suburbs, the Government will take measures to materially increase the efficiency of the police and to enforce the Law against the carrying of arms by unauthorised persons?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I cannot accept the view taken by the hon. Member that the Metropolitan Police are insufficient for the preservation of order and the protection of life and property. We all know that crime will exist, and that the police may from time to time make errors; and that there may be deficiencies may also be admitted. I am, however, bound to say that I believe there is no great town in the world in which order is better preserved or life and property better secured than in London, with the least amount of restraint on the liberty of the subject. I am not aware that there is a failure to enforce the law against the carrying of arms by unauthorized persons. I do not, however, know that I have any power to prevent the carrying of arms, except under the Licensing Act.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—PRISONERS DETAINED UNDER THE ACT—MR. JOHN M'CARTHY AND OTHERS.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that Mr. John McNamara has applied for his release on parole from Limerick Prison for the purpose of collecting his debts without getting any reply; and, whether three other men arrested from the same district (Tulla, county Clare) and on a similar charge have been released unconditionally?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that Mr. John M'Namara had already been released by order of the Executive.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been lately called to the case of Mr. John M'Carthy, of Longford County, detained until recently as a suspect in Armagh Gaol, and now removed to Kilmainham; whether Mr. M'Carthy is now in bad health, and under medical care; and, whether, under these circumstances, he will advise the release of Mr. M'Carthy from prison?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that on the 26th instant the medical officer at Kilmainham had examined Mr. John M'Carthy, and certified that although he was suffering from irregular action of the heart, his life was not in danger, nor was it likely to become so by further imprisonment.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can see his way to order the rules respecting visits to suspects to be reasonably modified in the case of wives visiting their husbands; whether it is necessary for the safe custody of such prisoners that visits from their wives should take place in the ordinary visiting cell in which the prisoner and his visitor are locked in separate cages some feet apart; and, whether the time might not safely be extended beyond fifteen minutes?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I am obliged to say that it is a fact, Sir, that on several occasions persons detained under the Protection Act have taken advantage of visits to send out of the gaols what we consider improper communications to the Press and otherwise. Therefore, we have been obliged to enforce much more strictness than we otherwise would have wished. The duration of a visit will always be extended on proper representations being made to the Governor.

Mr. REDMOND: The right hon. Gentleman has scarcely answered my Question, which was with reference to the visits of wives to their husbands.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I should be very sorry in any way to interfere with communications between wives and their husbands who are in prison under this Act; but we are obliged to carry out the prison rules.

Mr. HEALY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he could not put parties on their parole not to pass out anything improperly?

[No reply.]

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. C. J. O'Sullivan, Poor Law Guardian of Malestreet, county Cork, was arrested on the 17th of December last, under the Coercion Act, on a charge of intimidation, and continues still in custody on suspicion of that offence; whether, in the month of August preceding his arrest, Mr. O'Sullivan was asked by the local sub-inspector of constabulary if he had paid his rent, and whether again, at 10.30 p.m. on the night of 26th November, the same official called him up out of bed and asked him the same question; whether his arrest, three weeks after the second of these visits, had any connection with the inquiries as to his rent made by the sub-inspector; whether, on the 20th of February last, Mr. O'Sullivan applied for a parole of a week or ten days to attend an arbitration between his landlord and himself as to the acreage and boundary of his farm (involving a difference of £210), whether the ground of the application was verified by a letter inclosed from the Rev. A. O'Reordan, C.C. of Mr. O'Sullivan's parish, and whether this, and a second application, further verified and supported by the Rev. Mr. O'Reordan, were refused, although Mr. O'Reordan testified that Mr. O'Sullivan's presence was "absolutely indispensable for the settlement of his case;" whether Mr. O'Sullivan's health, which was good at the time of his arrest, had since so far declined, through prison life, and been injured by ill-treatment on the part of the prison doctor at Clonmel, that he is affected with hip disease, and cannot walk without the help of a stick; and, whether the Executive mean to keep Mr. O'Sullivan in custody any longer?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I have not heard that; but I know he was suffering from sciatica, and has been transferred from Clonmel to Kilmainham for change of air. I will make further inquiry as to the state of his health. Mr. O'Sullivan was arrested on the 17th December last on the charge of being suspected of having incited persons not to pay rent. The Sub-Inspector of Constabulary informs me he has no recollection of having ever asked Mr. O'Sullivan if he had paid his rent, the fact being notorious throughout the district that he had not paid it. It was stated that he had not paid any for three years. The visit to Mr. O'Sullivan's house on the night of the 26th November had no connection with the subject of rent, and Mr. O'Sullivan's arrest had no connection with his not having paid his rent. He had applied on the 20th of February last for a parole of a week or 10 days to attend an arbitration between his landlord and himself regarding his farm. Inquiry was made on the subject, and it was found on application to the landlord that no arbitration was taken. Subsequently an inquiry was received from a priest—Rev. A. O'Reardon—and the Sub-Inspector was directed to see the rev. gentleman on the subject, and also the landlord. The Sub-Inspector arranged to see the Rev. Mr. O'Reardon on the 29th February; but the rev. gentleman was not able to come forward to keep his appointment. The Sub-Inspector wrote arranging for an interview later on, but received no reply from the rev. gentleman.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that Mr, John Kavanagh, now detained in Kilmainham Prison under the Coercion Act, has been nearly a year in custody, and that two other persons arrested in the same district, on the same day and upon the same charge, were liberated nearly seven months ago; whether any grave cause existed for this disparity of treatment; and, whether the Executive will now order the release of Mr. Kavanagh?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, the arrest in this case was made on May 11, 1881, on reasonable suspicion of shooting at with intent to murder, and he could not order Mr. Kavanagh's release at present without serious danger.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a period of six months' detention in the case of Messrs. Gregory and Murphy, and John Byrne of Wexford, confined in Kilmainham Gaol, expired on the 22nd instant; whether Mr. O'Dempsey, who was arrested on the same charge, from the same neighbourhood, has since been released; and, whether he can advise the release of the other two prisoners?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, these cases had been considered, and he would order the release of both these persons.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Bernard McHugh, arrested under the Coercion Act fourteen months ago on suspicion of intimidating certain persons to compel to give up their farms, is still confined in Kilmainham Gaol; whether he is aware that it is alleged on the prisoner's behalf that there was no such intimidation in his neighbourhood at the time, and that his arrest is attributable to police persecution; whether Mr. McHugh is the same person who was arrested and kept in solitary confinement for a year and a half on the information of an informer named Clarke, whose evidence was discredited by the jury who acquitted McHugh; whether the fact of the first charge having been made against him has anything to do with his continued incarceration; and, if he will state how many prisoners are now confined under the Coercion Act for as long a time as Mr. McHugh?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, Mr. M'Hugh was arrested on the 10th March. He was not in Kilmainham now, but in another prison. He was not aware of the allegation mentioned in the second paragraph of the Question; but he had certainly seen a letter of Mr. M'Hugh's, written from Kilmainham, advising in strong terms the non-payment of rent. M'Hugh was formerly arrested in connection with the murder of Mr. Young, the magistrate; but, being acquitted, that had nothing to do with his present incarceration. Two other persons also arrested on the 10th March in the same locality were still in prison, and he could not release him.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that Miss O'Connor, Miss M'Cormack, Miss Reynolds, Miss Kirk, Mrs. Moore, Father Feehan, Captain Dugmore, Mr. Abraham, and others, detained under the statute of Edward the Third, are kept in solitary confinement for twenty-two hours out of the twenty-four, and are deprived of the rights of association and other privileges allowed to suspects; and, whether he will take steps, in the case of prisoners detained in future under the law of Edward the Third, to put them on the same footing as prisoners arrested under the Coercion Act; and, if he cannot do this, whether he will order their discharge and detain them under the Coercion Act for the period of their sentences?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, the prisoners named must be dealt with according to the prison rules applying to persons who have been committed in default of finding bail. That is a matter over which the Chief Secretary has no control. ["Oh, oh!"] Parliament framed the rules, and I see no reason for altering them. I can only state in addition, that on giving bail those prisoners will all be released.

Mr. HEALY: Are we to understand it is a fact that these prisoners—ladies, a priest, and Captain Dugmore—are kept 22 hours in solitary confinement out of every 24, because they refused to give bail under this obsolete Statute?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: There are certain rules to be complied with which will require to be altered by the sanction of Parliament if they are to be changed. They were adopted by this House after considerable discussion, and I cannot alter them. The gentlemen and ladies in whom the hon. Member is interested can at once obtain their release by producing bail.

Mr. HEALY: I beg to give Notice that I shall move, on an early day, that in the opinion of this House it is not contemplated that 22 hours' solitary confinement should be inflicted out of every 24.

Mr. O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman on this subject, If he is aware that these ladies and gentlemen who are kept in prison in default of finding bail only refuse because they considered that finding bail would be an admission of their guilt, they denying that they had committed any offence? ["Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has not put a Question.

Mr. O'DONNELL: I assure you that it was an exact Question.

[No reply.]

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — DEATH IN NAAS WORKHOUSE.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he caused inquiry to be made relative to the death of William Rooney in Naas Workhouse, as he promised; and, if so, what was the result?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had inquired into the matter by writing to the Local Government Board, and, from their answer, he did not consider that any blame was to be attached to the relieving officer. An Inspector of the Local Government Board had examined the case narrowly, and his and the other evidence was such as to induce the Coronor who presided at the inquest, which lasted two days, to sum up as follows:—

> "I suppose you will find a verdict in accordance with the medical evidence, and that you will agree with me that no blame is to be attached to the relieving officer."

STATE OF IRELAND—COUNTY WICKLOW.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state the total number of persons arrested in the county Wicklow and imprisoned under the Coercion Act; whether all the suspects belonging to the county Wicklow but two (Hely and Dowling) have been released; whether the county has been almost entirely free from crime and outrage for the last two years, and is so still; and, whether he will order the release of these men?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, there were five. Three of these have been released. Inquiry is now being made into Dowling's case. Hely's case was considered on the 18th instant, and I cannot order his release. It is true the number of crimes committed in the county has not been many; but notices have been extensively posted recommending and encouraging "Boycotting."

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES—THE QUINQUENNIAL RETURNS—REPORT OF THE REGISTRAR.

Mr. W. H. JAMES asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If his attention has been called to the statement in the Report of the Registrar of Friendly Societies, in which he states, in reference to the quinquennial Returns of sickness and mortality, that,

> "If the present Returns supply adequate data, the Chief Registrar is advised by the Actuary to the office that the purpose for which the quinquennial Returns of sickness and mortality were devised, viz. the collection of statistics on which to base Tables for the use of Friendly Societies, will have been, in his judgment, fulfilled; that the obligation to furnish this information has been a heavy burden on Societies, the continuance of which can only be justified by its necessity;"

and, how soon the Registrar will be able to give the information with respect to these data mentioned in his Report, and what has been the approximate public cost involved in their preparation?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Sir, I learn that it will not be possible to say whether the data supplied by the Returns of 1880 are or are not sufficient until they have been tabulated, which work will, I believe, occupy some time. When that has been done, the Chief Registrar proposes to report to the Treasury on the subject. As regards the cost, it is estimated that the collection of the data supplied by the present Return has cost the public about £50 up to the present, paid from the Vote for the Office. I cannot say how much it has cost the Societies.

FISHERIES—TRAWLING—LEGISLATION.

Mr. SYKES asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the Government propose during the present Session to introduce a Bill to regulate every kind of close in shore sea trawling, and to prevent undersized fish being exhibited for sale?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, the Government had no idea of legislating on the subject referred to during the present Session.

POST OFFICE ANNUITIES—LEGISLATION.

Mr. H. G. ALLEN asked the Postmaster General, Whether he will introduce, during the present Session, a Bill to facilitate the grant of small annuities and life policies, such as the Select Committee in their Report recommended should be passed without delay?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, in reply to my hon. Friend, I have to state that, immediately the Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the subject of Post Office Annuities and Insurance was laid on the Table, instructions were given to prepare a Bill embodying the recommendations of the Committee. This Bill is nearly ready, and I hope to introduce it in the course of a few days.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIAN ADVANCE.

Sir EARDLEY WILMOT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If it is true, as reported in a Bombay paper of 7th April, and copied into the "Homeward Mail" of 25th April, that a Russian force has left Samarcand, and was 50 miles on the high road to Balkh at the date of the report; and, whether the Russian Frontier is being pushed forward to Saracks, in the South of the Turkoman Country, a distance of only 150 miles from Herat?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, we have no information as to any Russian march southwards from Samarcand; but the Russian Frontier near Shahr-i-Sabz is itself some 30 or 40 miles on the road to Balkh, so that the hon. Baronet's Question is not very clear, because for 30 or 40 miles south they would be within Russian territory. As to Sarakhs, I have nothing to add to the reply which I made on the 3rd of March.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE GALWAY SUB-COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that while Mr. Rice, a tenant farmer, was removed from his district in county Cork, where he acted as Sub-Commissioner, Mr. J. J. O'Shaughnessy, a landlord, of Ballinasloe, is acting in the district with which he is connected, in county Galway, and in the very parish where he attends service; and, whether Messrs. Reeves and O'Keefe, previously associated with Mr. Rice, who also hold land in Cork, still adjudicate in that county; and, if so, why Mr. Rice was removed to Mayo?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, the hon. Member must have put the Question under a misapprehension of the facts.

Mr. CALLAN asked whether Mr. Rice was not connected with the county Roscommon?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he might be. He was not prepared to answer that.

Mr. HEALY: I am much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for his answer; but would he have any objection to state the districts in which all the Sub-Commissioners operate? We have no means of ascertaining except from the Dublin newspapers.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: The hon. Member will find them advertised in *The Gazette.*

Mr. HEALY: No person ever sees *The Gazette.*

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, the Sub-Commissioners were changed from time to time. A Return would be laid on the Table.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—EVICTED LABOURERS AT RHODE, KING'S COUNTY.

Mr. MOLLOY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it be true that on Monday the 24th instant at Rhode, in the King's County, the erection of huts to shelter poor labourers evicted by David Kerr was prevented by force under the orders of the resident magistrate; if it be true that these evicted labourers were thus left without any shelter, and without any means of subsistence, and under what law or by what authority the resident magistrate acted; and if he will take all necessary steps to prevent all further opposition to the erection of these huts, and against a repetition of such action; whether on the above occasion a most respectable farmer named O'Brien was taken into custody by order of the resident magistrate, and then and there sentenced to a fortnight's imprisonment with hard labour for questioning the right of the magistrate to prevent the erection of the above huts; and, if he will order his immediate release?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had only that morning seen the report that the erection of huts to shelter poor labourers evicted in King's County had been prevented by force, by order of the Resident Magistrate. He would make inquiries, and answer the hon. Gentleman's Question in the course of a few days.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MAJOR TRAILL, R.M.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the resident magistrate at Claremorris is the Captain, now honorary Major, Robert Gayer Traill, of the 1st Battalion, 19th Foot, whose conduct was the subject of a Court of Inquiry when that Battalion was last at Sheffield; whether the General Commanding the Brigade at Aldershot was directed by the Field Marshal Commanding in Chief to administer a rebuke to Captain Traill in the presence of his Staff and the whole of the officers of his Battalion; whether the Colonel Commanding the Battalion requested to be relieved of Captain Traill's services; and, whether it was in consequence of the special quarterly report ordered to be made on Captain Traill's conduct that that officer was informed that the Commander in Chief would not promote him to his Majority, and Captain Traill consequently retired when he was senior Captain of his regiment?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that Major Traill, whose appointment to a resident magistracy in Ireland was dated the 20th of March, 1880, was the same officer who had served in the 1st Battalion of the 19th Foot; but his conduct in the Army had never been the subject of a regimental Court of Inquiry. It was, however, the fact that Major (then Captain) Traill had been reprimanded in the presence of his brother officers, as stated in the second paragraph of the hon. Member's Question, and that his commanding officer had, in consequence, represented the desirability of his removal from the battalion. Captain Traill had not been refused promotion to his majority, the fact being that no majority was vacant at the period mentioned in the Question, and his retirement from the Army was voluntary; and he received a pension, with the honorary rank of major, on being appointed Resident Magistrate.

Mr. O'DONNELL: Since these facts have come to the right hon. Gentleman's knowledge, does he intend to retain the services of this reprimanded officer?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, this officer was appointed by the late Government, and I have no doubt they had all those matters under consideration. I think the House will agree with me that when the gentleman has been some time appointed it would be an act of great harshness, if not of injustice, to re-open the matter and dismiss him.

PRIVATE HYBRID BILLS—THE FORTH BRIDGE RAILWAY BILL.

Mr. ANDERSON asked the President of the Board of Trade, If it be not the fact that, in the case of the hybrid Committee on the Tay Bridge, the Board of Trade asked and got power to appear by Counsel, Agents, and Witnesses, in order that the public interest, irrespective of opposing Petitioners, might be protected; and, whether he intends to take the same step in the case of the Forth Bridge; and, if not, in what way the safety of the public, and of the navigation of vessels seeking shelter at St. Margaret's Hope, are to be watched over?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, it is a fact that, in the case of the Hybrid Committee on the Tay Bridge, the Board of Trade asked for and obtained the power of appearing by counsel, agents, and witnesses, before the Committee, in order that the public interests, irrespective of opposing Petitioners, might be protected. But in the present case of the Forth Bridge, in so far as the proposed structure of the Bridge is concerned, the Board of Trade do not think it necessary to appear before the Committee, as the inspecting officers of the Board of Trade were in frequent communication with the engineer intrusted with the construction of the Bridge, and they made certain stipulations for the safety of the public, which were at once accepted. Neither do the Board of Trade think it necessary to appear before the Committee with regard to the question of the navigation of vessels going to the anchorage above the site of the Bridge. In the spans of this Bridge, of which there are two, there will be 500 feet of 150 feet of headway, and 930 feet of 125 feet of headway at high water, and at low water 850 feet of 150 feet of headway, and 1,100 feet of 125 feet of headway. Under these circumstances, the proposal has been well considered by the nautical advisers of the Board of Trade; and they see no objection, in the interests of the public, to the Bridge as it is now designed.

CARRIAGE ROADS (METROPOLIS).

Sir EARDLEY WILMOT asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been drawn to the great superiority manifested in the construction of the macadamized roadway on the Thames Embankment, which is under the management and control of the Metropolitan Board of Works, to the construction of all other macadamized streets and roads in the Metropolis; and, whether he would consider whether it would be for the public advantage, both as to construction and repairs, if all Metropolitan highways were placed under the management and control of the Metropolitan Board of Works?

Mr. DODSON, in reply, said, he believed that many of the macadamized roads in the Metropolis were in a far less satisfactory condition than was desirable; but he had no means to determine, by a comparative examination of them all, which was the best. The second part of the hon. Baronet's Question involved large questions of municipal government, which could not be entertained without much consideration.

ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACTS—THE CHARITY COMMISSION.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether it is his intention to introduce a Bill for the purpose of renewing or modifying the powers now exercised by the Charity Commissioners under the Endowed Schools Act of 1869, and of subsequent Acts, which will expire at the close of the present year?

Mr. MUNDELLA, in reply, said, that it would be necessary, in consequence of the expiry that year of the Endowed Schools Commission, to introduce a measure this Session, which was at this moment under the consideration of the Government.

THE LADIES' LAND LEAGUE—IMPRISONMENT OF MISS KIRK.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, a few days since, Miss Anne Kirk, of Dublin, a lady who had gone to Tulla, County Clare, for the purpose of providing shelter and food for the families of evicted tenants, was arrested by order of Mr. Clifford Lloyd, R.M. and sentenced by him to three months' imprisonment, which she is now enduring in Limerick Gaol; whether the case was heard in private; and, if so, why, and upon what charge, and upon what evidence, the lady was convicted; whether he has observed the following passages in the published Letter of the 22nd instant, from the Rev. Michael O'Donovan, C.C. of Tulla, to the Member for Sligo:—

> "When the Chief Secretary visited the priests here, I asked him if it were legal for me to assist the lady (Miss Kirk), who had just arrived from Dublin for the sole purpose of erecting huts for the evicted tenants, and giving them temporary relief. Here are Mr. Forster's words: 'It is perfectly legal, and nothing could be more legal, than for man to assist man; and, so long as the lady confined herself to these duties, she should not be molested.' I then promised the Chief Secretary that I would act as a special policeman, and see that this lady did not in any way incite the people to pay no rent. I now assert that this lady did not, either directly or indirectly, interfere in anything outside what Mr. Forster had declared to be 'perfectly legal,' and that she always declined to answer any question outside the building of the huts and the distribution of a little charity. Miss Kirk is now in Limerick Gaol for acting 'legally.' .... Intimidation and outrage in this district have ceased. By Miss Kirk and myself telling these people that, if any outrage or intimidation took place, we would immediately break off all connection with them, we brought about a condition which the vast police force, and military force too, had failed to effect;"

and, whether, in view of this testimony, he will either order the release of Miss Kirk, or direct an independent and public inquiry to be held into the cause of her detention?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, I think it is very likely that the words quoted are substantially and literally correct, and I am quite prepared to abide by them at this time. They were these—that it was not illegal for man to assist man; and then I proceeded to say, what may have been somewhat of a bull, that so long as the lady confined herself to these duties she would not be arrested. I abide by that. This lady has been bound over to good behaviour.

Mr. SEXTON: No, no; not bound over—imprisoned.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: She was bound over, and on refusing to give bail was sent to prison.

Mr. SEXTON: No, no; not bound over.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: That was a matter the magistrate did on his own responsibility, believing there was sufficient reason to show that she was not engaged in a work of charity, but in intimidation. ["Oh, oh!"] There has been much intimidation of that kind, and I want the House and hon. Members to understand that my position is very different with regard to action taken under the ordinary law from what it is under the Protection Act. It devolves upon the Lord Lieutenant—upon either or both of us—to decide who shall be arrested or imprisoned under the Protection Act. When action is taken by a magistrate, it is done on his own responsibility; and it would be a most serious matter to suppose that I, as representing the Executive, have power to interfere with the action of the magistrates. I may inform hon. Members that Mr. Lloyd tells me—and I have no reason to doubt him—that he has sufficient warrant for what he did; but the hon. Member (Mr. Sexton) is perfectly well aware that, at the instance of the aggrieved persons, his action can be reviewed by the Court of Queen's Bench, as the acts of other magistrates have been reviewed by superior Judges who are not members of the Executive.

STATE OF IRELAND—THE MAGISTRACY—MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that Mr. Wilfred Lloyd, R.M. Miltown Malbay, county Clare (brother to Mr. Clifford Lloyd, R.M.) recently refused to accept bails in a case before him on the ground that the parties tendering bail had not paid their rents (said rents being more than double the Government valuation of the holdings); whether Mr. Clifford Lloyd, R.M. lately telegraphed to the constable in charge of the police station at Carregaholt, county Clare, ordering him to send in the names of eight or ten of the principal tenants on the property of Major McDonnell, so that he might have them arrested if they did not pay their rents; whether the brothers Lloyd are authorized by the Executive to make the non-payment of rent a reason for refusing bail, or for arrest and imprisonment; and, if they are not so authorized, what notice will be taken of their conduct; and, whether Mr. Clifford Lloyd, or any other magistrate, is supplied with signed blank warrants under the Coercion Act, to be filled up at his pleasure?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that Mr. Clifford Lloyd informed him that, on several occasions, he had accepted bail from persons who had not paid their rent. He asked the question when he was inquiring as to their solvency; but the fact that they had not paid their rents would not of itself prevent him accepting the person's bail. As for the second paragraph of the Question, Mr. Clifford Lloyd had sent no such telegram. With regard to the third part of the Question, the Chief Secretary had no power to interfere with the judicial discretion of the magistrates. With regard to the last part of the Question, he wished to state emphatically that no more false notion could possibly prevail than the idea that magistrates were supplied with signed blank warrants under the Coercion Act. No such warrants had ever been issued, either by the Lord Lieutenant or by himself, without full examination.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that, on Monday last, Mr. William Abraham, of Limerick, Chairman of the Limerick Board of Guardians, was arrested by order of Mr. Clifford Lloyd, R.M., and sentenced by that magistrate to six months' imprisonment on a charge of having held or attended a Land League meeting at Tulla; whether the fact is that Mr. Abraham was requested by a friend of his, Mrs. Burke, a Dublin lady, who desired to ascertain the condition of the evicted tenants at Tulla, to accompany her to that place, as she did not know anyone there; whether the "meeting" charged against Mr. Abraham by Mr. Clifford Lloyd was simply a visit paid by Mrs. Burke, accompanied by Mr. Abraham, to two of the parish clergy in the sacristy of the Church; and, whether the Government will order the release of Mr. Abraham, or permit the sentence inflicted to run its course?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, Mr. Abraham was ordered to enter into security for his good behaviour, and refused to do so. The Government would not interfere with the discretion exercised by magistrates. He had no reason to think that the facts were as stated in the second and third paragraphs of the Question. The object of the meeting was, he believed, to carry out the "no rent" organization.

MR. SEXTON asked if the right hon. Gentleman was aware that Mr. Lloyd was now holding Star Chamber Courts, sitting in private, and even refusing all applications for adjournment?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I am not aware of it. Perhaps the hon. Member will ask a definite Question in regard to a particular case.

MR. O'SHEA asked whether it was not the fact that the district of Tulla was now in a better condition than it was when Mr. Clifford Lloyd went there?

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, that was the case; and he believed it was mainly owing to the action of Mr. Lloyd.

MR. HEALY gave Notice that he would on Monday ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether several murders had not been committed in Mr. Lloyd's district since he had taken charge of it, while there was no murder in the corresponding period before he went there; also, whether outrages generally had not increased in that district since his appointment?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I hope the hon. Member will put that Question in detail, and I hope the House will not form any judgment in the meantime on this Question.

LAW AND POLICE—THE RIOTS AT CAMBORNE, CORNWALL.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, What steps he has taken, if any, with reference to the conduct of the magistrates and police during the rioting at Camborne?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, he must say, what he had often said in the House, that he was not responsible for, nor had he any authority over, the magistrates or the police. When magistrates asked his advice he gave it as well as he could. By the Constitution of this country, those who were in the Commission of the Peace had control over the police, and they were not under the orders or direction of the Executive Government. He thought that ought to be clearly understood, because he saw Questions founded on the notion that the magistrates and the police throughout the country were subordinate to, and under the direction of, the Secretary of State. That was not so. The Secretary of State was ever willing, when an occasion arose, to give them such advice as he could; but they acted upon their own responsibility, and upon their own responsibility only.

MR. O'DONNELL said, advice did not seem to have been given. ["Oh!"] He would conclude with a Motion——

MR. SPEAKER said, the hon. Member for Dungarvan must be aware that he could not enter upon a debate on this matter.

MR. O'DONNELL then gave Notice that he would ask a further Question on the subject on Monday, and especially he would ask the Home Secretary, whether it had not been brought to his notice that the Irish population in Camborne were left entirely without the protection of the law through the misconduct of the magistrates and the police of that district?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he thought he could answer that at once. He did not believe, from such information as he had, that that was the case. There had been disgraceful riots, which there was considerable difficulty in quelling; but the information he had was that the magistrates and police had made every effort to put down these riots; that at present they had succeeded, and that the population of all nationalities was now protected.

MR. O'DONNELL said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman had not sufficiently answered the Question, and he would repeat it on Monday.

LANDLORD AND TENANT (SCOTLAND)—EVICTIONS IN THE ISLAND OF SKYE.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been called to the state of feeling existing amongst the Crofters in the Island of Skye; and, if he proposes to ascertain, by the appointment of a Commission, or by any other means, the condition and grievances of the Crofters in that Island, the other Western Islands, and the Orkney and Shetland groups?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, this is a Question of a serious nature, and I do not feel that I could answer it advantageously in the form of a reply to a Question. I think that a Notice has been given upon the subject, in which it will be raised in more convenient form; and the Government will, before that Notice comes on, carefully consider the whole matter, and give Parliament the view we take.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked whether there was a Notice on the Paper on the subject?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Yes.

Subsequently—

Mr. DICK-PEDDIE asked the Prime Minister, Whether, considering the importance of the question, and the state of matters in Skye, and considering the very great difficulty which private Members had for bringing matters under debate, the Government would afford any facilities for bringing on that question?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, if it were in my power to add to the manufactures of this country, I would, in the first place, add the manufacture of time. Unfortunately, it is not in my power. While I fully admit, and much regret, the difficulty of private Members, yet I do not think any impartial man will say the difficulties of the Government are less with respect to time than those of private Members. I heartily wish I could give any such assistance; but it is not in my power.

Mr. MACFARLANE said, with reference to the Prime Minister's answer, that the Motion on the subject which stood on the Paper had no day fixed for its discussion. As the Government professed to attach so much importance to the question, might he ask if it were necessary for them to wait until the question had been discussed in the House before taking steps to deal with it?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am not prepared to enter upon the question at the present moment.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—THE CARRIAGE DUTIES.

Sir BALDWYN LEIGHTON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he can give some particulars as to Establishment Charges for Post Office Department stated in Budget speech at £200,000, and whether that is for new works and buildings, or for repairs and maintenance; if he can state generally in what form the relief for roads, estimated at £250,000, would be proposed to be paid; whether it would be collected and dispensed locally or generally; and, whether the new Tax would affect the carts and carriages of brewers, bakers, and builders beyond the six shillings increase on two-wheeled vehicles?

Mr. SCHREIBER asked, From what source the auxiliary letter carriers of the United Kingdom were to derive their long-expected increase of pay?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Gladstone): The Question put by the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down (Mr. Schreiber) ought to be addressed to the Postmaster General. In answer to the first Question, I have to say that, in stating the increase in the Postal Service for the present year, I was comparing the Estimates for the present year with the Exchequer issues of last year; and that is, in point of fact, the only mode in which, at the time the Financial Statement is made, a comparison can be instituted. The Exchequer issues are not identical with the private accounts; but the comparison with the private account cannot be given for some little time to come. With regard to the other questions associated with this, I could not enter at present upon a discussion of the mode in which it is proposed to grant relief for high roads. Indeed, I am not yet in prospective possession of the funds absolutely necessary for the purpose; but that will be done on the present occasion by the President of the Local Government Board. With regard to the carts and carriages of brewers, bakers, and builders, there is to be no charge with respect to them. There is no change intended, I may say, in the law of exemption. We do not think that a measure of this kind, which is necessarily impartial, and in some respects judicial, affords an appropriate opportunity for raising the various and rather difficult questions that are connected with the exemption of particular vehicles from taxes.

SIR BALDWYN LEIGHTON asked in what form it was proposed to levy the tax?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GLADSTONE) said, that would connect itself with the Vote, which he could not possibly propose until he had Ways and Means in prospect by which the charge could be made.

MR. PENNINGTON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, by the proposal to increase the Duties on private carriages, it is intended to include carriages let on hire to private persons for short times or special purposes, or at funerals or weddings?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GLADSTONE), in reply, said, he thought he had already answered the Question. He did not propose, nor did he think it possible, to make a general law of exemption on this occasion.

MR. BIRKBECK asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, taking into consideration that tenant farmers are the largest contributors towards the cost of maintaining roads, he will exempt them, under his Budget proposals, from increased taxation for vehicles?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GLADSTONE), in reply, said, he had no intention of proposing any new exemption on behalf of tenant farmers.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—ARREARS.

MR. BIGGAR asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government are prepared, pending the introduction of their measure regarding arrears, to discourage evictions in Ireland by withdrawing all support to assist landlords in executing eviction decrees?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, without entering into the very important subject of evictions in Ireland, to which the hon. Gentleman refers, I must frankly own that I think that the measure which he suggests and indicates, that the Government shall discourage evictions by withdrawing support to assist landlords in them, is a matter beyond the discretion of the Executive Government. It is our public duty to assist the execution of the law, not always taking into view our own opinion of the reasonableness of what may be intended, and we have no title to adopt the measure which the hon. Member suggests.

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH.

MR. FIRTH asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, having regard to the important constitutional issues involved, he will afford facilities for the discussion of a Motion on behalf of the electors of Northampton, that they be heard at the Bar of the House in accordance with the prayer of their Petition recently presented to the House?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, he could not say that he thought the present state of the Business of the House left it in the power of the Government, with a due regard to the calls of other subjects which were immediately coming before the House, to facilitate the discussion of a Motion with regard to the representation of Northampton.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT BILL—LOCAL OPTION.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, with reference to the announcement in his Budget speech that the County Government Bill will not be proceeded with at present, Whether the Government contemplate the introduction of any other legislation during the present Session for giving effect to the Resolution which this House has already twice passed in favour of giving localities control over the Liquor Traffic "by some efficient measure of Local Option?"

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, it was certainly quite true that they had contemplated action on the subject of County Boards, which would indirectly, but materially, bear upon the question in which his hon. Friend was greatly interested—namely, Local Option; but, being compelled reluctantly to abandon the County Boards Bill for the present year, he did not believe the Government had any means of making any proposal during the present Session on the subject of Local Option.

GENERAL PRISONS (IRELAND) ACT—CONVEYANCE OF PRISONERS.

MR. O'CONNOR POWER asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that, under the Prisons Act, 1877, English counties are relieved from the charge for the conveyance of certain prisoners, whereas, under the General Prisons (Ireland) Act, Irish counties are still liable for a similar charge; and, if so, whether the Government will introduce a Bill to establish equality in the Law, in respect of this charge, between England and Ireland?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I thought that I had stated, in the Financial Statement of the year, that the heavy charge which has now come upon the Treasury for the conveyance of prisoners had come upon the Treasury in consequence of a sheer error, and contrary to the intention, not only of the late Government, but contrary to the intention of Parliament. I cannot, therefore, look upon that charge, with which we are now dealing for the most part retrospectively, as establishing a principle from which arguments can be drawn for the extension of the area to other parts of the United Kingdom. The Government have not yet had an opportunity of considering the course which it will be their duty to take in relation to the state of things which exists under the English Prisons Act in that particular.

In reply to a further Question by the hon. Member,

Mr. GLADSTONE said: I am quite prepared to say that I have done nothing, and said nothing, and arrived at no conclusion in my own mind, favourable to the creation of any new inequality between England and Ireland in regard to Public Expenditure.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — MEMBERS OF THIS HOUSE DETAINED UNDER THE ACT.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN: I beg to ask the Prime Minister, in view of recent circumstances and recent declarations of the Government, Whether he does not think the time has come when he will release the three honourable Members of this House who have been in jail in Ireland for several months?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I think the House will feel, and I believe the hon. Member himself will feel, that it will be hardly possible for me to enter upon any statement, either of our opinions or of our intentions with regard to a matter of so much importance, and a matter so intimately connected with other circumstances in Ireland, perhaps still more important, in reply to an inquiry. We can only do it, I think, upon an occasion when there should be a perfect liberty of free statement and argument upon what we might say, or what we might not say—that is to say, in a regular debate. We have an opportunity of that kind in immediate prospect. I cannot at present enter upon the subject; but on Tuesday next my right hon. Friend near me (Mr. W. E. Forster) will be prepared to enter upon it fully.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—TUESDAY SITTINGS.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked the Prime Minister when it was intended to take the second reading of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill?

Mr. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, that he hoped the second reading would be taken early next week. It would not, however, be taken on Monday or Tuesday.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER asked, whether there would be a Morning Sitting on Tuesday next?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that he thought the announcement that was made by his noble Friend (the Marquess of Hartington) in his absence had been sufficiently explicit—namely, that it was the intention of the Government to ask for consecutive Morning Sittings on Tuesdays.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, I think it would be convenient if the House were better informed as to what is to happen on Tuesdays. The right hon. Gentleman has, in rather a remarkable manner, abstained from entering into a subject of high importance, the policy of the Government in regard to the maintenance of law and order in Ireland, and abstained even from answering a Question connected with it, because, as I understand, there will be an opportunity afforded on Tuesday for a full debate on that subject. I am not quite sure that I am aware of what opportunity the right hon. Gentleman refers to, unless it be the Notice of Motion given by my right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Wigton Burghs (Sir John Hay). If there is to be an important statement made on the part of the Government—and its importance can hardly be exaggerated—on the occasion of such a Motion, I wish to know whether we are to understand that it is to be put off till 9 o'clock, and, if so, what Business it is proposed to take at the Morning Sitting?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, we propose to take the question of Procedure continuously next week. As to the debate which may arise on Tuesday evening, if the House should be pleased to allow us to go on, I am not aware that it is likely to require to be a debate of great length and detail, although it may be difficult to say now what debate does not require to be pursued at great length and detail. But, so far as I can judge, I think there will be no inconvenience to the House in taking the discussion which has been referred to at the Evening Sitting. What I said, however, was that it was desirable that an answer to the Question put by my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. Joseph Cowen) should be given in a regular debate, when hon. Members would have an opportunity, if they wished, of commenting upon it.

Mr. CHAPLIN asked whether they were to understand that the Procedure debate would be taken continuously every Government night next week? Would the second reading of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill be taken if the Procedure debate was not concluded?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, we propose to take it on Monday, and at the Morning Sitting on Tuesday. The Customs and Inland Revenue Bill will not be taken on Monday or Tuesday next. We hope to be able to state by Tuesday whether that Bill will be taken on Thursday or not.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN said, that, in view of the important announcement which they were led to expect on Tuesday, he hoped the Prime Minister would reconsider his decision with respect to the Morning Sitting for Tuesday; and, in order to give the right hon. Gentleman an opportunity of doing so, he would ask him on Monday, Whether it would not be desirable to allow the Morning Sitting for Tuesday to lapse, so that they might have a full discussion on so important a question as the condition of Ireland?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, we have had debates on the condition of Ireland to the extent of nearly half, or more than half, the present Session; and, although this may be an important matter, it must be remembered that every matter of importance does not necessarily require a long and detailed discussion. In the view of the Government, there will be ample time for the discussion on Tuesday evening; and the other pressing subjects before us make it our duty, unless we wish the country to believe that we are paltering with them, to ask the House to give us Morning Sittings.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE—THE CHANNEL TUNNEL SCHEME.

Mr. O'SHEA asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he has seen a statement in the "St. James's Gazette" of this evening, to the effect that, notwithstanding the order of the Board of Trade, the "promoters of the Channel Tunnel scheme are pressing forward the work;" and, whether the right hon. Gentleman will take steps to enforce compliance with his own order?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: In answer to the Question of my hon. and gallant Friend, I have to say that I have not seen the newspaper this evening to which he refers, and I think that the statement which he says is contained in it must be incorrect. At all events, I gave the most explicit directions to the South Eastern Railway Company that the works were not to be allowed to proceed below the level of low water; and if that instruction has been disregarded I shall certainly take steps to see that it is properly observed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

£1 BANK NOTES.—RESOLUTION.

Mr. W. FOWLER, in rising to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the prohibition of the issue of bank notes of £1 each in England and Wales is unreasonable and ought to be removed, and that all needful steps should be forthwith taken to authorise the issue of such notes,"

said, that it was a long time since they had had a discussion on the currency of this country. He was glad that was so, because it showed that we were in a much better condition than we had been many years ago. At the same time, it was a very remarkable fact that the conditions of the currency in the Three Kingdoms were so different, and had remained so for so many years. He believed that Sir Robert Peel's legislation on that subject was wise legislation, and he was not the least disposed to break it down in any way. Bank notes in this country were not the machinery by which the great business of the country was conducted. They were merely used in the minor work of trade, and for the common convenience of mankind in the ordinary details of life. Anyone who knew anything of business was aware that business was conducted, not by bank notes, but by credit. Deposits had increased enormously, whereas circulation had practically not increased at all. In 36 issuing banks the deposits had increased from 100 in 1844 to 350 in 1874; while the proportion of circulation to deposits was, in 1844, 17 per cent, and in 1874 only 4 per cent. He would now refer to one or two points in the history of this question. The House was aware that £1 notes were, and had been for many years, in circulation in Scotland and Ireland, though successive Prime Ministers, in 1826 and 1844, had desired to do away with them. But the feeling in their favour was so strong, that the Prime Ministers had to give up the idea, and accordingly they were retained in Scotland and Ireland, though they were abandoned in England. On reference to the debates of the year 1826, when £1 notes were abolished in England, it would be found that the main reason given for their abolition was the panic of 1825, which, it was said, was caused by bank notes of small amount being in circulation. But Lord Liverpool combated this view, for, in writing to the Bank of England on the 13th of January, 1826, he said this—

> "Though a recurrence to a gold circulation might be productive of some good, it would by no means go to the root of the evil. We have abundant proof of this in the events which took place in 1793, when a convulsion occurred more extensive than that which we have recently experienced. Nearly 100 country banks stopped payment, and Parliament granted an issue of Exchequer Bills, yet in 1793 there were no £1 or £2 notes in circulation in England. We have a further proof in the experience of Scotland, which has escaped all the convulsions which have occurred in the Money Market of England for the last 35 years, though Scotland, during the whole of that time, has had a circulation of £1 notes. The issue of small notes, though it be an aggravation, cannot, therefore, be the sole or even the main cause of the evil in England."

The fact was that the main cause of the panic of 1825 was the enormous amount of speculation that then prevailed. Then, after the notes were abolished, there was another panic in 1837, and again in 1844, and there had been several more since, although during the whole period there were no £1 notes. The truth was that panics arose from great causes, such as excessive speculation and increase of prices, and not from comparatively small causes, such as the circulation of notes. If he was correct in his view, the Abolition Act of 1826 was passed under an entirely erroneous impression. Lord Liverpool was unable to carry out his project of abolishing the £1 notes in Scotland and Ireland, on account of the great attachment those countries felt towards them, an attachment as strong now as it was then. It might be asked—why raise this question at all; things were going on very well? That was, no doubt, a fair question; but he had recently, while travelling on the other side of the Atlantic, noticed the great convenience that was found in these small notes. In Scotland and Ireland they were found to be a great convenience to the poorer classes. Though the richer classes, with large balances at their bankers, and the power to draw cheques to any amount, might not feel any necessity for them, still, in dealing with this question, they must consider the humbler classes as well as those of the upper ranks. Postal notes and orders, although a convenience for the transmission of money, cost a commission for each order, and that consideration was a somewhat serious one to the working man. In Scotland, in Ireland, on the Continent of Europe, and in America, these small notes were found to be a great convenience to poor people. It was notorious that in Scotland and Ireland the people were determined to keep them. He had been informed on good authority that the best way to bring about Home Rule in those countries would be by abolishing the £1 notes. Then it was a great convenience to be able to send small sums by post in this way without charge. Also, these notes were a great convenience in the small transactions of trade, such as in paying wages. He would not propose to circulate the whole issue on credit; but a certain amount might be issued on security, and a certain amount on bullion, as proposed with regard to English notes by Sir Robert Peel in 1844. What was the circulation of bullion at the present moment? In 1835 Sir Robert Peel said there were from 30,000,000 to 40,000,000 in circulation; in more modern times it was said to amount to from 100,000,000 to 120,000,000. His impression was that there must be, at least, 100,000,000 in circulation. Therefore, we might circulate a large amount on securities and the balance on bullion, as at present under the Act of 1844. He wished to refer to the character of the present circulation. The state of the coinage of this country was very unsatisfactory. Every other coin was light. In Ireland the people would not take sovereigns, because, on presenting them at the bank, they were so often charged for light weight, notes being preferred because of the depreciation of the sovereign. If small notes were put in circulation, it would not become necessary to recoin the whole of the sovereigns and half-sovereigns. The matter was one of considerable importance, and ought not to be lost sight of. Various objections were raised to his proposal, the most attractive of which was the forgery question. In the early part of the century bank notes were wretchedly engraved, a great many forgeries occurred, and many unfortunate men lost their lives. But bank notes were now engraved in so superior a manner that forgeries seldom occurred. He believed that, at the present moment, a forgery of any importance had not occurred on any of the Scotch or Irish banks in respect of notes issued for the last 20 or 30 years. A similar state of things also prevailed in America, where there was also a circulation of small notes. When at Washington, figures were furnished to him showing that in the year ending June 1881 there were eight times as many notes of the value of £10 forged as of notes of £1. That showed that, at the present time, the skill and labour required to forge bank notes was so great that it did not pay to counterfeit notes of small value. In one case that occurred in Scotland he was told that it took a man six months to produce and circulate six £1-notes. In his opinion, they had passed that period when the forgery of bank notes was a serious question. Formerly, the punishment for the crime was so severe that people were unwilling to prosecute, and forgery was much more frequent than it had since become. The Judicial Statistics for 1880 showed that in that year no persons were committed for the forgery of bank notes in England and Wales. In Ireland there were eight cases, but in Scotland none. The figures with respect to Mint offences were very different, and proved that more than 2,000 persons were punished for the offences of coining, of having in possession implements of coining, and of uttering false coin. Another objection which he knew some hon. Members entertained to his proposal was the liability to the occurrence of panics. It was said that the holders of £1 notes would be more liable to panics than the holders of notes of larger amount. On that point he would quote the opinion of Mr. Tooke, who said that the only instance of a panic within the century with respect to Bank of England notes occurred in 1832, and that partook of the ridiculous, and was only remarkable for the use made of it by the partizans of a particular currency theory. The Glasgow Bank failure six years ago, affecting, as it did, a very poor population, and occurring under circumstances of fraud, was calculated to cause panic. That, however, did not happen, and the circulation of Scotch bank notes was in no way affected. He did not think that the liability to panics was as great now as it used to be. It had also been urged that they would lose bullion by the issue of small notes. In 1826 Mr. Huskisson said that notes and bullion could not exist together; but experience had not shown that to be true. He did not propose to issue the notes upon nothing; he considered that, for the most part, they should be issued upon bullion. The effect of the issue of small notes would be that the bullion would be kept in one place, instead of being scattered over the Kingdom. It was a mistake to suppose that the banks kept their reserves in gold; they only kept sufficient gold for their usual requirements. Gold would be much safer and much more available if held as a security against notes than if it were scattered over the country. It by no means followed that because there was a circulation of small notes there was no gold in a country. Although there was a large circulation of notes of various values in the United States, it was estimated by the Director of their Mint in November, 1881, that there were 112,000,000 sterling of gold and 36,000,000 sterling of silver in the country. It had been alleged that a £1 note issue would be costly; but it would not be so in reality, if we could save the interest on a large amount of bullion. Indeed, the saving on the bullion would pay all the expense of the circulation, and a good deal more. Moreover, the issue of £1-notes would prevent the wear and tear of our sovereigns, which at present amounted to a very considerable sum. It had been estimated that the restoration of our existing coinage would cost nearly £1,000,000. He calculated that the cost of the £1 note issue, as now existing, varied from 5*s.* to £1 per cent per annum. He had heard it suggested that the adoption of £1 notes would cause a great deal of trouble to bankers. Well, the Scotch and the Irish bankers were very happy to have that trouble as long as they had likewise the convenience for themselves and their customers. Then it had been said that the extension of banking facilities was less important now than it was formerly. There were, however, some figures on this point, which showed that, after all, the use of notes was a very important consideration even now. The amount of notes issued in Scotland and in Ireland was still very large, and there had been a very material increase in it. The circulation in Scotland had, between 1844 and 1874, increased 95 per cent; while in Ireland, owing to famine and loss of population, the increase had been 14 per cent during the same period. It would probably be said that some of the experience of the Continental States went rather in the other direction. It was a curious thing that in France the lower denomination was not that which was most in circulation; but the condition of France was so totally different from our own that we could not compare the two countries. Again, it was true that Germany had adopted something like our system in not issuing very small notes; but he did not see why we should follow Germany either in her politics or in her finance. He had endeavoured to show that the abolition of £1 notes was accomplished under a false impression as to the facts. He desired to impress on the House the truth that the great panic of 1825, on which all the burden was placed, was not occasioned by any issue of notes whatever, although it was aggravated, no doubt, by the conduct of both the Bank of England and the country banks. That panic was caused by enormous speculations and gigantic commercial operations of every conceivable degree of folly. As we had abolished the issue of £1 notes on unfair and ridiculous grounds, it was only right that we should reconsider the matter. It might be said it was impossible to prove that there was any public demand for the change in this country. He did not assert that there was; but he thought it was well worthy of the consideration of the House whether that which was so extremely convenient to Scotland and Ireland would not confer a boon on our own people, without doing them any conceivable harm. He had heard it suggested that there was one point about the bullion question which ought to be borne in mind—namely, that there would be more danger of gold being attacked in case of disaster if it were in one place than if it were scattered over the whole community. They ought not, however, for this purpose to consider what might happen once in a century, and to legislate with a view to an improbable contingency. He feared this was an abstract question, and, therefore, not an exciting one. But he must repeat his belief that no comparatively small change in the ordinary affairs of life would confer more real benefit on the humbler classes of the community than providing them with a well-secured currency of small denominations. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Mr. EWART, in seconding the Resolution, said, he heartily approved of it as an Irishman who had all his life been accustomed to £1 notes, and had seen the advantages of that system. He thought it seemed unreasonable that Ireland should have the advantage of the £1 note, while it was prohibited in England. One pound notes were merely promises to pay £1 in gold, and they were perfectly safe as £5 notes. In Ireland they found paper much more convenient for use than gold. Of course, there was the fear of forgery; but, as was said by the hon. Member, it was scarcely known to exist in Ireland, and they were a great deal more afraid of light gold than they were of forged notes. He believed that no people who had ever used paper would ever revert to gold. He might instance Ireland and Scotland, and the United States of America and the Colonies, where paper was much more popular than gold. The use of £1 notes had, no doubt, been objected to from the fear of inflation; but so long as they were convertible into gold there was, in his mind, no danger of inflation, provided a sufficient reserve was required. It might be feared that if the measure were adopted, it would be the germ of something further. Well, he hoped that no chimera of that sort would prevent the House from adopting what he considered would be a most valuable measure.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, the prohibition of the issue of bank notes of £1 each in England and Wales is unreasonable and ought to be removed, and that all needful steps should be forthwith taken to authorise the issue of such notes,"—(*Mr. William Fowler,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK, who had given Notice of an Amendment, which, however, he was unable to move, to the effect—

"That it is undesirable to remove the restriction from the circulation of £1 notes (if at all) without a careful inquiry into the effect which such a change would have on the general currency of the Country, and into the conditions under which such notes should be issued,"

said, no one would deny the importance of the subject brought before them that evening by his hon. Friend the Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler), whose knowledge of the subject and great practical experience enabled him to state the views he entertained with so much weight and effect. Generally, on such subjects, it was his good fortune to be able to co-operate with his hon. Friend; but, on the present occasion, he felt bound to express the hope that the House would pause before it assented to the Motion which the hon. Member advocated. The subject of £1 notes was no new question in this country. They had a long trial, and eventually were abandoned with general consent. The main arguments against them were three in number—first, the desirability of keeping up a large stock of gold in the country; secondly, that the £1 notes were more liable to be suddenly presented for payment during panics than notes of higher denomination; and, thirdly, they were found to lead to a very large amount of forgery. The result of the experience acquired at the commencement of the century was that almost all the highest authorities on the subject had unhesitatingly declared themselves against the issue of notes for smaller sums than £5. He might quote, for instance, the strongly-expressed opinion of Huskisson, Canning, Lord Lansdowne, the Duke of Wellington, Goulburn, Herries, Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Norman, Lord Overstone, John Stuart Mill, and, among more recent authorities, Mr. Weguelin, Mr. Kirkman Hodgson, Mr. Grenfell, the present Governor of the Bank; and Mr. Palgrave, the Editor of *The Economist*. He believed the very general opinion of the City at present was also decidedly opposed to the issue of £1 notes. There were Gentlemen in the House—for instance, the hon. Baronet the Member for West Worcestershire (Sir Edmund Lechmere)—who could speak more authoritatively for the country banks than he could; but he was naturally brought into contact with a considerable number of country bankers in all parts of England, and he believed that the very great majority were of the same opinion. The gold circulation had been regarded by the highest authorities as a reserve upon which they could fall back, if necessary, in case of adverse exchanges. Doubtless, the great extent to which what were called International Stocks were now held in this country weakened, to a certain extent, this argument. Still, it could not be omitted from consideration, and before it was summarily dismissed they ought to obtain the careful opinions of those most qualified to judge on the question. Again, it could not be denied that if we should, unfortunately, become involved in any great war with a first-rate Power, the gold circulation would be a source of much financial strength. During the Franco-German War the French found the practical advantage of this. By issuing small notes to replace the metallic circulation, they were able, with only a slight disturbance of values and at a very moderate cost, to obtain immense funds. But for this resource, they would either have had to borrow at very high rates or to purchase on credit, which would have been even more ruinous. He sincerely hoped that we should never have occasion to adopt a similar course; but the power of doing so must be taken into consideration when they were considering the respective advantages and disadvantages of a circulation of small notes. Again, the deposits in the Savings Banks amounted to nearly £80,000,000, and were steadily increasing. Against this immense liability the Government, according to the last Returns, held less than £500,000 of reserve, a reserve which, to a banker, naturally seemed, to say the least of it, extremely meagre. No doubt, however, successive Chancellors of the Exchequer had tolerated this state of things, partly on account of the exceptionally realizable character of the securities held on account of the trustees, and partly, also, because of the latent reserve existing in our gold circulation—a reserve which, although, of course, it would only be used as a last resource, and in case of absolute necessity, was still of great importance. Nor did he quite understand why his hon. Friend should stop at £1 notes. There were some considerations which afforded even stronger arguments for smaller notes than for those of £1. The half-sovereign was, in proportion, a more expensive coin than the sovereign. The wear and tear were more rapid. Again, our silver circulation, as everyone knew, consisted only of tokens, which did not, like the gold, constitute any solid national reserve. And, so far, the advantages of introducing a circulation of notes for 10*s*. and 1*s*. would be even greater in proportion. But even his hon. Friend did not propose to go so far as that. He would not occupy the time of the House by dwelling on the second consideration—namely, the liability of £1 notes to be presented for payment under panic. It would be sufficient to say that all practical authorities were agreed upon that point. It was possible that the spread of education—the greater amount of knowledge on such subjects possessed at present by the bulk of our countrymen might have removed this danger; and he quite believed that it had had much effect in that direction. Still, the consideration was not one which could be entirely ignored. Mr. Henry Burgess, Secretary to the County Bankers' Association, before the House of Commons' Committee of 1832, said that—

> "Nine out of 10 of the country bankers are decidedly opposed to the issue of small notes under £5. They have found from experience that all great demands upon the banks have commenced through the demand for small notes."

As to the profit which would be derived from the issue of £1 notes, he was not disposed to rate it so high as it had been estimated. Much, of course, would depend on the conditions under which the notes were issued, and especially whether such notes, when once paid, were to be re-issued or not. He would not discuss the question whether they should be issued by country banks or the Bank of England, though, if the subject were to come to a practical issue, that would be a question which would demand most serious consideration. He would assume that the notes were not to be re-issued, and he would shortly state to the House a calculation made by the late Governor of the Bank of England on that basis. That gentleman assumed that £21,000,000 of notes would be issued, and that one-third would be retained in gold as a security. That would leave £14,000,000 to be invested in Government securities, which would give £400,000 in interest. The present cost of a note was 1·26 of a penny; but on the manufacture of so large a number the cost might, no doubt, be reduced. He took it, therefore, at 7-8ths of a penny, and £21,000,000, then, would cost £76,600; and, assuming each note to live about three months, they must multiply this by four for a year. This would give £300,000, to which must be added the cost of prosecutions for forgeries and various minor expenses. The balance would be less than £100,000; certainly not more than enough to compensate the issuing bank or banks for their trouble. The Government, therefore, would gain but little in interest; and, if at all, would save little more than the wear and tear of the gold coins. It seemed evident, therefore, that if the notes were to be issued on this basis the pecuniary advantage would be comparatively small. Of course, if the notes were to be re-issued the cost would be less; but to this there were other objections. If, on the other hand, the notes were issued against gold the profit, of course, would vanish altogether. He now came to the question of forgeries. In the year 1820, though the circulation of £1 notes was less than £7,000,000, there were over 400 prosecutions for forgery, at a cost of £53,000, the great majority of these being forgeries of £1 notes. From 1816 to 1820, the last five years during which £1 notes were issued, no less than 131,000 forged notes were presented to the Bank of England, being at the rate of over 25,000 a-year; while at present, with our much larger population and vastly greater commerce, the average number was only 20. Moreover, out of these 131,000 forged notes, no less than 127,000 were notes of £1, and only 400 were over £5. It was a remarkable fact that, though £1 notes had been out of circulation for more than half-a-century, the majority of forged notes brought into the Bank were still £1 notes. From 1869 to 1874, the last year for which they had any return, the total number of forged notes presented was £369. Of these, 36 were for sums above £5; 88 were £5 notes; and 245 were notes for less than £5. It was sometimes said that the improvements in engraving had practically done away with the risk of forgery. He did not wish to undervalue the security afforded by skilful engraving. It was, no doubt, considerable. But practical experience showed that the number of forgeries at the beginning of the century was not mainly ascribable to any roughness in the engraving, for in that case it would have applied to £5 notes, as well as to those for £1. Nay, the temptation being greater, it might even have been anticipated that £5 notes would have been the more frequently forged. But far from that, as he had shown, the overwhelming pre ponderance of forged notes were for £1. That proved that the real determining condition was not the facility of counterfeiting, but the opportunity for issuing without immediate risk of detection. The life of a note—that was to say, the length of time it remained in circulation—was inversely as the amount; and, consequently, the smaller the note the less the risk of detection. He was told, however, that there was little or no forgery in Scotland or Ireland; and, no doubt, £1 notes were popular in the Sister Kingdoms—though the late Member for Waterford (Mr. Delahunty) did regard them as the source of all the trouble of Ireland, from the creation of the world down to the creation of the Land League. But the whole banking and economical conditions of Scotland and Ireland were unlike those of England. In Scotland, for instance, these notes remained in circulation for a very short time—mainly because, as all the banks enjoyed the privilege of issue, none of them used the notes of any other bank as till money. Hence anyone who issued a forged note knew that the forgery would be detected in a very few days, which acted in two ways. Firstly, the chance of punishment was greatly increased; and, secondly, the opportunity for issuing any considerable number of forged notes, and, consequently, the temptation to do so was greatly diminished. We had tried £1 notes in this country, and they were abandoned with general consent. No doubt, since that date many years had elapsed, and circumstances had greatly changed. It was possible that the objections then felt might now no longer exist; it was possible that the advantages might now be greater. He did not say that his hon. Friend might not make out a case for a Committee or Commission of Inquiry; but when he called upon the House, without inquiry and without consultation, to decide off-hand that the prohibition of £1 notes was unreasonable, and that steps should be forthwith taken to authorize the issue of such notes, he (Sir John Lubbock) believed that he represented the general opinion of the mercantile and banking community in expressing a hope that the House would not be carried away by the persuasive eloquence of his hon. Friend.

MR. GLADSTONE: The House, I think, will not be surprised when I say that the Government is not prepared to consent to put aside the Motion for your leaving the Chair, Sir, in order to adopt the Amendment, as the decision of the House, and it will be a sufficient reason against such a course, if I found myself entirely upon one word in the Motion—the formidable word "forthwith." I cannot conceive for the Government, in existing circumstances, a more formidable word, for undoubtedly it was found in 1844 that to deal with the currency of this country—and by no means to deal with the whole of the questions that may be raised—was an affair that required to be the main subject of legislation for a year, and was found quite sufficient to occupy a very great deal of the time of Parliament, certainly shutting out the consideration of any great measure during the same Session. Under those circumstances, my hon. Friend will judge that the Government must be either unduly sanguine or unusually unscrupulous, if it were prepared, by adopting this Resolution, to deal "forthwith" with the question which, I admit, is not of itself necessarily involving the whole question of currency, but which would be found, practically, to require that the whole question of currency should be considered. This question of currency is one of that long list of arrears which ought to be considered legitimately and positively as such. The House is probably aware that the old practice of Parliament, both with regard to the East India Charter and with regard to the Bank Charter, was to consider them once in 10 or 20 years—I think once in 20 years as regards the East India Charter, and once in 10 years as regards the Bank Charter—and I recollect very well that Mr. Goulburn, reflecting on the matter, was of opinion, when the Act of 1844 was framed, that it was an inconvenience to have the House tied down absolutely to consider the matter decennially, because there might be exigencies of a particular order which might make a short postponement rather convenient and desirable. Consequently, the Act of 1844 was enacted, not to remain in force for 10 years, but during the pleasure of Parliament, distinctly indicating, by its own phraseology, that the subject was one that ought periodically to be brought under review. And I do not entertain the smallest doubt that Sir Robert Peel, who was himself a great master on the subject of the currency, himself regarded the Act of 1844 not as a passing measure, but as a measure that laid a firm and strong foundation upon which a superstructure was to be raised, which the Act of 1844 imperfectly and partially supplied. I believe that both Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Goulburn would have been immensely astonished if anyone could, by the gift of prophecy, have announced to them as a fact that, 38 years after the Act of 1844, nothing would have been done in prosecution of the views with which that Act was introduced to lead onwards the system of the currency of this country to what may be called its perfection. That admission I make to my hon. Friend, accompanying it with the hope, which is more sincere than sanguine, that the vigorous labours on the Parliamentary Benches may, in a certain time, bring about a state of things so propitious that this great question may be dealt with for the benefit of the country. Having made that concession, Sir, I must make a further concession to my hon. Friend who has just sat down. I think it clear, looking to the importance and complexity of the issues involved, that no important change ought to be introduced into our system without a previous Parliamentary inquiry. The last Committee sat, I think, with the hope that legislation might take place which has not taken place; but, undoubtedly, that Committee grew also out of the circumstances connected with the commercial crisis; and my hon. Friend has observed, with great satisfaction, and, I think, with great justice, that the administration of the Bank of England—the enlightened administration of the Bank of England—appears, in a great degree, to have solved the practical question connected with these disturbances of the currency which marked the years 1847, 1857, and 1866, and which were so irregular, both in principle and in practice, that they might well be described as intolerable. As long as those crises occurred, at periods of eight or ten years, they themselves proved an irresistible argument for the review of the Currency Laws. As matters now stand, it may be said that the argument has lost a great deal of its force, because we may state that the days of those crises will have passed by, and that, from administration and early anticipation of difficulties on the part of the governing influences of the Bank of England, may prevent their return. While I quite admit that, on other grounds, there are reasons why this matter should come under the view of Parliament, I imagine there can be no doubt among us that the three great conditions of a good currency are these—

its safety, its convenience, and its cheapness. I must say, for my part, I would give a fourth condition to a perfect currency, which is that the profit of that currency ought to be the profit of the nation. But with regard to our system as it exists—and I think we have only yet got a very partial acknowledgment of the principle that the profit of issue belongs to the State—we have to look at the qualities of safety, convenience, and cheapness. As regards safety, no doubt, the question would be raised whether metallic currency or paper currency in small notes is the more liable to forgery; but my hon. Friend the Mover of the Amendment will at once see that we are not in a condition in this House to determine a question of this kind without a very close and careful inquiry. The question of how to deal with light gold is also an important and difficult one. As to the position of the gold coinage—which the country will have to face—I own that I am one of those who think that it is a fair and proper matter for inquiry, whether the country ought to make a charge, not in the nature of seigneurage, not in the nature of an artificial value attached to a commodity as an exercise of the Prerogative, even as we do in silver and in copper, but whether the country ought to make a charge for the labour of manufacture, by which it certifies in a particular form its value to the gold in circulation. Undoubtedly, the effect of our present system is that everybody melts gold at his convenience, and wastes to an enormous extent the costly labour we have bestowed upon it. I believe that a very proper subject for consideration. As I see the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote) in his place, I may say I was very sanguine in the hope that he might have felt himself strong enough in the time of the late Government to have attempted to deal with this whole question. I felt that the position of affairs was favourable; for I am quite certain that, as regards all those who now sit on this side of the House, they would have been found in very general concurrence with the right hon. Gentleman in his views on monetary questions, and I believe he would have had their most cordial and faithful support. I had a stronger reason for entertaining that wish, and it is, that I believe there is no person, either in the House or in the country, who more thoroughly comprehends that question than the right hon. Baronet, or who would have been more likely to lead the discussion of it to a favourable issue. I will enter briefly into one or two of the points which have been raised. I do not think the Mover of the Motion open to any just exception that there is no public demand for a change, because this is one of the questions as to which we cannot expect that there should be what is called a popular demand. After the War, and in 1834, the raising of questions of this kind was undoubtedly due to the few—and the number was a very small one, only, in fact, a fraction even of the educated classes—who took an interest in those questions. I would, indeed, say that there is no subject which interested a smaller number of persons, considering its importance. I will go one step further, and say that among the many sound arguments which contributed to the establishment of our metallic circulation, there was one argument that was less sound than the rest, and that was the notion that for whatever monetary crisis might occur, the possession of a metallic currency for ordinary cash transactions constituted an element of security, and afforded an available reserve. I do not now enter into the case of a great war. I can well conceive that in the case of a great war, Parliament, legislating for the purpose, might avail itself of the existence of a vast body of gold in circulation in the country for temporary purposes, which it might have in view, in the extreme exigency of the case, and might in that way, on that particular occasion, supply itself with a large quantity of gold by legislation, perhaps more easily than if it had not a very large metallic circulatian to deal with. But, undoubtedly, as far as my recollection goes, there was a belief that upon every occasion of monetary pressure such as we used constantly to be subjected to in the case of bad harvests—although, happily, the vast extension of the freedom of our trade has rendered these occasions of pressure comparatively insensible—that even upon these occasions we were better able to encounter them by having a large metallic circulation. I believe that was an entire fallacy, because, in point of fact, that large metallic currency is hard at work in the daily business of life conducting the cash transactions absolutely essential to the operations of civil society, and so far, I believe, the argument is not well-founded. I hope I shall not shock anyone when I say I see no fundamental unsoundness in the main intention and demand of my hon. Friend. We have already applied to a certain number of notes over £1 the principle that it is wise, to a certain extent, to economize the monetary circulation by the issue of such notes, provided we take care to keep that issue of notes within the limits of demand which we know the necessary purposes of the country will always make, so that there can be no possibility that those notes should become superfluous. If that be so, I own, although I believe in quarters of very high metallic doctrine there was a notion that something heretical lurked in the very idea of the £1 note, yet I must say I do not see why that principle, cautiously applied, should not apply to £1 notes which applies to notes of higher denomination, provided it may be found that convenience would be attained, as well as some degree of economy. With regard to that question, my hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) has suggested that it would necessitate a modification of the practice of banking. I am the last person to propose that the practice of banking should be changed by the Executive. If it were so changed, it should only be after full Parliamentary Inquiry. I will only add, in conclusion, that I hope the present discussion will do good in tending to turn the mind of those who are not in the habit of thinking on this question of currency to consider it; and I entertain not a very sanguine hope for myself, but a hope certainly for younger Members of this House, that they may have the happy duty of developing and applying the principles of the Act of 1844, in the way of giving it full effect, and to fulfil with still greater efficiency and equal safety the great purpose for which a currency is established.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, that, although his right hon. Friend had stated that the Motion could not be accepted by the House, it might, nevertheless, not be superfluous that a few remarks should be made on the topics which had been raised in the debate. His right hon. Friend had alluded to the fact that the Bank Act had been allowed to remain without change. It was a most fortunate circumstance for the country that that Act had not been revised on the various occasions when revision had been called for. For if a revision directed at certain minor points had been granted, it might have led to a revision of vital provisions of the Act. He thought he could discern, through his right hon. Friend's speech, that there were certain points in that Act which he would like to have changed. He thought his right hon. Friend was led in that direction by the desire to secure some profit to the State. In that respect he could entirely sympathize with his right hon. Friend. The profits of issue he would himself wish to see secured to the public. But he would impress upon the House that what had been desired by others on many occasions was to introduce relaxations into the Act, which the experience of years had shown not to be necessary. He thought there was no greater proof of the wisdom of Sir Robert Peel than that he had secured to this country a currency which, with all its drawbacks, had through most trying times and difficult crises proved to be a great success. His hon. Friend the Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) had introduced some dangerous proposals in a very seductive form. He admitted what had been said by his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the proposals of his hon. Friend were not by any means so dangerous in his hands as they might be in other hands. His hon. Friend had stated in his opening that he was a Bullionist. But here was a Bullionist proposing in that House to diminish the amount of bullion. His hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) had already called attention to this point. These £1 notes were, in part only, to be issued upon the security of bullion; and it had been admitted by the Head of the Government—and, indeed, it had been admitted by his hon. Friend—that the result of the proposal would be to diminish the amount of gold in the country. His right hon. Friend had naturally, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, looked to the amount of profit which might possibly be derived from these notes. But he himself confessed to being one of the straitlaced school of economists, and no desire for profit would induce him to lessen the extent to which our currency rested upon gold. His hon. Friend the Member for Cambridge had told the House the stupendous amount of transactions carried on by banks without any reserve of gold at all. But, notwithstanding that, it could not be understood too clearly that the whole of the vast transactions of this country rested ultimately in gold. The Bank of England was bound to find gold for its notes, and bankers were bound to find gold for their deposits. Every promise to pay was, in fact, a contract to deliver gold. The commerce of the country was conducted on that basis. His hon. Friend had called attention to the fact of the small reserves of gold existing in the country as compared with its enormous liabilities. But did not this increase the importance of avoiding any diminution of the stock of gold in the country? This decrease of that stock was a matter of the highest moment. It was well known how, in times both of external and internal pressure, gold flowed from a thousand channels into the coffers of the Bank of England, strengthening its reserve. The strain put upon gold was greater than it was before Germany had adopted a gold coinage. Gold, silver, and notes had, if he might use the phrase, been partners together, conducting jointly the business of the circulation of the world. Silver had now been thrust out of the partnership, and heavier responsibilities now rested upon gold. Hence it was more than ever important to look to a sufficiency of gold in the country. That was a matter in which they could not proceed too carefully and anxiously. His hon. Friend had referred to the motives which induced him to make his proposal. He, on the other hand, had brought forward some considerations which made him think that very strong arguments would be required to induce the House to introduce a change which would diminish the gold circulation in the country. Were those arguments strong? He admitted there were some arguments, and that some of the objections against the proposal had been successfully dealt with by his hon. Friend, especially those which related to forgeries. Nor did he base his own objections on the score of expense, but upon principles affecting the general currency of the country. As regarded the advantages which the proposals would bring about, they were alleged to be mainly in favour of the humbler classes. He thought his hon. Friend would not contend that they would bring any advantage to the richer classes. He agreed with his hon. Friend the Member for the University of London that it had not been sufficiently elaborated how the humbler classes would gain. They were told that Scotland, Ireland, and America had notes of £1 in value. It had always been a matter of notoriety that the population of Scotland had clung to their £1 notes with great tenacity; but that proved nothing as regarded other countries. Custom seemed to play a most important part in all questions of the use of different forms of money. It was urged that the transmission of small sums would be facilitated by the existence of £1 notes, and that the commissions on Post Office Orders would be saved. It might be convenient to have these notes for those purposes; but would the working classes prefer to be paid in them rather than in sovereigns? He believed it would be as hard to convince an English mechanic that the £1 note was better than a sovereign as it would be to convince a Scotchman that the sovereign was better than a £1 note. He did not feel disposed to legislate in order to make an experiment of that kind. His hon. Friend the Member for Cambridge had alluded to Germany, where the smaller notes had been abolished with a view to the introduction of gold currency, and he made an appeal to the patrotism of the House, saying that we ought not to follow Germany, either in her politics or in her financial transactions. The observation was an ungracious one, for, in point of fact, Germany had in this matter been following us. Germany had believed that in abolishing her smaller notes she had been adopting the soundest and most admitted English principles. With regard to America, the circumstances of that country were at present quite abnormal. His hon. Friend had stated the fact that an immense amount of gold had been accumulated there in order to prove that the stock of gold might increase, notwithstanding the circumstance of bank notes being issued. But his hon. Friend did not remind the House that it was the resumption of specie payments which obliged America to collect so large an amount of gold. We had not yet seen how America would settle down permanently. The resumption of specie payments, and the importance America showed she attached to a large stock of bullion, ought, in his judgment, rather to be put on the other side of the argument. His hon. Friend thought the humbler classes would receive considerable benefit from the ease with which £1 notes could be transmitted by post. In all other respects it appeared to him that gold coin was more convenient for the humbler classes than bank notes. The experience of many travellers was the reverse of that of his hon. Friend, and went to show that notes were more liable to be lost than gold; that they were less "get-atable," and in many ways less convenient than the English sovereign. It was argued that £1 notes might be transmitted through the post in preference to Post Office Orders; but it should be remembered that if it were necessary to send odd amounts, the £1 notes would not be available. Consequently, the advantage to the humbler classes would be very slight indeed. In his judgment the arguments in favour of the proposal had been shown to be exceedingly weak. On the other hand, he had endeavoured to establish that there were strong arguments against any measure which would diminish the aggregate amount of bullion in the country, and that even the coin in the pockets of the people was an ultimate reserve which it was most important to maintain. Looking at all the circumstances, he could not vote with his hon. Friend, though he entirely acquitted him of any desire to weaken our currency system, because he knew it had few firmer supporters than himself.

Mr. LAING said, that in discussing a question of this nature it was above all things necessary to have a clear idea of the issues which were placed before them. He did not desire to repeat the arguments the House had already heard. The question of the £1 notes might either be a very large or a very small question. Unless they could multiply the bank notes and make money for the time cheaper, so as to increase the wages of the working classes, he was afraid a great portion of those benefits to the working classes that had been pointed out would disappear. In the case of Scotland there was, no doubt, a great attachment to the notes, arising not so much from the fact that it was a piece of paper instead of a piece of gold, but very much on account of the operation of issuing £1 notes giving the banks a profit which enabled them to multiply the number of banks and provide additional banking facilities all over the country. As a Scotch Member, he should say there was no doubt that the people of Scotland were most firmly attached to the £1 note; and he thought they would encounter very serious opposition from Scotland if they attempted to abandon the system. Scotland being, as it were, a separate portion of the Kingdom, it had been possible to continue the advantages of the £1 note to that country without interfering materially with those general monetary rules that regulated the money market in London and the national relations with other countries. If the question were merely between £1 certificates as against the sovereign it would be a small question, and he thought argument would resolve itself into the question whether the loss of issuing the £1 notes would be less than the loss by the wear and tear of the coins that were in circulation. If the question were limited to the possibility of forgery it might be a fair question of investigation for any Government or Select Committee. The question of providing security against panics was one of the largest that could be raised, as that was a question which involved the whole currency system of this country, which was based exclusively on the metallic basis. That was a question on which he might say a great deal; but after the speech of his right hon. Friend it would be unnecessary for him to detain the House upon it. He concurred entirely with the remarks that the right hon. Gentleman had brought forward as to the importance of not tampering in any way with the great principles of the Act of 1844. Looking to the future, it could be denied that, seeing the wants of the nation for gold were constantly growing, that population was increasing and commerce was spreading, whilst the quantity of gold was spparently diminishing by natural causes, it was, of course, a possible question of the future whether the quantity of gold in the world might not be found insufficient for the wants of the community. When that became the case, some means might be devised to meet the difficulty; but, in the meantime, when they had a system that was working extremely well, and which was improving in its working every year, he could not imagine why they should desire at the present moment to depart from it. Many years ago there was a series of panics, and the Government were obliged to interfere and authorize deviations from the Act of 1844 in order to prevent the Bank of England from stopping payment, and to save the City of London from a great crisis. That was done by raising the rate of interest. Periodically panics had occurred which were milder and milder each time; and within the last few years they had many instances in which a slight rise in the rate of interest by the Bank of England, taken in time, had been sufficient to secure confidence and prevent anything of the nature of a crisis. They could not have a better instance than what occurred in the present year. A great financial crisis had occurred in Paris; an immense amount of over-speculation collapsed that suddenly sent a mass of international stock to the market, and it was thought it would extend to this country; but the Bank of England raised its rate of interest by successive steps up to 6 per cent, on which gold gradually flowed in from all parts of the world, and within a very short time without any perceptible disturbance or panic the Bank bullion accumulated, and the reserve rose to a point at which the whole apprehension of evil was dissipated, and they again found themselves in possession of easy money. It would be unwise, he thought, as London was becoming the central money market of the world, if they tampered with the existing system; and on those grounds he should feel bound to vote against the Motion.

MR. ANDERSON said, he desired to thank the Prime Minister for three clear principles he had stated to the House. One was that the profit of a paper circulation ought to belong to the State; the next was that they were not bound to wait for a change of this kind until there was an apparent public demand for it; and the third one was that the currency in the pockets of the people was in no sense a reserve currency of any value for any other purpose. That last he considered to be the most valuable point that had been stated in the debate. He had himself endeavoured to expose the fallacy of the contrary position in the House on several occasions, and he was pleased to see it stated so clearly by the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) endeavoured to controvert that; but he considered his argument was entirely fallacious. The right hon. Gentleman said that a reserve of golden currency in the pockets of the people acted as a reserve, and could be got out of them by means of a high interest. He denied that entirely. It might have been the case in old times when private individals hoarded large quantities of gold; but now-a-days private individuals did not do that, they merely retained sufficient for their daily wants; therefore, no temptation of high interest would bring that out. The Prime Minister said in the event of a crisis, such as a war, legislation would be necessary to bring the reserve out of the pockets of the people, and that would be a forced paper currency, as that was the only way by which they could bring the gold coins used by the people for their daily wants in use as a national reserve. No advocate of the £1 note currency had ever desired to see a forced currency. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon said it would be as difficult to persuade the mechanics of England to take a £1 note in place of a sovereign as it would be to induce a Scotchman to take a sovereign in place of a £1 note. He would never wish to persuade the English mechanics to do anything of the kind; neither would he seek to force or persuade them; all he desired was to give them the option of taking it if they chose. Let them have which they liked best. The English mechanics were too enlightened not to do the same thing that every other civilized nation had done—namely, to take the symbolic in place of the actual currency. The symbolic was the scientific currency. The other was the barbarous system of mere barter. The paper note was a symbol, and was, therefore, the more scientific and more modern form of currency, and was sure to be taken when the people had the option of taking it. But what the State was bound to do was to take care the paper currency was in every respect thoroughly sound and secure, and that could be done perfectly well by legislation. He agreed with almost all his hon. Friend the Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) had said. The only objection he had to him was that last year, when he introduced a Bill to confer the inestimable boon of paper currency on England, the hon. Member opposed it; and his hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) also opposed it, and in his speech to-night in opposition he endeavoured to frighten the House with a large array of great authorities. It might be a deficiency in his character, but he confessed he had not got the reverence for antique authorities that the hon. Baronet displayed. Upon any other question the hon. Baronet would be the first to say they were better able to judge for themselves than any of these antique authorities; and, as far as he was concerned, he said they had the experience of these authorities as well as their own, and there would be no advantage in living in modern days if they were not able to use the experience of those who had gone before to add to it, and to benefit from it. The advantage of having a paper currency was so great that he did not think it required any argument at all; but he admitted that, before making so great a change as that proposed, it might be well to have the advantage of some inquiry before the House. If the hon. Member had proposed an inquiry of that kind, he would have got a great deal of support for his proposal. He could not, therefore, recommend the hon. Gentleman to divide the House; but if he did he would support him.

MR. MAGNIAC said, his hon. Friend had laid himself open to the charge of raising expectations without any definite prospect of fulfilling them. There were some very novel theories current about property. They had before them a scheme for dealing with property in a way in which they had never dealt with it before to his knowledge. But, whether it was held that the State ought to adopt a system of expropriation or not, compensating the owners of property for what was taken from them, he hoped that the House would set it face firmly against any attempt to manufacture money for meeting any schemes of that kind. The hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) had told them he had no great faith in the antique authorities cited by the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London. But, surely, the Governor of the Bank of England and other distinguished men now living, whose names he had mentioned, were not antique authorities.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. MAGNIAC, resuming, said, that the system of the Banks Act of 1844 had come triumphantly out of whatever examination it had been subjected to, and he did not think that it had been proved to be unfit for the present time. As far as his own knowledge and experience went, he had never heard that it was contended in any quarter unconnected with the Scotch banks that £1 notes would be of benefit to the commercial classes of this country. In his opinion, it was a question not of theory, but of practice, and one for the people to decide for themselves; and although there might be a demand prevailing in Ireland or in Scotland for those small notes, that of itself was no reason why England should follow the example of those countries. He deprecated the use of small notes to be used for transmission through the post as an incentive to crime, which the institution of postal notes had been expressly created to obviate. The Prime Minister had laid it down, without qualification, that a metallic reserve in the hands of a nation was no reserve and of no use. He entirely, but respectfully, differed from so high an authority. What more ample disproof of that assertion could possibly be given than the case of France after the German War? The French Government, by a very wise arrangement, placed their Stocks at the command of every class of the community in such sums that the smallest peasant was able to buy into those securities, and they were paid for in gold—£180,000,000 going in that way into the French Treasury. In conclusion, there ought to be no alteration made in our system of currency which was not well considered and investigated by a competent Committee; and he earnestly hoped that nothing would be done which would tend to shake the confidence of the world in the English bank note.

Mr. BUXTON said, he could not but think that it would be greatly for the convenience of the people that £1 notes should be issued. In Scotland and Ireland £1 notes were not only regarded with satisfaction, but were preferred to gold. In England they would also be found useful, more especially for the transmission of small sums of money from one part of the country to another. That was shown by the demand for the Postal Orders now issued, though it was an argument against the Motion that Postal Orders were not used as currency after their issue. One great advantage would be a reduction in the heavy loss now incurred by bankers through light gold. He spoke feelingly on this subject, for, as a banker, he was one of the small body of men in the country who bore the whole loss through light gold.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. BUXTON said, he believed great profit would result to the country through the issue of these notes. No doubt, there were drawbacks to the proposition by reason of the danger of forgery and the diminution of the bullion reserve of the country. With respect to the diminution of the bullion reserve, he believed that that was a very serious objection to the proposal. The stock of gold was none too much, and a very small drain upon it might cause serious inconvenience at any moment. He should have preferred to vote for the Amendment of the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), affirming the undesirability of removing the restrictions on the issue of £1 notes without careful inquiry as to the effects of the change, had it been possible to do so. As that Amendment could not be moved, he feared that he must vote against the Resolution.

Mr. WARTON said, he thought that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) was the only consolation that could be derived from the debate, as it showed that the English mind was not yet willing to yield to the fallacies that had been so lightly brought forward. He objected to the Motion, because no Act of Parliament could make a piece of paper of any value.

Mr. WILLIAMSON concurred very much with the way in which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) had dealt with the question. At the same time, there might be some value in the proposal that £1 notes should be issued in England. If, however, they were to be issued, it must be made clear that they could only be issued by the Bank of England, and that there should be a deposit of bullion for each note issued. In that case there would certainly be an advantage to the community. It would be easier to carry in one's pocket a small bundle of notes than 20 or 30 sovereigns, and there would be a great saving in the deterioration of the coinage which at present took place by friction. If the hon. Member had limited himself to inquiry, and had omitted the word "forthwith," he should have been inclined to support the proposal; but as the matter stood he could not do so, because it was evidently the hon. Member's idea to economize the metallic currency, and that, he believed, would be a thing fraught with the utmost danger. Considering the vast extent of our commerce, the enormous amount of the transactions that took place, and the very small amount of bullion in this country used for the liquidation of our international indebtedness, the proposal, as it stood, could not but be dangerous if it were adopted. If, however, the hon. Member introduced a Resolution for an inquiry into this subject, and at the same time let the House clearly understand that he so guarded his proposals as to make the issue of £1 notes to be solely by the Bank of England, and expressly and only on the deposit of coin or of bullion, then he (Mr. Williamson) should most cordially support it, because he believed it would be one of great public advantage.

Mr. W. FOWLER said, he would never advise an unsecured issue of £1 notes. As a very interesting debate had taken place, if the House would allow him, he would withdraw his Motion. ["No, no!"]

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

SLAVERY—THE SLAVE TRADE IN ASIA AND AFRICA.

OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. **LABOUCHERE**, who had given Notice to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, it is improper for any British official to lend his sanction to, or to aid directly or indirectly in, retaining any person in or consigning any person to slavery,"

said, that when he placed his Resolution on the Paper he had in his mind to call attention to the action of the Foreign Office and of the Consuls of Turkey and Egypt in regard to slavery in these countries rather than to any other subject; but, on looking into the matter, it seemed to him that this country was hardly in a position to make any complaints to any Foreign Government on the slavery which took place within their territories until it had entirely removed from its own the stigma of permitting slavery to exist. It had been the traditional policy of this country to put an end to slavery everywhere; but he was sorry to say that of late years it had fallen away from that traditional policy, for he found that slavery existed in many parts of the British Dominions. A Blue Book that had recently been presented to the House, treating of Slavery in Hong Kong, revealed a state of things which it was perfectly monstrous to allow to exist under the English flag. On the Gold Coast certain protected States became, after the Ashantee War, British Colonies. One was the British Colony of the Gold Coast, and the other was the Colony of Lagos. After the assumption of Sovereignty, a Proclamation was issued in the former, putting an end to what was called debt slavery; but he was credibly informed that no such Proclamation was issued in Lagos, and at the present moment there was a considerable amount of that debt slavery existing within that Colony. Then, with respect to the protected Malay States, not one word was said in the Blue Books presented of late years as regarded the slavery which they knew existed there. But there appeared in *The Times* of March 25 a letter from Sir Benson Maxwell, who had long been Chief Justice in these protected States, in which he stated that—

> "We govern as absolutely—nay, more absolutely—than any Crown Colony. The Malays have two kinds of slaves, the ordinary menial creature, and the debtor slave. There is no good reason why slavery in any form should be tolerated in our Malay possessions."

After that letter had appeared in *The Times*, a Question was put to the Under Secretary for the Colonies respecting it, and the hon. Gentleman then said that the Colonial Office was about to call the attention of the Governors of these Colonies to debtor slavery. He (Mr. Labouchere) hoped that had been done, and that they should speedily hear that not only debtor slavery, but all slavery, had ceased in these Colonies. Again, in North Borneo, which was now a State affiliated to the British Empire, provisional regulations had just been laid down respecting slaves. One was to the effect that all slaves absconding would be for the present returned to their masters, unless they could purchase their freedom, or showed that they had been cruelly treated. He hoped the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs would take these regulations into his serious consideration. The state of things existing in Hong Kong was a disgrace to this country; the Free Trade, which was said to account for its progress, included free trade in slaves; indeed, the place was literally an *entrepôt* for slavery in the East. The statements showing this were made by Chief Justice Smale and other authorities, and they were quite sufficient to justify us in demanding that the system should be put an end to at once. It might be inferred that Chief Justice Smale had done his best to induce the Attorney General of the Colony to institute prosecutions, and the Attorney General appeared to have held that there was no use in doing so in the present state of the law. But the law in Hong Kong was precisely the same as it was in this Metropolis; that was the effect of Ordinances passed in 1843 and 1845. A Report had been made to Chief Justice Smale by Mr. Francis, a barrister, who said that relatively there was little or no family life in Hong Kong among the Chinese, and, therefore, no legitimate demand for either adopted male children or for female domestic servitude; that from three-fourths to five-sixths of the Chinese women in Hong Kong were prostitutes or lived directlyby prostitution; that the bulk of these prostitutes were slaves bought and trained up at considerable expense for the purpose; owned there, at Canton, or Macao; prostituted for the sole profit of their owners; redeemable only by purchase, and rarely able to purchase their freedom; that every Chinese woman who was not in the actual practice of prostitution engaged, if she could get the means, in buying and rearing girls for the work; that Singapore, Australia, and San Francisco were supplied from Hong Kong with prostitutes, kept women, and concubines; that the profits of this trade were so great and the demand so strong that Chinese men and women were daily tempted into a career of open crime as kidnappers of women and children to supply the demand, not sufficiently supplied by the breeders; that there was a veritable slave class, and a genuine slave trade carried on in Hong Kong, and that on a very large scale indeed; that the prosecutions under the local Ordinances only touched the fringe of this garment of crime—only the abuses that had grown out of this tolerated slavery and slave trade; and that until this slave holding and slave dealing were entirely suppressed, the grosser abuses arising out of them and incidental to them—kidnapping of women and children—could never be put an end to. Girls of 13 or 14 were brought from Canton or elsewhere, and delivered according to bargain, and as a regular matter of business, for large sums of money, which went to their owners, and frequently, it would appear, to their own parents. Their regular earnings went to the same gaolers, and the unfortunate creatures were subjects of speculation to regular traders residing beyond our jurisdiction, There were from 18,000 to 20,000 prostitutes in Hong Kong, and from 4,000 to 5,000 respectable Chinese women. Mr. Francis said—

"When some of the girls are sent away on account of age, new ones are got from Canton. There are about eight or ten changes a year (among 20 girls); they remove into other Chinese brothels or go back to Canton. No woman is kept in a first-class Chinese brothel after 24 years of age. Then, if they are not married, the parents (pocket mothers) take them away. What becomes of them is not known. They become, perhaps, hairdressers, servants, or prostitutes in other brothels. If these girls are not slaves in every sense of the word, there is no such thing as slavery in existence. If this buying and selling for the purpose of training female children up for this life is not slave-dealing, there never was such a thing as slave-dealing in this world."

In October, 1879, Chief Justice Smale, from his place on the Bench, called attention to a placard offering rewards for the detention or restoration of a slave girl, and he said—

"Has Cuba or has Peru ever exhibited more palpable, more public evidence of the existence of generally recognized slavery in these hot-beds of slavery than such placards do?"

Writing in October, 1879, Chief Justice Smale said—

"The more I penetrate below the polished surface of our civilization, the more convinced am I that the broad undercurrent of life here is more like that in the Southern States of America when slavery was dominant, than it resembles the all-pervading civilization of England. Nothing less powerful than a Commission, with legislative powers to investigate and to examine on oath, will ever lay bare the evil which, from suggestions I have received, I believe to underlie our seemingly fair surface. My suggestion that the mild intervention of the law should be invoked was ignored. It was also met by the assertion that custom has so sanctioned the evil in this Colony, that they are above the reach of law, and that by custom the slavery was mild. I must leave it to the Government to decide whether there shall or shall not be investigation, and whether the *status in quo* of public morals in this Colony in these particulars shall be allowed to continue as one of the many evils which neither law nor legislation can cope with. That is a question which, fortunately, is not within the province of the Judge; it is for the statesman only to decide."

And in another communication he said—

"I take shame to myself that the appalling extent of kidnapping, buying, and selling slaves, for what I may call ordinary servile purposes, and the buying and selling young females for worse than ordinary slavery, has not presented itself before to me in the light it ought. It seems to me that it has been recognized and accepted as an ordinary outturn of Chinese habits, and thus that, until special attention has been excited, it has escaped public notice. The practice is on the increase. It is in this port and in this Colony especially that the so-called Chinese custom prevails. Under the English flag slavery, it has been said, does not, cannot ever be. Under that flag it does exist in this Colony, and is, I believe, at this moment more openly practised than at any former period of its history."

[The hon. Member read the text of a bill of sale under which a boy had been sold, and also the statement made by a Chinese girl of 14, who, at the age of 11, had been sold by her parents to a Chinaman, who in Hong Kong sold her to a young Chinese gentleman, who took her to his family house, from which she ran away, because she was beaten by her mistress.] He observed that there was a disposition to represent that these girls were well treated, and were benefited rather than injured by being thus dealt with. On that point he would quote from a judgment delivered by Chief Justice Smale in a case that came before his Court. The victim was brought into Court in the arms of an Inspector of Police. She could not stand, and was placed in a chair, much emaciated, with pale and hollow cheeks, to the eye of a non-medical man almost dying; and she then narrated the history of her sufferings. This child, of about 13 years of age, lost her father, and about a year ago her mother sold her to someone, who brought her to Hong Kong and sold her to the female prisoner. The female prisoner beat her very often, sometimes with a rattan, and sometimes with firewood, taken from the ordinary bundles of split firewood, perhaps two or three times a week. She was beaten with firewood on the 3rd of November last, when her leg was broken. She could not walk even now. Some time after that the female prisoner burnt her on the arm and hand with a hot crimping-iron. The little girl showed eight places where the marks of the burning remained. One neighbour described the beating on the 3rd of November last—that the little girl was tied up by her hands to a bamboo, which hung from the ceiling, by the clothes line by the male prisoner, and that she was beaten by the woman with a piece of firewood, described as being about 2 feet long and 2 inches in diameter. This witness saw the female prisoner strike the little girl two or three times on one of her legs; then the man struck the little girl, still tied up; and he then untied her, and on the support of her being tied up failing her the little girl fell down. It would be said, perhaps, that this was an isolated case; but Chief Justice Smale was not of that opinion. He said—

> "I fear that, though it may be pre-eminently atrocious, hundreds, nay, thousands, of cases of a like kind have existed in this Colony and under the British flag."

In Hong Kong a regular Slave Market existed for the purpose of supplying Australia and California. The price was various—bought in Hong Kong, the women cost from $50 to $150; and when sold in California, they were to be disposed of for from $250 to $350. That was stated in evidence in the course of a trial at Hong Kong. In such a matter the public opinion of an Eastern Colony was sure to be wrong, and the view taken of it by the Chinese might be gathered from a Petition published in the Blue Book. The petitioners (Natives) set forth that the decisions of the Lord Chief Justice had "put all Native residents of Hong Kong in a state of extreme terror;" the merchants and wealthy classes fearing that they might be found guilty of an indictable offence, and the low-class people that they might be deprived of a means to preserve their lives—that was, by selling children to be domestic servants. Now, his hon. Friend might, perhaps, argue that there was a defence for that state of things; and, if he did so, would probably take the line that the adoption of children was for their advantage, and that they were educated as domestic servants at Hong Kong. But there was the authority of the Chief Justice of the Colony to the effect that very few of these women became domestic servants, and that the children who were brought to Hong Hong were sold from one home to another, till at last they were exported to Australia and California. His hon. Friend, who had so often raised his voice on behalf of humanity, would, he was sure, not defend such a system now that he was in Office. He need say no more on this subject; the facts he had brought forward were incontestable, and he only hoped that the Government would do all in their power to prevent Hong Kong from becoming an *entrepôt* for the most infamous slavery.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND said, he thought that the House was greatly indebted to the hon. Member for Northampton for bringing this important question under the consideration of the House —a question, indeed, second in importance to none of those ordinarily brought under their notice. But he desired, before the Under Secretary for the Colonies made a full reply to the speech of the hon. Member, to point out some curious mistakes which the hon. Member for Northampton had made in his statement. In the first place, as regarded our Possessions in West Africa, he seemed to think that Lagos and the Gold Coast became protected Territories after the Ashantee War. Now, they never were protected Territories at all; but they were Crown Colonies long before the Ashantee War, and no slavery had existed in them for many years. The hon. Member complained that no Proclamation against slavery had been issued in Lagos; but there was no reason why any such Proclamation should have been issued, inasmuch as the law of England against slavery always was in force. Some States, however, bordering on the Gold Coast, we did take under our protection after the Ashantee War, and in these domestic slavery was being gradually extinguished under the conditions imposed by Lord Carnarvon. The result of Lord Carnarvon's efforts had been most satisfactory; and, as far as he (Sir Henry Holland) knew, no complaints of the existence of slavery in those protected States had been received at the Colonial Office, nor had the hon. Member for Northampton brought forward any cases. Then, as regarded the Malay States, the hon. Member had quoted from a letter of Sir Benson Maxwell, whom he stated to have been the late Chief Justice of those States. But Sir Benson Maxwell was Chief Justice of Singapore and the Straits Settlements, and had no jurisdiction over the protected Malay States. Nor had the Colonial Government, so far as he (Sir Henry Holland) knew, such absolute jurisdiction over those States as to enable them directly to enforce the abolition of domestic slavery there. But it was well known that the late Secretary of State for the Colonies took most active steps to check domestic slavery there, and those efforts had been attended with considerable success. Then, as regarded the new Company in North Borneo—as he (Sir Henry Holland) had ventured to point out in a former debate—the Charter imposed with regard to slavery the only practicable conditions which could be imposed. The Company were bound to use all their efforts to put an end, as soon as possible, to the system of domestic slavery. They could not have been called upon to put an end at once to an institution which was firmly rooted in the country, and which had existed there for years. Lastly, as regarded Hong Kong, he (Sir Henry Holland) entirely agreed with the hon. Member for Northampton in his strong condemnation of the abominable practice of selling young Chinese girls for the purposes of prostitution, and he trusted that the Colonial Office would use their best endeavours to stamp out that practice. But that practice, however iniquitous, was entirely different from the system of slavery; although, judging from what the hon. Member had said, it would almost seem as if the Chief Justice, Sir John Smale, must have confounded that system of selling for prostitution with the question of slavery, from which it was really quite distinct. It did not, however, appear whether the bill of sale, which the hon. Member read to the House, was brought before the Chief Justice in his judicial capacity. If it had been, it might possibly have been held to be null and void, and then those who relied upon it would have failed. But, at all events, as regarded slavery, the hon. Member was forced to admit that the law of England prevailed in Hong Kong; and if any case had been brought into Court, the presiding Judge would have been bound to act on that law and to free the slave. If, then, any fault was to be found, it was not in the law, but in the fact that sufficient care was not taken to see that the law was put in force. No evidence, however, was produced by the hon. Member to show that there was any failure in this respect; and even if there were, it would not bring the case within the terms of the Resolution before the House. But, although the question of slavery was immediately brought before the House, a question which he had shown to be quite distinct from that of Chinese Prostitution, he could not conclude without again expressing his earnest hope that the Colonial Office would not relax in any efforts to check that iniquitous traffic, and would not hesitate to introduce and enforce any legislation which might be found necessary for that end.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, it was matter for great satisfaction that there should be a discussion on Slavery at a time when that horrid institution was showing a new activity, and when we had just received information with regard to it from all parts of the world. That the Slave Trade was increasing at the present time was beyond doubt. From Jedda, in the Red Sea, our Consul reported that the stock of slaves was so increased by importation that prices had gone down 50 per cent, and that he could buy any number he pleased. From other quarters they had news which proved that the Circassian and Georgian slave dealings were also increasing. This was the White Slave Trade, and many of those were as fair and as lovely as the handsomest of our own people. That this trade was flourishing was chiefly due to the preference which the Turks had shown for the Circassian law with regard to slavery over their own. According to the Circassian law, the children born of slaves were themselves slaves, whereas, according to the Turkish law, the children of slaves were not slaves; The Turks, therefore, who were engaged in a general traffic in domestic slavery, habitually purchased large numbers of Circassians, especially children, and those children, being born in slavery, were themselves slaves. He reminded the House that just a year ago a Circassian female slave sought refuge from ill-treatment in the British Consulate at Larissa. In taking part in this debate his deliberate object was to encourage those of Her Majesty's Representatives in different parts of the world who did what they could at all times to uphold the doctrine of this country in reference to freedom, and to show them that when they took that course they would have the sympathy and support of the House of Commons. He was aware of the great difficulty which surrounded those who were resident in a country in which domestic slavery was practically universal; but he also knew something of what could be done, and was persuaded of the great importance in the eyes of our Representatives of having, not an evanescent, but a persistent encouragement from this House and from the people of this country when they set themselves with discretion, but with firmness, against the institution of Slavery. He did not wish to discourage efforts so praiseworthy and zealous which had long been made, and which were now being made, by the gallant Naval Forces of this country to annihilate slavery; but he had long been convinced that we should never succeed in the abolition of slavery unless our efforts, which were entirely directed against the supply of slaves, were devoted more earnestly and more thoroughly than they had been against the demand for slaves. In this case at Larissa there was no question of the ex-territoriality of the Vice Consulate. The Civil Governor told Mr. Longworth that this female slave was not amenable to the local laws while in the Consulate, but that when she went out she might be lawfully seized and restored to her owner. Upon hearing that, Mr. Longworth called the girl, and, in his own words, "told her plainly that she must return to her master." The cause of freedom would be advanced if that House would join in reproving Mr. Longworth for this flagrant disregard of the rights of this woman and the British flag. The Consul said—"The excitement and terror caused by my words on this poor woman were beyond description." He contrasted Mr. Longworth's dealings in this matter with that of the Vice Consul at Angora in a case which occurrred lately of a slave girl named Hosheda. Her owner was about to sell her to some nomad Kurds, and she took refuge at the British Vice Consulate. Lord Granville telegraphed—"If the girl takes refuge at the Vice Consulate she should not be given up." It would be easy to quote much evidence to show that slavery was practically universal in European and Asiatic Turkey and in Egypt. There was a public Slave Market at Mecca, and there was a Slave Trade carried on by private brokers in every city of the Turkish and Persian Empires, including Egypt. Our operations, he held, ought to be directed against the demand for slaves. They were attempting the impossible when they supposed they could accomplish the abolition of slavery by attacking the traffic in the most remote parts of Africa from which black slaves were originally imported, while in every Mussulman city in the world, except in India and Algeria, there was a rapid and a constant and a certain demand for slaves from whatever quarter they might come. What a most painful contrast there was between effort and result, when we compared the brave energy of Captain Brownrigg with the fearful report that not fewer than 8,000 mutilated males, the survivors of 40,000 who had been subjected to the same cruelty, were annually imported into Turkey and Egypt. Consul Burton truly said that closing the Red Sea and hanging eunuch-manufacturers would not arrest slave importation into Egypt and Turkey, and that the absolute abolition of the legal status of slavery was the only effectual measure to adopt. He trusted the House would be of that opinion, and that the best efforts of the Government would be directed to that end. He believed that he had seen slaves imported under the British flag from Egypt to Turkey and from Turkey to Morocco, the slaves being entered as servants of the dealers with whom they were travelling. The Representative of Portugal reported that from the single province of Mozambique there was an average export of from 2,000 to 4,000 slaves per annum. There could be no doubt that two great centres of the Slave Trade were the cities known as "Mecca the venerated and Medina the resplendent," where, by an exception to the capitulations, no Power could place Consuls. Slavery was practised all over the coast of the Persian Gulf. It was not uncommon for slaves to take refuge on British vessels in those waters; but they were sometimes restored to their owners on the recommendation of the British political Residents. In fact, his observation led him to believe that a fugitive slave seeking refuge in a British ship had a better chance of escape if the British Crown had no Representative on the shore from which he had fled. In conclusion, he expressed an earnest hope that the European Powers would make strenuous efforts to procure the abolition of the status of slavery. He trusted all the Powers of Europe would unite with England in adopting a more robust attitude in opposition to slavery, so that we might hope, at no very distant date, to secure the abolition of that most grievous traffic.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, his hon. Friend the Under Secretary for the Colonies would answer that which formed the main portion of the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). He should like to say a few words in answer to what had fallen from the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) on one point that had not been touched by the hon. Member for Northampton. The first complaint of the hon. Member for Salford was that there had not been a general distribution of Slave Trade Papers. Previous to the year 1851, 2,000 Copies of those Papers were printed. The expense did not seem to be justified by the amount of interest taken in those Papers by the public. The number of the Copies was reduced in 1852. Alterations were made in the number of printed Copies in subsequent years. From 1862 to the present year about 900 Copies had been ordered. If another change was to be made on the subject, he thought it ought to be this—that, in all cases, such Papers only as were asked for should be delivered. The hon. Member for Salford made an attack, not based upon any evidence, upon Consul Longworth. The fact was, that a very large number of slaves had been emancipated through the exertions of that gentleman. That was shown by the Papers themselves. As regarded domestic slaves employed, or seeking refuge on board British merchant vessels in territorial waters of States in which the status of slavery was recognized by law, the language of the Motion was so vague that, if adopted, it would prevent the restoration by a Naval or Consular officer of any fugitive slave to his master, whatever might be the circumstances of the case. If such a rule were adopted it would be in violation of the principles of International Law; domestic slaves would flock to our ships; enormous claims for compensation would arise; and riots and hostilities would necessarily ensue. In the discussion which took place in 1876 on the Slave Trade Circular, the present Judge Advocate said—

> "The Attorney General had argued that merchant ships were liable to the law of the territory in whose waters they were—a proposition which no one denied."

And the present Home Secretary said—

> "The first Circular was founded on a supposed obligation on the part of a ship to submit to the local law of the port. If that was so, all he could say was that they reduced the Queen's ships to the condition of a merchant vessel, because that was the situation of a merchant vessel."

"Merchant vessels were not extra-territorial within the waters of Foreign States." As regarded British merchant vessels, it was well known that a slave did not obtain his freedom by having been on board a private ship, and that a slave who had come to this country or who had been on board a British ship on the high seas, when he returned to the place where he had been a slave, resumed, on so doing, his condition as a slave. It could scarcely be supposed, therefore, that the Motion was intended to apply to cases in which fugitive slaves were returned by Her Majesty's Naval and Consular officers to the local authorities, although thereby "retained in or consigned to domestic slavery." It might be that what was meant was that no British official in whom might be vested the exercise of jurisdiction over Natives in a country where the status of domestic slavery existed should recognize such status, and give any decision whereby such Natives should be retained in or consigned to slavery. But when could that happen? If the hon. Member referred to the probability of some of the officers of the Borneo Company being made British Consuls while the status of domestic slavery was recognized by the law of that country, and would point out that officers might be called upon to enforce that law while holding Her Majesty's Consular commission, he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) would explain that the status of domestic slavery would only exist pending its gradual extinction among the Natives. There were Courts of Justice for the Natives, in which that status would, no doubt, be recognized by the judicial officers who might preside over them. There would necessarily be also Courts of Justice for Foreigners, and in these the status of slavery would, of course, not be recognized. It was not contemplated that Consular appointments should be conferred on any officer of the Company who would preside over the Courts of Justice established for the Natives; consequently, the state of things which the hon. Member deprecated would not arise, as no officer of the Company, holding Her Majesty's Consular commission, would be called upon to recognize the status of domestic slavery, or have it in his power to retain in, or consign anybody to, slavery. In conclusion, he could only say that this subject was not only of general interest, but was one of the highest interest that could be brought before the House. No one could ever maintain that hon. Members were not entitled to bring the subject before the House from time to time; and certainly nothing but good could result from the minds of hon. Members being directed to it. It had always been the policy of this country, and he believed it would continue to be its policy, to take steps for the suppression of slavery.

Mr. A. M'ARTHUR said, he could not regret that the subject had been brought before the House. The Blue Book dealing with this question showed that a system of slavery had been practised in the neighbourhood of Hong Kong, not only for domestic purposes, but also, in the case of women, for much viler uses. The highest praise was due to the Governor—Sir John Pope Hennessey—for the efforts which he had made to counteract these evils. It was true, as the Governor had pointed out, that a distinction should be drawn between the binding of boys and girls to domestic service, which was practised in that part of the world, and actual slavery. But the Governor had done all he could to vindicate English ideas and to prevent the importation into an English Colony of Chinese notions on the question of domestic service, and had laid down the principle that the parent was entitled to the support and aid of his children. There could be no doubt that slavery did exist in Hong Kong, although it was prohibited by English law. He trusted that the inquiry which was going to be held by Lord Kimberley into that matter would be made by impartial persons. He attached considerable importance to that debate, because he thought there were indications that we were not so vigorous in our efforts against slavery as we formerly were.

Mr. COURTNEY said, he agreed with his hon. Friend (Sir Charles W. Dilke) in his statement that the Government viewed the purport of the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton in a spirit of friendship. It would be admitted, he (Mr. Courtney) thought, that it had always been the desire of recent Governments to use their influence to prevent, not only slavery, but everything approaching thereto. The hon. Member for Northampton did not appear, however, to be of that opinion; and he had brought a charge against the Government which seemed to have no foundation whatever. He must point out to the House that the hon. Member had brought an extraordinary accusation against the Government. He said that he was credibly informed that slavery existed in Lagos. But he had not deemed it necessary to adduce a single fact or circumstance in support of that statement. How was it possible that the Government could meet such a charge as that? He should have thought that it would have been the duty of the hon. Member, before bringing such a charge, to make inquiry as to its correctness. It was the belief of the Government that slavery had ceased to exist, not only in Lagos, but in all the other places to which the hon. Member referred. Every attempt to revive it had been checked and punished by all recent Governments; but if the hon. Member furnished them with new facts they would cause further inquiry to be made, and take steps for the extinction of slavery where it was found to exist. The same observations applied regarding the alleged existence of slavery in the Malay States. The hon. Member complained that there were no Papers on the subject. But several Papers were published in reference to the West Coast of Africa in 1875, and many others dealing with other places had also been published from time to time. The hon. Member surely could not require that Papers on that subject should be issued year by year, when no fresh case of any description had arisen. As regarded the question of slavery in the Malay States, however, some Correspondence with the Governor of that district was in existence, and would be shortly laid before the House. The hon. Member for Northampton said he was going to rest his observations upon a substantial foundation — upon the remarks of Chief Justice Smale, and not upon the statement of any newspaper correspondent. He thought the hon. Member ought to know the value of newspaper correspondents, though he seemed to speak somewhat slightingly of them. The fact was, the hon. Member used the word "slavery" with some degree of looseness. His remarks chiefly referred to Hong Kong, and to the slavery in existence there. But, as a fact, the state of things in Hong Kong, though, no doubt, deplorable, did not amount to slavery. Slavery he defined to be a condition of life in which one person was held under the authority and compelled to work for and fulfil the will of another in such a way that the subjugated person could not escape, which condition, also, the law of the country enforced. He defined slavery so, and so, indeed, it was. Nothing of the kind existed in Hong Kong, because in that city the English law prevailed. The hon. Member for Northampton considered the whole strength of his position lay in the fact that people were so bought and sold for the purpose of prostitution. Now, there were special laws in Hong Kong affecting purchases and sales for that purpose. It was enacted in 1875 that the sale or purchase of a woman or child for the purpose of prostitution, or the harbouring of any woman or child for that purpose, should be a misdemeanour. Every person, therefore, who affected to buy or sell, or to hold out that any woman or child had been bought or sold for the purpose of prostitution, was guilty of a misdemeanour. There was a vast number of people who were bought and sold for other purposes, and such sales constituted no offence. It was so in England. They all knew of the common accusation of husbands selling their wives in Smithfield, and how the practice was not unknown even at the present day. The transaction, however, was a pure nullity. That was the state of facts as at present existed in Hong Kong, and perhaps it might be the concomitant of a very dangerous state of society; but when they remembered the situation of Hong Kong, placed in the centre of a teeming population that could with difficulty obtain a livelihood, they could not be surprised at it. In quoting the Petition of the Chinese inhabitants of Hong Kong, with the view of showing how rotten public opinion there was, the hon. Member for Northampton omitted that part of the prayer in which they condemned the purchase of free people for the purposes of prostitution, and prayed that kidnapping and selling for such purposes should be severely punished. If the hon. Member had quoted this passage, he would have answered this part of his case, for the Chinese were most eager in their desire to help the Government in checking the evils which they admitted to exist. He admitted most fully the existence of the practice of buying and selling children for the purposes of adoption and apprenticeship; but he would point out that none who were so adopted could be held in servitude against their will, that they could escape, that they could apply to the Courts, and that anyone could apply on their behalf. The fact of their having been sold, Lord Kimberley had pointed out, did not deprive them of any rights. Undoubtedly the position of children so placed was one of peril, which required to be safeguarded; and his noble Friend had suggested for consideration whether the entering into agreements should be made a misdemeanour, whether specified conditions should be exacted, whether all transactions should be registered, or whether some combination of these provisions should be adopted, in order to prevent abuses. The Government would continue, not only in the task of preventing slavery, but also in doing what they could do to avert the growth of a servile class of a different race from the dominant class, conscious as they were of the dangers that were inseparable from such a condition of things.

MR. DILLWYN said, he must confess he was generally disappointed at the tone adopted by the Under Secretary for the Colonies, and he could not help comparing the hon. Member's official utterances with those he used before he accepted Office. The hon. Member's speech was a half-hearted condemnation, amounting almost to a defence, of gross abuses. He was sure the reply of the hon. Gentleman would produce a general feeling of disappointment in the country, and he regretted the Government would not give a frank condemnation of the monstrous practices prevailing in Hong Kong. Whether there was legal slavery or not, there was practically slavery in its worst form; and the more the actual condition of things was realized the more would the country feel that the hon. Member for Northampton deserved thanks for having called attention to it.

MR. CROPPER said, that it was satisfactory that the Colonial Office had laid before the House the result of their investigations into that matter, and that it was not merely drawn from them by the investigations of any private individual. Lord Kimberley had expressed a desire that a full and trustworthy inquiry should be made into the facts and into what measures, if any, should be taken to remove the evils which might be brought to light. He had great confidence in Sir John Pope Hennessy and Sir John Smale, and he fully believed that what they would see was that in some way the system of Colonial Slavery, which it could not be denied existed at Hong Kong, would be abolished. The great evil of retaining girls in houses of ill-repute at Hong Kong was a much larger question, and it could only be removed when the question as to contagious diseases at Hong Kong was thoroughly gone into. He was convinced that the feeling expressed in England some years ago on the subject of the Slave Circular had had a good effect, and that it was now a point of honour in the Navy that wherever the British flag waved slavery was to be discouraged.

CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS—PRIVATE SECRETARIES TO MINISTERS.

OBSERVATIONS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR, who had given Notice of a Motion—

> "That the practice of appointing clerks of the Treasury Office, and other gentlemen who have acted as private secretaries to Prime Ministers and Chancellors of the Exchequer, to important posts in Departments of the Civil Service other than the Treasury, is calculated to discourage zeal and industry in such Departments to the prejudice of the Public Service,"

said: Being precluded by the Forms of the House from moving the Resolution which stands in my name on the Paper, I rise now for the purpose of calling attention to the question, which is a very important one. I wish to disclaim, at the very outset, any desire to make any special attack upon the present Administration, because I am not aware that the practice which I ask the House to disapprove is followed by the Ministers who are now in power more than it has been followed by any of their Predecessors. Under all Governments it has been pretty much the same. My present object is not to blame or to disparage the Members of any Government, past or present, however much I may be, upon other grounds, opposed to a particular Administration. Still less do I wish to make an attack upon any of the gentlemen who have been exceptionally promoted, or to detract in any degree from the reputation they have acquired for more than ordinary strength of character, ability, and zeal. I am very ready to admit that they may all be considerably above the average. In fact, it is obvious that they must be able and qualified men; the interest of the Ministers themselves secures that in the selection of Private Secretaries they will have regard to those qualities of readiness and dispatch in business, tact, urbanity and firmness, and a certain aptitude for administrative work, which are all of the first importance in the direction of a Department, and without which they would scarcely be efficient assistants to a hard-worked Minister. There is, therefore, no question of their character or their qualifications; and the Motion which I placed upon the Paper was intended to be far removed from anything of a personal nature. I desired to bring it forward solely in the interest of the Civil Service, with which for years I was myself connected, and in which I must always take a lively interest. The Civil Service Departments may be divided into two great classes—the first class, comprising the Departments of Secretaries of State, which may be called the administrative and spending Departments; the other class, including the Revenue Departments of Customs and Inland Revenue, which are not presided over by Secretaries of State. Intermediate between these two classes is the Post Office, which partakes of the character of both, being at once a Revenue and a spending Department. And over all is the Treasury, the centre of administration and of patronage. The Departments of the first class are strong and influential; strong in the fact that their own Chiefs are Cabinet Ministers, able to protect the interests of their subordinates, and influential from the social position and connections of large numbers of their members. These Departments have, accordingly, little to complain of in consequence of the practice to which I refer. On the contrary, they sometimes, but only occasionally, receive some of those undue advantages of which the Treasury itself keeps the lion's share. A case in point, which I mention only incidentally, is that of Mr. Mitford, a clerk in the Home Office of 12 or 13 years' service, but who, having acted for some time as Private Secretary to the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir William Harcourt), was appointed by him, some six weeks ago, to be a Commissioner of Prisons, and the colleague of an experienced officer, Admiral Hornby, to the exclusion and discouragement of experienced Inspectors and Governors. The Home Office, therefore, does not suffer much, neither does the Admiralty, the Colonial Office, or the War Office; although there was a case in connection with the War Office, not many years ago, which gave rise to a discussion in this House. The Post Office, again, is able to offer a considerable resistance to any outrageous encroachments upon its own field attempted by anyone outside the Treasury. Thus, when some years ago the noble Marquess, now the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington), but formerly Postmaster General, after having been Under Secretary of State for War, attempted to appoint Mr. Hobart, a junior in the War Office, who was his Private Secretary, to one of the most lucrative postmasterships in the Kingdom, the design had to be given up. But when the encroachment is made by the Treasury itself, the Post Office sees its best prizes snatched away from its own officers, and given to junior outsiders. But the Customs and Inland Revenue Departments are still less influential, and their Chiefs are not Cabinet Ministers. The appointments they offer to the rapacity of outsiders are more numerous and more tempting to those who can strongly influence the actions of the chief Ministers of the Treasury; and these Departments, accordingly, are the principal sufferers. But these Departments are also the largest; and the discontent engendered by appointments such as I refer to is more extensively propagated, and, in its effects, more generally injurious to the Civil portion of the Public Service. Let me now give the most prominent cases of Private Secretaries of Ministers who have been appointed to posts of profit in the Civil Service. What are these appointments? I will content myself with a limited number of them; all notable cases, and all still in being. They are Mr. Herbert Murray, who was a clerk in the Treasury and Private Secretary to a Chancellor of the Exchequer, and who was appointed Assistant Paymaster General and a Queen's Remembrancer in Ireland, and is now Secretary of Customs, at a salary of £1,400 a-year; Mr. Algernon West, Private Secretary to Mr. Gladstone, Prime Minister, appointed Commissioner of Inland Revenue, and recently promoted to be Chairman of that Board — salaries, £1,200 and £2,000; Mr. Walter S. Northcote, who was not in the Civil Service at all, but was Private Secretary to Sir Stafford Northcote, when the right hon. Gentleman was Chancellor of the Exchequer, appointed Commissioner of Inland Revenue — salary, £1,200 a-year; Mr. Charles G. Turner, a clerk in the Treasury, appointed Accountant and Comptroller General of Inland Revenue — salary, £1,000 a-year; Mr. Stevenson Arthur Blackwood, a clerk in the Treasury, appointed Secretary to the General Post Office—salary, £2,000 a-year; Mr. Algernon Turner, clerk in the Treasury and Private Secretary to Lord Beaconsfield, Prime Minister, appointed Assistant Secretary at the General Post Office—salary, £1,500 a-year; Mr. (now Sir) Rivers Wilson, clerk in the Treasury and Private Secretary to Mr. Lowe, Chancellor of the Exchequer, appointed Controller of the National Debt—salary, £1,800 a-year; Mr. C. W. Fremantle, clerk in the Treasury and Private Secretary to Mr. Disraeli, Chancellor of the Exchequer, appointed Deputy Master of the Mint—salary, £1,200 a-year; and Mr. C. L. Ryan, who was a clerk in the Treasury and Private Secretary to the present Prime Minister, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, was appointed to the post of Assistant Controller and Auditor General, with a salary of £1,500 a-year. I do not wish to canvas any of these appointments; but, in order to show what may be said as to some of them, I may mention that, in regard to Mr. Ryan, he was not originally in the Treasury, but was in the Audit Office, and was not transferred to the Treasury for promotion, but was made Private Secretary. Whether he was an efficient Private Secretary or not, it is not for me to inquire; but he was afterwards appointed to the post of Assistant Controller over the heads of a considerable number of very efficient men, under whom he had previously served in a very subordinate capacity, to do very inferior work, and he was appointed, notwithstanding a protest sent in to the Treasury by these officers. The House will readily understand that Members of the Civil Service, knowing my own quondam connection with it, and knowing that they may, with perfect confidence and safety, make to me any communication they think fit as to their grievances—knowing, also, I am at least as well able to appreciate them as any other Member of the House, and that no man is more qualified to enter into them, or more desirous of having them removed—knowing this, they have, during the last two years, sent an immense number of representations to me. I have never been on the look-out for grievances. One has enough to do, in all conscience, without that; neither have I put forward a complaint at any time without having first assured myself that it was well founded. I think I may claim credit from the House for not having unnecessarily put forward any grievance in connection with the Service, unless it was clearly my duty to do so. When, the year before last, and again last year, I made some observations upon the Customs Department, I knew very well how well founded was that dissatisfaction which has now at last forced itself upon public attention, and is now known to the whole of the House, with regard to the re-organization attempted on its Staff. But when the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Norwood) brought forward the grievances of the Outport Officers, though I appreciated fully the hardship of their position, I contented myself with a silent vote, and did not address one single word to the House upon the matter, because I saw that it was unnecessary, as it was in perfectly safe hands. But with regard to the matter to which I now wish to draw the attention of the House, I do feel that it is my duty to appeal, not to the Government, and not to the ex-Ministers, but to the House of Commons generally, and to declare, from my own knowledge and experience in the Service, that these appointments of specially-favoured individuals, however high their qualifications, to the best posts in Departments where they have never served, and over the heads of all the Staff of those Departments, produce evil effects, which it may be difficult exactly to define, but which are none the less real, and none the less injurious. Now, Sir, I have alluded to a number of these appointments, and I might have doubled the list if I had thought fit. It is obvious that each such appointment must necessarily produce great discontent, heartburning, and disappointment in the Department invaded. If the promoters had gone within the Department itself, not one man alone would have been advanced, but through every grade below him an official would have risen in his turn, and a healthy tone would have been imparted to the entire office, with that stimulus to exertion which the sight of fair promotion is always calculated to engender. But with the introduction of an outsider from the Treasury, you have first a disappointed man in the person immediately superseded, you have discontent at every step in the ladder below him, where men have been baulked of anticipated promotion, and you have a sense of injustice permeating that branch of the Service which naturally tends to render the entire Staff sullen and inert. The Treasury Staff secures the whole advantage, for the man removed from Downing Street obtains for himself extraordinary advancement, and his removal secures an improvement in the position of all below him on the Treasury list. It will, Sir, be in the recollection of many hon. Members of this House that during the last Parliament the House was invited, on the Motion of the hon. Member for Hackney (Mr. John Holms), to express its opinion upon an individual case somewhat akin, but not altogether on all fours, with the case to which I allude. At that time Lord Beaconsfield saw fit to appoint a junior from the War Office to the headship of the Stationery Office—I mean Mr. Pigott. Knowing Mr. Pigott personally, I was, for his own sake, glad of his advancement, and congratulated him upon it, and I claimed for Mr. Pigott the well-earned credit of having acquitted himself singularly well in a difficult and responsible post. But the hon. Member for Hackney would have been inclined, if he had been a friend of Mr. Pigott's, to congratulate him also, and he probably would have been ready to give that gentleman the credit which is his due. But the terms of the hon. Member's Motion were—

> "That the recent appointment of Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office is calculated to diminish the . . . . interest and zeal of officials employed in the Public Departments of the State."

The hon. Member pointed out that Mr. Pigott had been Private Secretary to several Under Secretaries of State, and denounced the appointment as unfair to the country, and unfair to the Civil Service. The hon. Member for Wenlock (Mr. A. Brown), in seconding the Motion, said that the appointment must tend to discourage all those gentlemen who had been superseded, and could not be for the benefit of the Public Service. It fell to the Chancellor of the Exchequer of that day to say what he could in defence of his Chief. With regard to the personal qualifications of Mr. Pigott, he had not a very difficult task; but he went on to contend on the general question that—

> "It was not a necessary rule that promotion must always take place within each Department, and reasons might easily be suggested why a man might be advantageously brought in from another Department. He would come with a fresh mind, and bring a fresh eye to bear on any abuses which might exist."—[3 *Hansard*, ccxxxv. 1338.]

I am prepared to admit that there is a great deal of force and a certain amount of truth in that statement; but what did the right hon. Gentleman the present Secretary of State for War (Mr. Childers) say in reply? Mr. Childers said—I quote from *Hansard*—

> "That he was not at all disposed to regard the affair from the point of view of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (the Chancellor of the Exchequer). At a time when they were doing their best to improve the status of the Civil Servants, it would be an unfortunate course to adopt, and altogether a departure from sound principle and common practice, if they were to say to men who had nearly reached the top of the tree:—'No matter how long your services, or how great your efficiency may be, you will not be promoted to the headship of your Department, but we shall take a junior clerk out of another office who knows nothing about the business and appoint him over you, in order to have the advantage of a fresh mind.'"

He went on to say—

> "He did not know how far that doctrine might be carried; but if a man was to be appointed, not because of his knowledge and experience, but because he came from somewhere else, and knew nothing of the particular business he would have to discharge, then, indeed, it would be a sorry look-out for the members of the Civil Service, who entered through the painful door of Competitive Examination in the hope that if they did their duty they would be promoted to the highest offices in the Department in which they were placed."—[*Ibid.*, 1339-40.]

Such were the sentiments of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War then, and such are his sentiments now. His action in respect of recent promotions in the War Office has been in accordance with them. Throughout that debate it was unanimously admitted that Mr. Pigott's character was of the highest; there was no imputation upon it, and no one questioned that his abilities were equal to his character. The House of Commons did not consider that question at all. It put it aside, and the decision was arrived at upon totally different grounds. The Motion of the hon. Member for Hackney was carried against the Government. And why was it carried? It was carried because the general sense of the House was that the appointment was given not altogether because of the qualifications of Mr. Pigott, high as they might be, but also because, over and above that, there were some kind of relations of a personal or political character between Lord Beaconsfield and Mr. Pigott or that gentleman's family, and that, but for these relations, the appointment would not have been made. Lord Beaconsfield afterwards, in his place in the House of Lords, made an explanatory statement, and emphatically denied that any such relations existed. On that explanation, and solely and only because of that contradiction, this House, with a loyalty and generous promptitude which did it honour, rescinded the vote. The House on that occasion was not only loyal and generous, but its position was strictly logical and as simple as a syllogism. Such a syllogism reduced to the simplest form would be: The appointment of a gentleman to the headship of an important office, in which he has not served, over the heads of the Staff of that Department, if made on account of his personal relations with the Minister in whose gift the appointment lies, is calculated to diminish the interest and zeal of officials employed in Public Departments of the State. That is the major premiss. The minor was this. Mr. Pigott was so appointed to be Controller of the Stationery Office. This the House accepted on the representation of the hon. Member for Hackney; and, having so accepted it, the House drew the logical conclusion in the shape of the Resolution which the hon. Member submitted. But when it was shown, as Lord Beaconsfield showed, that the minor premiss was false, the House properly abandoned its conclusion, and rescinded its vote. But what I want to point out is this — that it never abandoned its major premiss, and that, if Mr. Pigott had been Lord Beaconsfield's own Private Secretary, such a defence could not have been made, and the vote would have stood. I take it, therefore, that the vote on that occasion may be regarded as a proof that the House is prepared to condemn any such appointments, which would not have been made if the recipient of the benefit had not stood in some close personal relation to the Minister in whose gift the appointment lay. Now, there voted on that occasion, in support of the Motion of the hon. Member for Hackney, as shown by the Division List—the Hon. Evelyn Ashley, Mr. Thomas Brassey, the Right Hon. John Bright, Lord Frederick Cavendish, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, Leonard H. Courtney, Sir Charles W. Dilke, the Right Hon. John G. Dodson, Henry Fawcett, Sir Charles Forster, the Right Hon. W. E. Forster, Sir William Harcourt, Arthur Divett Hayter, Sir Henry James, Lord Kensington, G. Osborne Morgan, Anthony J. Mundella, the Right Hon. Dr. Lyon Playfair, and George Otto Trevelyan. Now, Sir, that was in the last Parliament, of which I was not a Member, and, therefore, I cannot be supposed to know anything about the individuality of the persons to whom these names belong; but the list induces me to think that many present occupants of the Treasury Bench are not altogether indisposed to give a mental adhesion to the principle of my Motion. But, Sir, it may be said by those who do not agree with the majority of the present Ministry with reference to some of their appointments, that the gentlemen promoted had served as Private Secretaries to successive Ministers of different Parties, and that, therefore, no charge of undue partiality can be brought against the Minister who actually makes the beneficial appointment, because he is promoting a gentleman who occupied the same post with regard to his Predecessor as he did with regard to himself. But I may point out that any man who makes use of that argument—and it has been made use of on former occasions—by so doing entirely misses the force of the complaint which is made. It has absolutely nothing to do with the question. What matters it to the Staff of the Customs that the man who takes the prize of their Department has been Private Secretary first to one Minister and then another? Tory patronage or Liberal patronage, it is all one to them if the Treasury Staff is benefited always at their expense. Then, again, we may be told that these gentlemen are all singularly able men, and specially qualified beyond others for the posts to which they are translated. But, surely, we are not expected to believe—and I hope the House will not believe, and I am certain the Civil Service will not believe—that, from some unexplained and mysterious cause, one Department is so provided with an abnormally gifted Staff, that from its own ranks it is able to furnish a regular and constant supply of officials pre-eminently fitted to occupy all the most lucrative posts in other Departments, while not a single instance can be adduced of a junior of the Customs or Inland Revenue Department being recognized as so gifted as to be fit for preferment to the Treasury itself. No, Sir; however gifted an officer in the Inland Revenue Department may be, however long and faithful his service, however fully qualified he may be, by work and experience, to obtain one of the prizes which he is legitimately entitled to hope for, he must be a man of marvellously sanguine temperament if he does not find his zeal chilled and his assiduity clogged by the consciousness that when within reach of his goal he may be called upon to place his knowledge and his capacity at the command of a junior from the Treasury, who, with half his service and none of his special experience, will supplant him in the post which he has fairly earned. It was well remarked, some three weeks ago, in an article in *The Times* newspaper, that—

> "The mere sense that years of labour and application may, and probably will, go for nothing in procuring promotion to the highest posts is the most serious damper to departmental zeal that can well be imagined."

That is the result of my experience. I scarcely like to refer to a third argument—for it scarcely deserves the name of argument—in favour of some of these appointments; but I allude to it because it will possibly be put forward on this occasion—namely, that the man who has passed the whole of his service in one Department is sure to have his favourite hangers-on and favourites, who will be certain to establish a clique around him, which will influence promotion for the benefit of themselves or their friends. It is scarcely worth mentioning at all; but, I would answer, it is precisely this cliqueism of the Treasury that we object to; and, besides, an outsider is just as likely to be swayed by his likings and dislikings as another, while he cannot possibly be so well able to form a correct judgment of the qualifications of his subordinates as that man can who has watched their career for years. If cliqueism is what it is necessary to prevent, it is very much more necessary to prevent it in the Treasury than in any other Department. Cliqueism in a Department may produce evils, and unquestionably it has done so; but the evils produced by a clique in a Department are confided to the Department itself, whereas cliqueism in the Treasury extends its baneful influences all over the Services. In dealing with this question, I have been told that I am dealing with a difficult and a delicate question. I have endeavoured to avoid the least expression which might be calculated to irritate or provoke anything of personal feeling; and if I have made use of any expression calculated to produce such an effect, I have done so unwittingly. I have brought forward the matter, not for the purpose of attacking any Minister, or of offending any gentleman who may have been previously promoted; but solely in the interest of the Public Service. I have pointed out that the Treasury clerks who have acted as Private Secretaries are apparently endowed with abilities far exceeding those of all other clerks and Private Secretaries in the Public Service. It is a good thing for a young man in the Treasury, when a good post falls vacant, to be Private Secretary to a Minister, and to have his merits recognized; but it is not necessarily for the good of the Public Service that he should be rewarded with the prize post of another Department. It is a practice which has produced evil effects in the past, and must continue to produce evil effects as long as it is continued. I appeal, therefore, to the House of Commons—not to the present Ministry, but to the House of Commons—at least to do their duty in providing safeguards for our great Public Departments, and, by so doing, promoting the general interests of the public.

Mr. WARTON said, he had no intention of following the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) into all he had said upon the subject, because he was quite prepared to admit that, with regard to both political Parties, very much the same system was pursued in reference to these appointments, and neither Party could reproach the other as to the course that was taken. The Government were now engaged in dealing with corrupt practices at elections, with a view of rendering electoral contests more pure in future; and they were imposing heavy penalties upon venal candidates and agents. Yet it nevertheless appeared that they practised analogous arts themselves in the distribution of patronage. His object, however, in rising was not to enter into the cases which had been submitted to the House by the hon. Member; but rather to call attention to a matter that occurred a very short time ago. He had no doubt that it was sometimes possible to find in a Department a man fitted for any place—a man of super-eminent ability, who was naturally fitted to fill any position. There was, however, an Order in Council which provided for the promotion of these extraordinary geniuses, so that their services should not be lost to the public. He referred to the Order in Council dated 4th of June, 1870, in reference to promotion in the Civil Service; and the 7th Rule of that Order was as follows:—

> "In case the Chief of a Department to which a situation belongs, and the Lords of the Treasury shall consider that the qualifications in respect of knowledge and ability deemed requisite for such situation are wholly or in part professional, or otherwise peculiar, and not ordinarily to be acquired in the Civil Service, and the said Chief of the Department shall propose to appoint thereto a person who has acquired such qualifications in other pursuits, and in case the said Chief of the Department and the Lords of the Treasury shall consider that either for the purpose of facilitating transfers from the Redundant List, or for other reason, it would be for the public interest that examination should be wholly or partially dispensed with, the Civil Service Commissioners may dispense with examination, wholly or partially, and may grant their certificate of qualification upon evidence satisfactory to them that the said person possesses the requisite knowledge and ability, and is duly qualified in respect of age, health, and character."

He had felt it his duty, in the month of February last, to call attention, by a Question to the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General, to an appointment made by him of a gentleman who had been acting in the capacity of Private Secretary to himself. That person had been appointed, in defiance of all the safeguards provided by this Rule—a person neither qualified by age, nor distinguished by ability, and not in the Public Service at all, to a position in the Post Office. If hon. Members would look at the Rule he had just read, they would see at once how far the Postmaster General, in making this appointment, had obeyed the only Rule which could shield him from the charge of improper favouritism. The individual in question certainly did not come under the first part of the Rule or Order. There was neither any wonderful amount of knowledge or ability possessed by the gentleman who was appointed by the Postmaster General; and if it was for the public interest that an examination should be wholly or in part dispensed with, surely it was necessary that there should be some qualification as to age and so forth. Yet this person was considerably beyond the specified age, and possessed neither the qualification of ability, public service, or age. He (Mr. Warton) had put a Question to the Postmaster General on the subject, and the only answer he received was that he did not know what the age of the gentleman was. But there were hon. Members who recollected what Ministers said from time to time, and who occasionally brought them to book at a moment when it was not quite convenient to be reminded of their former statements. He had considered it his duty to move for a Return of the age of the gentleman who had obtained exemption from the stipulations of the Rule laid down in 1870. The Return was granted as far back as February last; but the Minister had not chosen to comply with it, and no steps had been taken to produce it.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: The hon. and learned Member who has just sat down (Mr. Warton) has kindly stated that he is ready to make every allowance, both to the present and to any other Government, for the difficult circumstances under which they are required to exercise their political patronage. I regret very much that my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister is not present to answer any attack which may be made upon him in regard to this particular question; and I can assure the House that the absence of my right hon. Friend is not intentional, but that it is simply owing to the fact that he did not expect that this question was likely to come on. I hold that no function of a Minister of State is more important than the exercise of the higher class of patronage in connection with appointments in the Civil Service, because the efficiency of the Civil Service depends mainly upon the character of the appointments which are made. From time to time these appointments have been called in question. It is perfectly proper that that should be the case, and that, if necessary, the person who has made them should be held strictly responsible and called to account. But I would venture to say that of all the appointments which have been made by the present Government, those which have been made by the Prime Minister, although I am not here to speak upon his behalf, are the least open to any challenge whatever. The hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Warton) has thought fit to make an attack upon my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General for an appointment which he has made in the Post Office, in connection with a gentleman who had previously occupied the position of his Private Secretary. It will scarcely be credited that the appointment thus called in question was not one of any important character whatever, but simply to a subordinate clerkship in the Post Office. I think I shall be perfectly within the recollection of the House, when I say that, after the explanation of my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General (Mr. Fawcett), the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) is alone the hon. Member who continues to regard the appointment as unsatisfactory. I think there are very few Members of this House who will be of opinion that the faithful services rendered by the gentleman in question to my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General did not deserve the small recognition which they have received. As I have said, the patronage of the higher class appointments in the Civil Service is a very important question. I fully recognize the force of the observation of the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor), that it is discouraging to any branch of the Civil Service to find that they have been deprived of their well-deserved hopes of advancement. But the appointments which have been made in the Inland Revenue Department show that the Prime Minister is by no means insensible to that consideration. For instance, the appointment of the present very able Vice Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue has, for the first time, placed a man who has fought his way from the very bottom of the Service in that responsible and important position. It is even more important still, than any other consideration that can be named, that the best man should be selected for such a post. The hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor) has, at some length, dwelt on what he considers the unfair proportion of lucrative posts which have been awarded for political services to gentlemen connected with the Treasury. I was somewhat surprised that the hon. Gentleman did not illustrate his remarks by a reference to the Treasury itself; but it is a remarkable fact that for many years the Treasury has not had at the head of its own permanent Department a Member selected from the Treasury itself. Sir Ralph Lingen is not a Treasury man; his immediate predecessor, Mr. Hamilton, was not a Treasury man; and Sir Charles Trevelyan, who was the predecessor of Mr. Hamilton, was not a Treasury man. The reason of this has been that the head of the Treasury has felt that it was a most important object to obtain, in this responsible position, the man who was the best man for the Office; and, therefore, the Government of the day has altogether disregarded what the hon. Member has spoken of as the natural feeling of the Department in looking forward to promotion. I could illustrate the course which has been pursued still further; but I do not think that it is really necessary. The hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor) adverted at considerable length to the harm which he said was effected by Mr. Pigott's appointment; and he has called attention to the Resolution which was passed by this House in reference to that appointment, a Resolution in favour of which I myself voted. Now, that appointment was of a most important nature, and the accusation which was made was that it was conferred not on account of service or ability, but because of the close personal relationship which existed between the Minister by whom it was made and the individual on whom it was conferred. I am not ashamed of the vote which I gave in favour of the Resolution. It appears to me to have been a most reasonable vote, if the appointment was made simply on account of personal relationship. Under such circumstances, I hold that such an appointment would be a bad appointment. At the same time, I do not hold that it is necessarily a bad appointment because the man appointed happens to have a personal relationship with the Minister by whom the appointment is made. Personal relationship should, by no means, be a matter of disqualification; but the appointment should be fairly judged upon its merits, and upon its merits solely. I do not think, after the explanations that were made, that the appointment really came within the terms of the Resolution which was subsequently passed by this House, and afterwards rescinded. It appears to me that the hon. Member has also been inconsistent in the treatment of the case of Mr. Herbert Murray. It so happens that Mr. Herbert Murray never had any personal relationship whatever with the Prime Minister. I believe that Mr. Murray was not even known to the Prime Minister, except by reputation as one of the most able of the members of the Civil Service.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I hope the noble Lord will excuse me if I interrupt him. I did not ground anything upon the particular appointment of Mr. Herbert Murray. I only mentioned his case incidentally with other appointments.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Then I have some difficulty in following the hon. Gentleman, because I certainly understood him to complain of the appointment of Mr. Herbert Murray. I understood him to complain that Mr. Herbert Murray, not having belonged to the Department to which he was appointed, had been selected over the heads of other Civil Servants; and all I have to say is, that I do not see how the Prime Minister could have been actuated by improper partiality towards Mr. Herbert Murray, seeing that he had had no previous acquaintance with him. The appointment was made for this reason, and this reason only—that, able as the officers of the Customs are, as there were important changes in view, it was considered desirable to have a man from the outside, who should be able to view the difficult questions under consideration from a different standpoint from one who had been brought up in the Department. And I venture to say that the appointment will be justified before long. The hon. Gentleman has complained not only of appointments from the Treasury generally, but of the appointments of Private Secretaries. The idea that Private Secretaries are gentlemen appointed simply because they are connections or friends of the Minister is an antiquated one, and has long since been exploded. So very much of the personal convenience of the Minister, and of the possibility of his discharging his duties, depends upon his appointing the man best fitted for the post, and best qualified to aid in the discharge of the duties of the Department, that such appointments can no longer be called in question. The Minister who has the appointment to make naturally looks out, in his own interest and convenience, for the best man he can get. I will take the case of a gentleman to whom the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor) has referred—Mr. West. Mr. West, when he was first appointed by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister as his Private Secretary, was not in the Treasury; but he was simply selected for the office of Private Secretary because, from all my right hon. Friend could learn, he was the man best fitted for the post. He discharged his duties in the most able manner, and, having proved himself to be so thoroughly qualified for that position, he was made a Commissioner of the Board of Inland Revenue; and when the post of Vice Chairman of the Board became vacant, he had so well performed his duties that Lord Beaconsfield, who had had no connection with him in a private capacity, appointed him to the vacancy.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Lord Beaconsfield refused for a long time to promote Mr. West.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: The hon. Member is very ingenious in discovering a discrepancy with regard to the facts. I venture to say that anyone who knows anything about the working of the Department is fully aware that the reason why Mr. West was promoted to the Vice Chairmanship was, that he was looked upon as the best man for the post, and I will add that the appointment has been amply justified by the services which Mr. West has since rendered. I have already said that it is well Ministers should be called to account for the manner in which they discharge the important function of exercising patronage in regard to high appointments. The names which the hon. Member has read out contain those of some of the most able members of the

Civil Service; and they afford convincing proof that the high function of patronage has, at any rate, in their case, neither been disgraced nor badly discharged. The hon. Member has referred to the case of Mr. Ryan. I appeal to every hon. Member who has sat upon the Public Accounts Committee to say how the important duties which fall to the lot of Mr. Ryan have been discharged. It would be absolutely impossible to obtain a better man. I could go through the other names which have been referred to by the hon. Member — Mr. Fremantle, Mr. Rivers Wilson, Mr. Stevenson Blackwood, and others—but all I will say is, that the Ministers who appointed them ought to be proud of having done so, and that there is nothing to regret or be ashamed of in appointing them.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he wished to offer a few words in confirmation of the view which the noble Lord (Lord Frederick Cavendish) had expressed. It had been his duty for some time to act as Secretary to the Treasury; and when he arrived at the Department he found it necessary to select a Private Secretary from amongst gentlemen in the office. This gentleman was, to all appearances, adverse in politics to himself, but possessed the best qualifications for the appointment—that was to say, great experience and knowledge of the office, added to a spirit of loyalty to the Department and to the State. It was urged that the Administration might suffer from the Party politics of gentlemen appointed to these offices; but, with his experience in administration, he could say that in his Department, no matter what the politics of gentlemen might be, their one desire and object was to serve the State and their superiors in office with vigour, loyalty, and perfect diligence. During the four or five years that he was Secretary to the Treasury, he was served, and the Exchequer and the State were likewise served, by a gentleman of the highest possible credit in the position which he then occupied—a gentleman who was since promoted to the position of Secretary to the Governor General of India. This gentleman was no sympathizer with any of his (Mr. W. H. Smith's) political views, but was, on the contrary, his political opponent; but, notwithstanding that, he served him with fidelity as Private Secretary, in which capacity he regarded him not so much as he did in the light of an important officer doing his duty to the Government and the State. He understood the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor) to refer to Mr. Herbert Murray, who was an officer in the Treasury Department in Dublin. It was a matter of great regret to him (Mr. W. H. Smith), when he heard that it was the intention of the present Government to remove that gentleman from the position which he held in Dublin, and which he exercised with so much advantage to the public. It would be a very hard thing, indeed, if, because an officer had done his duty to the State in one position, he was not to be promoted to another—in other words, that Mr. Herbert Murray should be disqualified for any other position in the Public Service. Reference had been made to the fact that gentlemen who had filled positions in one office had been promoted to positions in another. He would only quote the case of the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, who was advanced to his present position from that of Under Secretary in the Education Department. This was an instance of the advantage of being able to remove gentlemen from one Department and utilize their services in another. He could say from his own experience that it was very much to the advantage of the Public Service that it should be possible to move gentlemen in this way, and that there should be no exclusive right that promotion should follow from step to step in any one Department. If a contrary rule were laid down, the Public Service would, in his opinion, suffer exceedingly; and, therefore, he trusted that the House would give its sanction to the principle that the responsibility in these matters must lie with the Minister in whom the patronage rested. If that Minister made a mistake in the exercise of his patronage, the consequences of that mistake would fall upon himself. He ventured to say that, if mistakes were occasionally made, it was better, on the whole, that some should occur than that it should be the recognized right of any Department to have a monopoly of the highest posts in that Department. He abstained from expressing any opinion whatever upon the appointment which the Prime Minister had thought it right to make, because that was a matter which must remain for his discretion alone; but he might be permitted to express his regret that Mr. Herbert Murray should be removed from Dublin, because he was doing good work there; but, inasmuch as the responsibility in that matter rested with the Prime Minister, he considered that the present arrangement ought not to be disturbed.

MR. O'DONNELL said, when he saw right hon. Gentlemen rising to take part in the discussion of this subject, which naturally excited the sympathies both of the actual occupants of Office and those who expected to be in Office again, it occurred to him that it was time to give way. The present was a case in which it was likely that the old Parliamentary saying would be verified, that when the Front Benches did agree their unanimity was wonderful. They had before them an example of the great value which the Government attached to this very important class of patronage, and he was not surprised at that, because it was, undoubtedly, an important branch of the patronage of which they were the dispensers. He by no means wished to convey that he believed in the theory that, in every case in which they exercised their powers of patronage in this respect, they must necessarily be in the wrong; but he had been struck, as anyone must be, by the remarkable manner in which some members of the Civil Service, and sometimes those who were not members of it, found themselves in a position to have their merits closely scanned by the dispensers of patronage, and to have those merits recognized in a degree and manner in which other Civil Servants did not succeed. He referred to those Civil Servants who spent long and laborious lives in the ordinary work of administration, and who, however much they might deserve the confidence and praise of their immediate superiors, were overlooked, because they did not happen to be brought within the charmed circle which surrounded the high dispensers of patronage in the Service. He had listened with great interest to the speech of the noble Lord the Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Frederick Cavendish), which certainly rose to the level of the occasion. But, at the same time, he did not think the noble Lord could have believed that hon. Members, in raising this question, were bent on ascribing bad motives to anyone on account of the appointments referred to. It was not bad motives that hon. Members found fault with; but the little foibles and weaknesses of human nature, as displayed by the dispensers of the powers of patronage. The speech of the noble Lord consisted partly in prophecy, and partly in solemn declarations that the best men were always chosen for these appointments. With regard to the prophecy, he was not sufficiently acquainted with the future to be able to test the accuracy of the noble Lord's vaticinations; but with regard to the declaration that the best men were chosen, no doubt, men were selected who, it was believed, would justify the choice made, although, by a remarkable coincidence, these fortunate Private Secretaries to Prime Ministers and other high personages were not promoted to the positions in which, as the House was informed, they were so much required, until just before the departure from Office of the Prime Minister to whom they acted as Private Secretaries, and who, while their services as Secretaries were required, did not see the necessity of promoting them over the heads of others. It was only when irreconcilable constituencies removed the Prime Minister that he thought of the merit of his Private Secretary, and at once promoted him to a position of £1,500 or £2,000 a-year. He (Mr. O'Donnell) had no doubt that, as a rule, Private Secretaries who were promoted were men of capacity. It was not likely that they would be chosen as Private Secretaries without capacity; and, therefore, that question need not be raised. The question was that, in the ordinary service of the State in various Departments, there were men who, by length of service, were working their way to the top, and were close to the top—men of equal ability with these Private Secretaries—who had their chances of promotion stopped on a sudden by someone being brought into the office from the immediate vicinity of the dispensers of power of the day, who might be able men, but who had not served long and well in the Department in which they obtained such high promotion. The noble Lord the Secretary to the Treasury had challenged his hon. Friend (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), who brought this question before the House on the present occasion, to say anything, if he had anything to say, against the recent appointment of Mr. Young to the position of Deputy Chairman to the Board of Inland Revenue. There was nothing to be said against that appointment, but against the system of appointment, for, if the merit of service alone had been considered, Mr. Young ought to have received promotion a very long time before. A Paper had been placed in his (Mr. O'Donnell's) hands, written by someone who appeared to be acquainted with the facts, and it gave the history of the appointment of Mr. Young to the following effect:—It seemed that Mr. Young was one of the best Secretaries which the Inland Revenue Office had seen for a generation, notwithstanding that, when it was deemed advisable to promote Mr. Algernon West, the Premier of that day, who was also the Premier of the present day, did not hesitate to appoint him to the position of Commissioner in the Inland Revenue Department, over the head of Mr. Young. Again, when, after a while, the merits of Mr. Northcote appeared to the Chancellor of the Exchequer of another Administration to require marked appreciation, Mr. Northcote was appointed Commissioner to the Board of Inland Revenue, again over the head of Mr. Young. Then, when Mr. Charles Herries was obliged to retire from the Board on account of ill-health, it was found absolutely necessary to promote Mr. Young, over the head of one Commissioner who had been promoted over his head without any previous service. The conclusion was, therefore, that Mr. Young's promotion was delayed as long as possible; that Mr. Algernon West, Private Secretary, was brought into the Department over his head previously, as was also Mr. Northcote, doubtless a very capable gentleman, but who, he (Mr. O'Donnell) believed, had not possessed the advantage of being a member of the Civil Service at all, until he was bombarded into the position of Commissioner of the Inland Revenue. Under the circumstances, he could not but think that the noble Lord had put forward a somewhat unfortunate example of the present system of promotion in the case of Private Secretaries. The fact remained that a surprisingly large number of Secretaries, clerks in the Treasury, and gentlemen in the immediate vicinity of the chief dispensers of power and patronage, had obtained promotion over the heads of old, tried, and experienced members of Departments. The right hon. Gentleman the late First Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. W. H. Smith) left to the present Prime Minister the entire responsibility of the appointment of Mr. Herbert Murray to his present position, and regretted he should have been removed from Dublin, where he regarded him as the right man in the right place. That gentleman had been rather fortunate in his career of promotion. He had been promoted to the Assistant Postmastership, and afterwards to the Secretaryship of the Customs Board, with the present salary of £1,400 a-year. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman the late First Lord of the Admiralty that, in the general opinion of the Service in Ireland, Mr. Herbert Murray was by no means that success, departmentally or socially, which the right hon. Gentleman seemed to imagine. Few interesting strangers from England ever earned less personal favour from the Staff of Irish officials than Mr. Herbert Murray, and it was not from Dublin that any wish would be expressed to have Mr. Murray back again. He (Mr. O'Donnell) understood that the only real justification for Mr. Murray's present appointment was that he was free from the traditions and free from the experience of the Customs Board; he had been specially selected for the purpose of pressing upon the Customs officials an entirely new view of Customs policy which the present Chancellor of the Exchequer thought it advisable to adopt. If Prime Ministers would promote their Private Secretaries, as a rule, at some date much earlier than their own approaching retirement, there would be much less ground for the suspicion that the promotions were made as a reward for faithful service as Private Secretaries to the Prime Minister, in which capacity they could be no longer retained. He could assure hon. Gentlemen sitting on both Front Benches that the dissatisfaction in the Service generally was extreme at the habitual interruption of promotion; at the habitual disregard of the merits of experienced officers; and at the habitual way in which private acquaintance, if not personal affection, seemed to interfere with the claims of the old and experienced servants of the State. Both the Government and the

Opposition Front Bench could depend upon the applause and the votes of the Parties which they were in the habit of leading, upon this, as upon every question; but the fact remained that there was a wide-spread dissatisfaction in the Public Departments at the manner in which all the best prizes of the Public Departments seemed to be reserved for gentlemen within the immediate cognizance of the occupants of the Treasury Bench. The occupants of the Treasury Bench might assure the House in perfect good faith that they always desired to choose the best men; but so long as they seemed to confine their appreciation of the best men to the men whom they happened to know best in their own immediate circle, so long would that dissatisfaction in the Public Service continue. If it was possible to appoint any constitutional test by which the opinions of the Civil Servants at large could be laid before the House, he was persuaded the result would be something startling. They who had the advantage of the explanations of the right hon. Gentleman, of course, did not for a moment entertain the idea that any unworthy favouritism had prompted the appointments under review; but amongst the mass of Civil Servants who had not the same opportunities of becoming convinced of the entire disinterestedness with which the occupants of the Treasury and Front Opposition Benches devoted themselves to the service of the State there was considerable doubt as to the impartiality of these appointments. He hoped that out of regard for the feelings of the public servants at large, every effort would be made in the future by the Treasury Bench to give, more frequently, chances of promotion to those servants of the State who seemed to have earned promotion, not in the immediate vicinity of Ministers, but by hard service, and by gradual rise in the State Departments. A few well-advertised instances of promotion as a result of long service and merit within a Department would go an immense way towards removing the impressions which a long series of, to outsiders, strange appointments had produced upon the Civil Service at large.

Motion, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," by leave, *withdrawn*.

Committee *deferred* till *Monday* next.

Mr. O'Donnell

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS (*re-committed*) BILL.—[Bill 113.]

(*Mr. Hibbert, Secretary Sir William Harcourt.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House will, upon Tuesday next, at Two of the clock, resolve itself into the said Committee."—(*Lord Frederick Cavendish.*)

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he rose to object to the Motion, and to repeat the protest which he made last week against what they must term those violent inroads upon the rights of private Members at that early period of the Session. ["Oh, oh!"] He hoped hon. Members opposite would allow him to express his opinion. He spoke on behalf of private Members, and he protested against the assumption of their time by the Government. He was bound to say that, after the announcement made that morning by the Prime Minister, he could not think hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House could be surprised at the course he was adopting. They had been told by the Prime Minister that their Tuesdays were to be taken for the purpose of proceeding with Resolutions which were not only repugnant and obnoxious to hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House, but to a great many hon. Members opposite. But that was not all. The Prime Minister made another statement of great importance, and which afforded them stronger ground for resisting the present proposal. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say, in answer to a Question put to him by the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Joseph Cowen), that he would take advantage of a Motion to be made by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Wigton Burghs (Sir John Hay) to state whether or not the Government intended to release the "suspects" now in prison in Ireland. He need scarcely point out that the position of the Government was this—that whatever answer they made to that Question, it must lead to a protracted, and, in all probability, an acrimonious debate. If the Government announced their intention of releasing the "suspects"—and there were a great many rumours flying about the Lobbies to that effect—he (Mr. Chaplin) supposed they themselves must be prepared to expect a considerable debate upon a subject of such great and vast importance as that. He did not place any reliance upon the rumours he had alluded to; he did not believe the Government intended to pursue such a policy; but if, on the other hand, they stated they had no intention of releasing the "suspects," but were prepared to reject altogether the proposal of the hon. Member for Newcastle, they must be sure that such a declaration would undoubtedly lead to a long and protracted discussion, and one of great importance. He was bound to say that, under those circumstances, he did not think the Government were justified in proposing to take a debate of that nature at an Evening Sitting on Tuesday. The right hon. Gentleman told them that if they did not take Tuesdays, it would be considered by the country that the Government was faltering in its duty. He (Mr. Chaplin) had no doubt they were considered by the country to be faltering in their duty, because they had neglected their elementary duty in Ireland, and that was to give security to life and property in that country. He begged to move the omission of the words "at Two of the clock."

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "at Two of the clock."—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he was glad the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) was in his place, because his hon. Friend (Mr. Chaplin) had omitted to notice what struck him (Mr. Sclater-Booth) the other evening; and that was that, when the question of Morning Sittings on Tuesdays was before the House last Friday, the noble Marquess said that although the Government wished to take last Tuesday, for reasons then stated, the question of Morning Sittings in future would be decided when it arose. That was a very different statement to that made by the Prime Minister at 4 o'clock that day, and he (Mr. Sclater-Booth) hoped the discrepancy would be explained.

Mr. HEALY rose for the purpose of supporting the Amendment of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin). It would be in the recollection of the House that on this day week the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India stated that the Government did not intend to ask for Morning Sittings on all Tuesdays, if occasions of importance arose as to justify the whole of the day being appropriated to private Members. He (Mr. Healy) would remind the noble Marquess that an occasion of extreme importance would arise on Tuesday next, and that it would not be wise or convenient that a debate on the release, or otherwise, of the "suspects" in Ireland should commence at 9 o'clock in the evening, instead of at half-past 4. Of course, it was not intended to resist Morning Sittings on every occasion that the Government should demand them; but Tuesday next was a special occasion. Seeing the importance of the subject involved in the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Member for the Wigton Burghs (Sir John Hay), a good case had been made out for resisting the present proposal. The question was important under any circumstances; but it was still more important owing to the fact that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister stated that day that the Government would take the opportunity, on the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, of making a statement upon their general policy in Ireland. He (Mr. Healy) would put it to the noble Marquess, who at this moment led the House, whether it was wise that the Government should, as a matter of course, ask for a Morning Sitting on Tuesday next, seeing that the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir John Hay) stood first on the Paper for that day? He would remind the noble Marquess that, as far as his recollection went, a sort of pledge was given to the House on Friday last that the Government would not ask for Morning Sittings without due Notice; and certainly it could not be considered that, inasmuch as it was now 1 o'clock on Saturday morning, due Notice had been given in this instance. It was considered by those who were in the House at the time that due Notice would be given, owing to the form of the Motion. He would ask the noble Marquess if, by the attitude they had assumed, the Government were treating the House in the way it had a right to expect, remembering the tacit understanding arrived at last week, and seeing the importance which attached to the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir John Hay), and to the statement to be made upon that Motion by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. The Irish Members desired discussion, and although they could not expect to go into all the circumstances connected with Ireland, there were various matters connected with the pacification of Ireland which would arise on the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Baronet, which required serious consideration. Under the circumstances, he trusted the Government would not persist in their Motion.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, he was afraid the Government must persevere in the proposal now made to the House, and of which due Notice was given more than a week ago. He could not agree with the hon. Gentleman who had last spoken (Mr. Healy) that there had been any want of Notice. He stated last Friday that the intention of the Government was to ask the House to grant Morning Sittings on all Tuesdays during the remainder of the Session, and Notice was given at that time. In the subsequent discussion which took place, the noble Earl the Member for North Northumberland (Earl Percy) asked whether due Notice would be given, in order to enable hon. Members who wished to do so to oppose any Morning Sitting being taken; and he (the Marquess of Hartington) stated, on the part of the Government, that they would not take any steps to secure a Morning Sitting for next Tuesday until Thursday in the present week. It was now Saturday morning; and the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister gave Notice, when the House was very full indeed, that it was the intention of the Government to ask the House to grant them a Morning Sitting on Tuesday. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth) had called attention to what he considered a discrepancy between the statement made by him (the Marquess of Hartington) last week and the statement made that evening by the Prime Minister. He (the Marquess of Hartington) ventured to think there was no discrepancy at all. He stated last week that the intention of the Government was to ask the House for a Morning Sitting on every Tuesday in future; and he also stated at that time that, owing to the form in which the House decided the matter, it was impossible to make any general Motion on the subject; but the point must be determined on each occasion that the Sitting was asked for. He further stated that, if there was an occasion on which the House thought it wise to withhold a Morning Sitting, it would be quite possible for it to do so. The only question was, whether, on Tuesday morning, the whole time should be given to the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for the Wigton Burghs (Sir John Hay)? The hon. Member who opposed the Motion (Mr. Chaplin) had frankly stated that one of his objections to giving a Morning Sitting was that it would be for the purpose of discussing a measure which he disliked. That might be very natural; but the fact that a particular matter might not be agreeable to one section of the House was hardly a reason against granting a Morning Sitting. The subject must be discussed some time or other, and it was possible that the measure might be made, by discussion, somewhat less objectionable to the hon. Member. At all events, he (the Marquess of Hartington) did not know how they were to progress with the Business, unless the House would grant some greater facilities. The hon. Member opposed the Motion, and said that, whatever might be the nature of the announcement to be made by the Government, it was sure to lead to discussion, and the time for that discussion would be longer than was possible in a Morning Sitting, and that the discussion would be acrimonious.

Mr. CHAPLIN: I said it was certain to be long, and probably acrimonious.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, he misunderstood the hon. Member; but if it was likely to be acrimonious, then it was desirable that it should be short; and he must protest against the statement of the hon. Member, that the Government had announced their intention to make an important statement with regard to their whole policy in Ireland. His right hon. Friend was asked a Question that evening, and he said it would not be convenient to give an answer to that Question in a form which did not admit of discussion, but that it would be more convenient to answer the Question when a discussion might be had if necessary. They all knew that the right hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir John Hay) had a Motion on the Paper; but, considering the amount of time that they had already devoted to Irish subjects, he did not know why it should be necessary for any of them to speak at any great length. He did not know whether it might not be possible to have a very interesting discussion, the speeches averaging not more than a quarter of an hour in duration. If they were limited to that extent, he did not know that a discussion of that kind would be inadequate to the importance of the question to be raised. He did not think it was necessary to discuss at greater length the general subject of Morning Sittings; and he ventured to think he had shown sufficient reason why they should not depart from that intention.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he was very much surprised at the statement of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington), for, if there was one thing at the present moment which the country was anxious to hear, it was a statement from the Government with regard to the preservation of peace in Ireland. The course they intended to pursue, and the new measures which they intended to bring in, were matters of great interest and importance to the country; and he was much struck with the statement of the Prime Minister that at 2 o'clock on Tuesday he intended to bring forward the *clôture* Resolutions, as against any statement with regard to peace and order in Ireland. The country was looking with great anxiety to the statement to be made by the Government; and there was not a man in any part of the House who did not regard with the gravest apprehension the present condition of Ireland. There was nothing which deserved the serious consideration of the House more than that subject; and when he heard from the noble Marquess that there was to be a short statement made on the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Baronet, and when he knew that the Prime Minister was able to make long statements whenever he liked, he thought it was not treating the House or the country with proper respect when this statement, which was so much expected, was put off from day to day, as it had been, by the Prime Minister. He, therefore, rose to enter his protest against taking the *clôture* Resolutions on Tuesday at 2 o'clock, when the House ought to have a statement of far greater importance than the *clôture* could be to the House or the country.

Mr. WARTON hoped the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) would not consider his answer as final, and said he made this appeal in obedience to one of the noble Marquess's strongest supporters—the hon. Member for Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey Vivian). When the first discussion arose about taking last Tuesday for a Morning Sitting, that hon. Gentleman asked the noble Marquess to consider his unfortunate position; and he (Mr. Warton) was now speaking in the interests of that hon. Member, because, although he (Mr. Warton) himself was opposed to the hon. Member's Motion, and believed he would not be able to carry it through, yet it was fair, as an opponent, to state the position in which the hon. Member would be placed. The Statutes to which the hon. Member's Motion related were laid on the Table of the House on the first day of the Session, and they were then to remain on the Table for three months. That period would expire on Sunday, and therefore next Tuesday was the last occasion on which the hon. Member would be able to bring forward his Motion. When the Prime Minister intimated his intention to take all the Tuesdays for Morning Sittings, an appeal was made, which he had thought was successful, to the Government to reserve next Tuesday for private Members; and he hoped the noble Marquess would well consider that appeal, and spare next Tuesday for private Members.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he must confess that, on a general consideration of this question, he regretted, on the whole, that the Government had not allowed the Business to proceed in the usual way on Tuesday, because, although he fully sympathized with their wish to push the Procedure Resolutions, yet, nevertheless, there was no doubt that the question which was to be brought on next Tuesday was one of such great and pressing and vital interest that nobody could complain if hon. Members opposite desired a full Sitting for its discussion. On the other hand, it seemed to him that the noble Marquess had asked a very fair question—namely, whether it was not the fact that this question, important and vital as it was, could not be discussed in the five hours of Tuesday's Sitting, if the House chose. The House would meet punctually again at 9 o'clock in the evening, and there was no reason why the debate should not be continued till 2 o'clock or later. They had all had the great misfortune, during the last few years, of often sitting up in the House for Business of much less importance until a much later hour than that. Therefore, if the Government intended to press the point, he should certainly go into the Lobby with them; for he felt that the attention of the House and the country was now fixed on the question of what progress was to be made with the Procedure Rules. He believed that to get those Resolutions settled, and order and decency in debate restored in the House, was the very first condition to a restoration of order in Ireland, which he understood to be the question which the right hon. and gallant Member for the Wigton Burghs (Sir John Hay) was anxious to bring before the House. He believed until that was done it did not much signify what else was done. They must first restore order in the House, and then he believed that the disorder which originated there, and spread from there elsewhere, would be limited. For that reason he hoped that the right hon. and gallant Member for the Wigton Burghs would not oppose the Government, and that hon. Members representing Irish constituencies would realize that they, objecting, as they did, to the principle of the Coercion Act, would have an opportunity of showing, by not offering anything approaching to what might be called factious opposition to the proposals of the Government, that they desired to do what was right by their own country—namely, to enable the House to get its Business into such a condition that it might be able to discuss fairly and fully questions relating not only to the good of England, but to the good of Ireland, which he believed many of them had sincerely at heart.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I think the noble Lord opposite (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) is very sanguine if he imagines that merely by securing a Morning Sitting on Tuesday the Government will be able to make such progress with the Procedure Resolutions as will lead to the desirable results which he has at heart. I regret very much that the Government have determined to appropriate the Morning Sitting on Tuesday, because it appears to me that, above all things, it is desirable that the present condition of Ireland should be fairly and fully discussed in this House. I am not by any means prepared to say that the Motion of my right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Wigton Burghs (Sir John Hay) affords the very best opportunity for initiating such a discussion; but what I do feel is, that such a discussion must take place before long; that it is absolutely demanded by the country, and that it is, in the mind of the country, a matter of far greater importance than the Procedure Resolutions. If, as appears to be probable, the Government think it best to take part of Tuesday for proceeding with those Resolutions, one result will certainly follow. There will be an imperfect discussion on the Motion of my right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Wigton Burghs, and then it will be felt to be necessary, I think, by every Party in this House, that the discussion shall be renewed upon an early occasion, and shall be thoroughly thrashed out and completed. Therefore, the whole of Tuesday evening will probably be wasted, and that simply to enable the Government to make some fancied progress with the Resolutions, with which I do not believe they will really make any progress in the Morning Sitting.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I do not think the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) has advanced any argument which is at all conclusive on this matter. He said he did not think the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir John Hay) was a Motion which would adequately raise the general question of policy in Ireland, and I should have been very much surprised if the right hon. Gentleman had been of opinion that it would do so. So far as I recollect that Motion, I doubt whether it is one which the right hon. Gentleman would support. If you want a general discussion and a Motion on the policy of the Government in Ireland, you will not raise such a discussion upon that Motion. That Motion will be discussed as an isolated matter, and if there should be a Motion with reference to the whole condition of Ireland, the right hon. Gentleman can hardly suppose that a single Morning Sitting would dispose of that subject. Therefore, neither of the right hon. Gentleman's arguments is addressed to the question of a Morning Sitting. We are not going, and nobody proposes, as I understand, to raise the whole Irish policy on the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for the Wigton Burghs, and the matter with which that Motion deals might very well be disposed of on Tuesday evening. We, in the present state of Parliamentary Business, ask the House to support us in getting on with the Business. That is the meaning of this appeal, and we must take the responsibility of asking the House of Commons to allow the Business of the country to be gone on with. The hon. and gallant Member opposite (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) complained bitterly that the noble Marquess had said that the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government would make a short speech, and said that if you have an early Sitting the Prime Minister would have an opportunity of making a long speech. I do not think that is a reason for a Morning Sitting. Then the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) said—do not let us have a Morning Sitting, because that might interfere with the Motion of the hon. Member for Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey Vivian)—whom he has taken under his wing for this occasion only. But if we are to do what the country wishes us to do with reference to the Public Business, the Government must ask the House to agree to their proposal. They take the responsibility of making that request, and those who oppose it must take the responsibility of resisting it. That is a very fair and proper issue; and upon that only the House of Commons will be able to decide whether there is any reason for making an exception of this Tuesday over any other Tuesday. I do think that the country, looking at what happened on former Tuesdays during this Session, will not consider that the Government are proposing any very great sacrifice of the time of private Members, of which we hear so much; but with regard to which, when hon. Members have the time, they prefer not to take it, but to take the Government time. That being so, I think we are not unduly encroaching on their manor, or making unjust demands on the House; and I do hope that the House will support the Government.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN said, the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) had told them it was the intention of the Prime Minister to make, on this forthcoming occasion, a speech which would not exceed a quarter of an hour's duration. ["No, no!"] Well, he would say half an hour; at all events, it had been intimated that the speech would be a brief one. Supposing the Prime Minister was able to fulfil his intention and to make a brief speech, no doubt, within the compass of a brief statement, the right hon. Gentleman would be capable of giving the House material for a very long debate—he would be capable of saying enough to make it a matter, he (Mr. Sullivan) would almost say, of necessity, to enter very fully into the matters the right hon. Gentleman had touched on. The Irish Members were bound to claim for themselves a pretty fair amount of time to deal with the topics that would be touched on by the Prime Minister. Not only the Irish Members, but, perhaps, the occupants of the Front Opposition Bench, might have a great deal to say with regard to the statement of the Prime Minister. It was all very well for the noble Marquess—a Member of the Government—to say that hon. Members should content themselves with quarter-hour or ten-minute speeches; but it was possible that so materially might they find themselves affected by the Prime Minister's statement, that the Irish Members would not be able to do justice to themselves, or their country, or the matter in hand. Even if 4 o'clock were decided upon as the hour for commencing the Business of the evening, he (Mr. Sullivan) did not suppose they would be able to get to the discussion of this matter for an hour or two hours afterwards; but if they got to it almost immediately the limit of time would be short enough. He only hoped that in the event of their commencing Business at 4 o'clock they might have a fair prospect of being able to give the matter full and adequate discussion. It would not be at all satisfactory to commence the discussion of such an important matter as that at 9 o'clock. They should, at least, be allowed the ordinary time for considering what was looked upon, not only by the people of Ireland, but also by the people of England, with the greatest amount of interest. Let the Prime Minister give them the day they required, and he would find that he would lose nothing by the transaction.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite had laid so much stress on the Government running the *clôture* against this debate on the evening in question that those of them who took deep interest in the 1st Resolution being passed were bound to support the Government on this occasion. The Government had stated, on their responsibility, the great necessity there was for making progress with this Resolution; and hon. Members opposite had shown that their objection to the Resolution entered largely into their objection to giving up Tuesday morning. At the same time, as the evening would be short, he trusted that an opportunity would be afforded, by the shortness of the speeches to which the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) had alluded, for English Members, as well as Irish Members, to take part in the discussion that would occur. It had been too much the custom for these important questions to be made the occasion of a duel, if he might say so, between the Home Rule Party and the Front Bench, and many had been the times when hon. Members on the Ministerial side of the House would have liked very much to have supported Her Majesty's Government, and to have stated their views in opposition to views which had been urged by Home Rulers; but the value of time was felt so strongly by them that they refrained, and perhaps in that way it might have appeared, more than once, that Her Majesty's Government were not sufficiently supported by their followers. When the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had been attacked, it had often been a matter for deep regret on the part of a great many hon. Members on that side of the House that, except under the penalty of speaking on a Motion for the adjournment of the House, or of interrupting at Question time, they were unable to support the right hon. Gentleman to the extent to which he had deserved support at the hands of his Party. He (Mr. Goschen) had ventured to say those few words, because he hoped that when the important question of the release of the "suspects" was discussed it would be possible for all sides to take part in the debate. Though it was the fashion for some hon. Gentlemen opposite to refer to this as a foreign House of Parliament, and though the question might affect only Irish hon. Members, they (the supporters of the Government) knew that their constituents expected them to take part in the consideration of the position of their fellow-subjects in Ireland. Their constituents wished them to join in the discussion not only of what affected England, but of what affected Ireland also; and he believed the time had come when it was necessary that many English Members should take part in such debates as that they were to have on Tuesday. He trusted, therefore, that the advice of the noble Marquess would be followed on Tuesday, and that, by shortness of speeches, it might be possible for Her Majesty's Government to hear the opinions of all sides of the House on a question of first-rate importance.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, he had no doubt everyone had the highest respect for the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Goschen); but the right hon. Gentleman's observations were a most conclusive reason why they should not have a Morning Sitting on Tuesday. He had said that there were many hon. Members sitting behind Her Majesty's Government who were anxious to speak in support of their Irish policy, and who had hitherto been unable to do so through want of time. The right hon. Gentleman arrived at the somewhat inconvenient conclusion that it would be right for those who had hitherto been prevented through want of time from taking part in these debates to take part in the discussion on Tuesday night, if a Morning Sitting were granted. There was one fact with which the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) did not seem to be acquainted, and which, to his (Lord George Hamilton's) mind, very materially altered the position of affairs. His right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Wigton Burghs (Sir John Hay) was about, on Tuesday, to make a Motion relating to a certain portion of the Irish Question. The noble Marquess stated that upon that question very short speeches would be made—in fact, he gave the House to understand that the Prime Minister's observations would be confined to about 15 minutes. With all deference to the noble Marquess, he (Lord George Hamilton) very much doubted that, because it was absolutely impossible for any Minister to say how long he would be on his legs, when he did not know the arguments he would have to answer. But since his right hon. and gallant Friend had put this Notice on the Paper, a distinguished Member of the Liberal Party—the Member for Bolton (Mr. J. K. Cross)—had put a Notice which would raise the whole Irish Question, because it was to the effect that those persons in prison in Ireland only suspected of a certain class of offences should be released. That Notice could only have been put on the Notice Paper with or without the knowledge of the Government. If it were put down with the knowledge of the Government, it was not fair for them to defer their observations until so late a period of the evening that it would not be possible to thoroughly discuss the matter. If, however, the Notice had been put down without the knowledge of the Government, and represented the views only of a considerable section of the Liberal Party, it was only fair that that section of the Liberal Party should have a proper opportunity of expressing their views. It therefore seemed to him that these circumstances must so change the aspect of affairs that the Government would be able to see their way to the withdrawal of their Motion for a Morning Sitting on Tuesday.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he was one of those who would be very glad to hear any English Member who felt inclined to speak on the Irish Question favour them with an expression of his views. He should be especially glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) express his opinions in that House, because he would then be spared the necessity of hearing him give them out, not perhaps in season or in due place. The right hon. Gentleman had favoured a non-political gathering at a dinner he himself (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) had attended with an expression of his views, notwithstanding that most of the company were of an opposite way of thinking to the right hon. Gentleman himself. The right hon. Gentleman had revenged himself for the privation from speaking he had experienced of late in the House by declaiming, with a greal deal of acrimony, upon the wickedness of the Home Rule Members, and of the Tory Members who did not help the Government to crush them. He (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) hoped the Government would give them such an explanation as would save the Irish Members the necessity of entering into any prolonged discussion. While he should vote for giving the whole of Tuesday to the debate, he should not express his views in answer to the statement the Government might make at any great length.

MR. R. N. FOWLER said, the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) had raised a new question in regard to this debate, having pointed out that there was an Amendment to the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Wigton Burghs (Sir John Hay), which would raise the whole Irish Question. Under these circumstances, he wished to say that it was perfectly impossible that they could have the whole question of the state of Ireland—which, as every Member of the House knew, and as the Government would not deny, created great anxiety in this country at that moment—discussed in a three or four hours' debate. It was most important that they should have the whole evening to discuss that question; and, under those circumstances, he begged to move the adjournment of the debate. The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) made a point of wishing to get on with the Resolutions, upon which he (Mr. R. N. Fowler) hoped, by the favour of the House, to have an opportunity of saying something when they came before them. He referred to what were called the Procedure Resolutions, but which he looked upon as gagging Resolutions. He believed that every hon. Member on that (the Opposition) side of the House felt very strongly on this question, and that they would only be doing their duty to their constituents by expressing, at the fullest length, their views on the subject. The time might come when they might not have an opportunity, because, when the Resolutions were passed, they would be tongue-tied, and would have no liberty left them. While they retained their liberty, however, they thought they were only doing their duty by giving expression to everything they felt in the matter. There had been a former discussion with regard to a Tuesday Morning Sitting, the noble Marquess having, on a previous occasion, made a similar appeal. Well, they had a Morning Sitting at that time; and, as regarded that (the Opposition) side of the House, they had faithfully carried out their pledges to the Government in endeavouring to bring the question under discussion to a division. It was talked out, however, by an independent Member, or, at any rate, by one who owed no allegiance to the Opposition—he did not know whether the noble Marquess opposite would claim him as a follower. He referred to the hon. Member for the County of Louth (Mr. Callan). Under the circumstances, he (Mr. R. N. Fowler) submitted that if they had a Morning Sitting on Tuesday they might have the Procedure discussion, with regard to which Members felt very strongly, carried to such a length that the subject would be talked out. He did not think Her Majesty's Government were likely to gain anything by having a Morning Sitting. The Prime Minister had stated that his Colleague the Chief Secretary for Ireland was to make a very important statement; and, such being the case, it seemed to him it would be for the advantage of the Government that the whole question should be discussed at full length. To give an opportunity to the Government to have this matter discussed, he would move the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. SEVERNE: I beg to second the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. R. N. Fowler.*)

Mr. P. MARTIN said, he hoped the Government would reconsider the matter before the House was called on to decide the question. The Prime Minister had deliberately selected Tuesday to make his statement, notwithstanding that several opportunities had been given to him on other occasions for making it. There was no one, either in or out of the House, who denied that the position of Ireland was serious. It was a matter which not only excited the anxiety of Irishmen, but it was idle to deny that in every part of England they looked forward to the statement of the Prime Minister for guidance, and as giving some solution of the present difficulties. Under circumstances of that character, would the time of the House be in any way saved, he asked, by forcing on a Motion for a Morning Sitting in that way? He must say that he himself, though an Irish Member, had had very slight opportunities in the House of discussing these Irish questions, and he did not think it was right to have to speak on them on Motions for Adjournment. And as the Prime Minister had selected an occasion, every Irish Member who appreciated the condition of his country was bound to take advantage of the opportunity to record his independent opinion. He would ask, therefore, was it fair and right that they should be forced to give a Morning Sitting on Tuesday? There could be nothing more convincing against the proposal than the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), which was to the effect that a number of English Members intended to take part in the debate. He would desire to remind the House that the Amendment which had been given Notice by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bolton (Mr. J. K. Cross) was of a wide character, and would be likely to open up a discussion on the condition and present aspect of affairs in Ireland. Would it be, then, desirable that independent Irish Members should, in a crisis such as the present, be prevented from stating their views on the questions likely to arise on such a discussion? It could not be contended that the hon. Member for Bolton could have taken this course without having taken the advice and opinion of the leading Members of his own Party. They had now a very serious question raised in a very serious and critical state of affairs in Ireland, and yet the Government wilfully insisted upon having this Morning Sitting. Looking at all the circumstances, there would be at the disposal of the House only a very short amount of time—if, indeed, any at all—for that discussion upon the state of affairs in Ireland, which on all hands was admitted to be necessary.

Mr. GIBSON said, the great importance attached to what was to take place on Tuesday was that the Prime Minister himself had deliberately selected it as the occasion for making a statement of vital importance on what must be acknowledged by everybody to be the most vital question of the day. It would be impossible for the right hon. Gentleman to confine his statement within very narrow limits. That was not a usual weakness on the part of the Prime Minister. Even if he desired to do so upon so important a question, and to confine himself to the topics raised by the Motion of his right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Wigton Burghs (Sir John Hay), the right hon. Gentleman would find himself compelled, by the new Amendment which had been placed upon the Paper, to enter into a much wider field, because, when the right hon. and gallant Member for the Wigton Burghs sat down, the hon. Member for Bolton (Mr. J. K. Cross) was to get up and to move a still wider Amendment. [*Cries of* "No!" *from the Ministerial Benches.*] That was certainly the way in which he (Mr. Gibson) read the Amendment, and he hoped to have an opportunity of studying it still more carefully before the hon. Gentleman submitted it to the House. Any hon. Member who read the Amendment and the Motion would see at once that it was altogether impossible for the Prime Minister not to make a statement of supreme importance. The statement must demand important public criticism from that (the Opposition) side of the House, and it would not be giving fair play either to the House or the country to compel the Opposition to deliver a crippled and imperfect criticism upon the policy of Her Majesty's Government, as announced in the speech of the Prime Minister at a late hour of the night, when it was impossible that any remarks they desired to make could be reported. Under those circumstances, he contended that the statement about to be made by the Prime Minister might and would demand prolonged and close criticism and examination; and it might become necessary, therefore, if there was a Morning Sitting, to ask respectfully for an adjournment of Tuesday's debate until the following Thursday.

MR. LEAMY would venture to express a hope that, in the event of the Government insisting upon having a Morning Sitting on Tuesday, and thus throwing over the important statement of the Prime Minister until a late hour, the right hon. Gentleman would consent to accept the suggestion thrown out by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), and to adjourn the debate until Thursday. No doubt, there were many English Members among the supporters of the Government who would desire to express their opinions, and he was quite satisfied that most of the Irish Members would desire to express theirs. It was understood that the Government intended to declare their Irish policy; and it was not at all unlikely that many of the Radical Members, who had consented to give exceptional powers to the Irish Executive, might feel themselves called upon to say that they were not prepared to support any further coercive measures which the Government might have determined to take. It was, therefore, most improbable that the debate could be concluded on Tuesday night; and if the Government insisted on taking a Morning Sitting, the House ought to receive some intimation that there would be no opposition to a proposal for the adjournment of the debate.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I trust that the House will not consent to the Motion for the adjournment of the debate; and I hope it will be perfectly well understood that, although many hon. Members opposite may take exception to the course now proposed, there is no desire to adopt an obstructive line of policy. The question of having a Morning Sitting has now been fully discussed, and the House is perfectly competent to come to a decision upon it. All I wish to say is, that it is impossible to come to any understanding whether it will be necessary to adjourn the debate on Tuesday or not. No doubt, a discussion may arise which may make it necessary that the debate should be adjourned; and if it be necessary, of course the Government would not oppose the demand. It is impossible, however, to know now whether an adjournment will be desirable or not. I would venture to suggest to hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, who think that they will not have a fair opportunity for discussion, that it is impossible for them at present to judge whether it will be requisite to discuss the statement which is to be made from these Benches at all or not. It would, therefore, be much more convenient that they should hear the statement before they arrive at any conclusion in regard to it. After they have heard it, they will have an opportunity, if they consider it necessary, of distinctly expressing their opinion upon the conduct of the Government in the form of a Motion. Full opportunity would, of course, be given for the consideration of such a Motion; but it by no means follows that the statement of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister will be one which will require such a Motion or discussion. As to the question of adjourning the debate on Tuesday, no doubt, if the discussion should be of a nature that would appear to demand discussion, it must be adjourned; but it is perfectly impossible, until the nature of the discussion is better known than at present, to decide now what course it may be desirable to take.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I think the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) hardly realizes the gravity of the position. There has been a disposition to minimize the present condition of Ireland and the present state of affairs in that country. ["No!" *from the Ministerial Benches.*] My right hon. Friend opposite shakes his head; but we are told that a statement of the greatest importance is to be made on Tuesday evening after 9 o'clock, and that, as the House has so frequently discussed Irish affairs, short speeches and a limited discussion will be quite sufficient to dispose of any questions which may arise out of the statement. I venture to think there never was a period in the whole history of the country when the affairs of Ireland were of so grave a character. They do not concern Ireland alone, but the whole of the United Kingdom. In point of fact, they concern the stability of the Empire. We are told that at 9 o'clock on Tuesday evening a short statement is to be made by the Prime Minister; that it will only be necessary to make very brief speeches upon that statement; and that the whole matter may be reasonably disposed of in the short interval between 9 o'clock and midnight. It is not with a view of embarrassing the Government, but with every desire to assist Her Majesty's Ministers in the discharge of their responsible duties in connection with the administration of the affairs of Ireland, and with every desire to afford the greatest possible facilities for the re-establishment of peace, law, and order in Ireland, that we ask for a better opportunity than an Evening Sitting on Tuesday will give us for the consideration of the statement which the Prime Minister proposes to make. It is scarcely courteous, then, for the noble Marquess to say to the Opposition that, if they are not satisfied with the statement made by the Government, it will be in their option, if they think fit, to give Notice of a Vote of Censure, for the discussion of which, of course, the Government would find an opportunity. I certainly do not believe that that, upon the whole, is the best way of disposing of the time of the House; nor, on the whole, is it the best way of arriving at the object we have in view, not only on this side of the House, but on both sides of the House. We can have but one common object, and that is, by any means in our power, to restore peace, law, order, and tranquillity in Ireland. As I have said, peace, law, order, and tranquillity in Ireland have never been so seriously disturbed and threatened as they are at the present moment. They have never before been so seriously compromised; and everyone who has the slightest feeling of regard for the interests of the country must view with the deepest possible concern the present state of things in Ireland. We are not so much concerned in the Motion of which Notice has been given by my right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Wigton Burghs (Sir John Hay) as in the intimation which has been given by the Prime Minister, that on that Motion he proposes to make a statement to the House in regard to the condition of affairs in Ireland. I believe that the whole country is waiting for that statement with the greatest possible interest and anxiety, putting Party questions altogether aside. Our object is to aid, by every means in our power, the efforts of the responsible Government to do what they can to place life and property in Ireland in a position of perfect security. It is out of the question to suppose that considerations of so important a nature can be discussed in the short interval of two or three hours in an Evening Sitting on Tuesday. If, after the discussion has been introduced, and the Prime Minister is afforded the necessary opportunity for making his statement, it is understood that the debate will be adjourned until the Thursday following, then we shall have nothing further to say; but if anything in the nature of an important statement is to be made by the Prime Minister, then three hours will certainly not be sufficient to enable the House to discuss it satisfactorily.

MR. J. K. CROSS remarked, that allusions had been made in the course of the debate to the Amendment of which he had given Notice in the early part of the evening. It was said that he had placed the Amendment on the Paper with the knowledge and at the instance of the Government. All he had to say was that his intentions had been entirely unknown to the Government, and that he had given Notice of the Amendment solely upon his own account. Not only was the Notice given without the knowledge of the Government, but he had given it without consulting more than one, or at most two Members of the House. He had no wish to say a single word upon the merits of the question itself. He apprehended that at the time the House met on Tuesday that matter would be entirely in the hands of the Government; and if the statement which the Prime Minister proposed to make were of such a character as to be acceptable to the majority of the House, it might probably not be necessary that the Amendment of which he (Mr. J. K. Cross) had given Notice should be brought forward at all.

MR. CHAPLIN said, he was glad that the Motion had been made for the adjournment of the debate, because, undoubtedly, it had had the effect of eliciting from the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Hartington) a reply which he did not think would have been made under other circumstances. He confessed that the reply of the noble Marquess was not altogether satisfactory, because, although the noble Marquess made a sort of qualified concession that the debate should be adjourned if the statement of the Prime Minister was not satisfactory, that concession did not altogether get rid of his (Mr. Chaplin's) objection that private Members were deprived of their legitimate opportunities for bringing important questions before the House. He did not know whether his hon. Friend who moved the adjournment of the debate (Mr. R. N. Fowler) proposed to go to a division or not. If he did, he (Mr. Chaplin) should vote with him, because he wished to record his protest against the course which the Government were taking. The noble Marquess seemed to think that there was an intention to oppose the proceedings of the Government by moving successive Motions for Adjournment. He (Mr. Chaplin) did not believe there was any intention of the kind; but the noble Marquess must not be surprised, having regard to the manner in which the Government proposed to deprive private Members of their rights, if private Members took measures on their own account to protect their own interests. If the practice now pursued by the Government were persisted in, and if it led to further delay in Public Business, they would be entirely to blame.

MR. CALLAN pointed out that if the Government accepted the proposal which had been made on that side of the House, and gave up the idea of a Morning Sitting on Tuesday, the discussion consequent on the statement of the Prime Minister with regard to Irish affairs would, in all probability, terminate on Tuesday night; but if not, and the question came on at 9 o'clock at night, as it was probable that the right hon. Gentleman would not rise until after 10 o'clock, and would very likely not sit down until after midnight, there would clearly be no opportunity for discussion on the part of the Opposition. The manœuvre of the Government was evidently to give 48 hours' start in the country to the Ministerial Statement, without affording any opportunity for the comments of hon. Members on that side of the House to reach the public. The effect of that would be that Thursday night also would have to be given up to the discussion of the Irish Question; and so, instead of concluding the debate on Tuesday, the half of that day and the whole of Thursday would be lost.

MR. O'DONNELL said, he was not disposed to throw any difficulties in the way of Her Majesty's Government. Since he had seen an indication on their part of a desire to treat the Irish Question in a manner in which it ought to have been treated long since he was certainly not inclined to offer any unnecessary opposition. However, he could not but think that the disposal of the public time which was now proposed to the House was not calculated to carry out the intentions of the Government. There could be no doubt that the question of the release of the "suspects" was one which, until it was settled one way or the other, impeded the progress of every kind of Business in that House. He was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman had put off until Tuesday his definite answer upon that subject, and he also regretted that such an important matter as the Resolutions on Procedure were to be taken before the Irish Question had been dealt with. Those Resolutions raised serious questions in many minds; and although the discussions upon them might be calm, even to dulness, he could not but think that the state of anxiety in which the Government had left the House was not calculated to lead to even a business-like debate upon them next Monday. On the other hand, he believed that a calming and encouraging statement upon Irish affairs would do more towards facilitating the progress of Public Business than anything that could be devised. He thought that the Government had really indulged in a kind of cat-with-the-mouse treatment of the prisoners, their friends, and the Irish people generally; and he could not but express the hope that they would state, one way or another, what was their policy in this matter. The sooner they did so, the better he believed it would be for all parties interested. He repeated that the manner in which this question was kept hanging over was certainly not favourable to the progress of reform of Procedure. Moreover, he did not believe the Government would be gainers in the smallest degree by taking several hours from the discussion of the Irish Question on Tuesday next; and, therefore, in the interest of the Liberal policy as well as of fair play to all Parties in the House, he begged them to devote the whole of that day to its discussion. Although he would not say that there was a deliberate manœuvre to place the Government Statement before the country without comment on the part of the Opposition, there was a strong opinion that the time and circumstances under which they had chosen to make that statement were calculated to give undue advantages to the Ministerial Statement, and give, so to speak, 48 hours' start to it, no matter how much time might be required for the statement of the Opposition. Therefore, he urged upon the Government the necessity of avoiding even the suspicion of unfairness in this matter. There could be no Ministerial Statement on Tuesday, under the proposed arrangement, until 11 o'clock; and, consequently, there could be no fair criticism of it which could appear in the papers of the following day. That fact would be known throughout the country, and would give the appearance of dodging to the Government policy, which he trusted and believed was quite undeserved, so far as this matter was concerned. Notwithstanding that, he could not shut his eyes to the fact that both the Government themselves and the independent Parties in the House would suffer by the proposed arrangement.

Mr. BIGGAR said, the Government were doing what he had known many Governments to do on former occasions. They were trying to save time, and by their way of doing it they were throwing away twice as much as they expected to save. He could corroborate the statement of the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan), that the result of the Government proposal would be that, instead of the whole of Thursday being devoted to Public Business, it would be taken up entirely by the continued discussion upon the question to be brought before the House on Tuesday. Therefore, he suggested that the Government should appoint the whole of Tuesday for the discussion of the Irish Question, which certainly could not be concluded if it commenced after 9 o'clock in the evening. It was all very well for the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Hartington) to allege that a subject of that importance could be discussed at 2 o'clock in the morning; but hon. Members must know very well that no important question could be properly discussed after 1 o'clock in the morning. The probable effect of the Government proposal would be that the whole question would be raised again, and that another day would be wasted. The right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) had expressed his opinion that it was desirable that a number of English Members should take part in the debate on Tuesday night, and that the Irish Members should abstain from doing so. That would certainly be another effect of the Government arrangement, because, as had been pointed out by the right hon. Member, a considerable number of

English Members were to speak; and he (Mr. Biggar) could not, therefore, understand how it could be said that Irish Members would have any opportunity of expressing their views. What portion of time would be at the disposal of Irish Members, after the evening had been occupied by speeches from English Members and Members of the Government? The right hon. Member seemed to think that it was more important that hon. Members who knew nothing of the subject should state their opinions, than that those who were thoroughly acquainted with it should do so. It was needless to say that the reverse of this should take place; and, therefore, he appealed to the Government, in their own interest, and in the interest of all Parties, to afford Irish Members every opportunity for the discussion of the present question, by taking the debate at the ordinary time on Tuesday next, with the reasonable expectation that it would be concluded the same evening, and thereby secure the whole of Thursday for Government Business.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 36; Noes 90: Majority 54.—(Div. List, No. 73.)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. BIGGAR begged to move that the House do now adjourn. It was now after 2 o'clock, and he thought the best thing to do would be to adjourn.

MR. HEALY rose for the purpose of seconding the Motion.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman has addressed the House on the Main Question; therefore, he is not in Order.

MR. R. POWER said, he would second the Motion, and he did so with very great regret. He assured the House that he should be very sorry to second the Motion; but its adoption was advisable in the interest of the Government themselves, and in the interest of economy of time. If the Government would consent to sit at the usual hour on Tuesday—namely, 4 o'clock, they would be able, most likely, to conclude the discussion upon the Irish Question about 2 o'clock the following morning. What was the real position of affairs? The Motion of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Wigton Burghs (Sir John Hay) would certainly give rise to a long debate, and the Prime Minister had told them that he himself was going to make a most important statement. He (Mr. R. Power) supposed that in the whole history of Ireland there never was a time when the people of that country looked forward with more interest and with more anxiety to any statement from any English Minister, and the idea of discussing an Irish difficulty in three or four hours was most ridiculous. If the Government acceded to the request of his hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. Joseph Cowen), who had asked that the Members of Parliament who were now detained in Kilmainham should be released, the Irish Members on the Opposition side of the House would, in a few brief speeches, congratulate the Government upon the decision they had arrived at; but he was not quite certain that the Conservative Members would do the same. He believed they would get up, and, in very violent speeches, condemn such a policy. It was all very well to say that the Prime Minister would only take 15 minutes to make his statement as regarded the future policy of the Government towards Ireland. Although he very much doubted whether the Prime Minister could confine himself to 15 minutes, he was persuaded the right hon. Gentleman's remarks would give rise to a very long and protracted debate. If they knew exactly what they were to discuss on Tuesday, they might be able to form an opinion as to the amount of time the debate would occupy; but, at the present moment, they were quite in the dark. They might be asked to discuss the necessity for martial law in Ireland, or the release of the political prisoners, or the continuance of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant in Office; but no matter what they were required to discuss, as long as it related to Ireland it was absurd to suppose that the debate could be of short duration. He was very sorry, indeed, to find that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) thought that the *clôture* was a far more important question than the Irish Question. He did hope that the right hon. Gentleman, who had been so successful in solving the Eastern difficulty, would have devoted some of his ability, and some of his time, to solving the Western difficulty. He was, however, glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman express the opinion that English Members ought to interfere in Irish debates. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that the Irish Members intended to interfere in English debates. The idea of an Irish debate, like that which would take place on Tuesday, only lasting three hours, was perfectly ridiculous.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Biggar.*)

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, it seemed to him that every speech that was made in the debate to which the House had listened for some time past showed very plainly that the proposal for a Morning Sitting on Tuesday was ill-advised, and was not really likely to facilitate the progress of Business in the House. The House, however, had pronounced, by a very considerable majority, in favour of that Morning Sitting being taken; and, so far as he was concerned, he did not think the present was an occasion in which they should endeavour, by repeated divisions, to prevent the majority from carrying their wishes into effect; therefore, he should take no further part in resisting the Government proposal.

Mr. HEALY said, he would remind the House of the different position in which they found themselves that night to other occasions in which Morning Sittings had been asked. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) said that, inasmuch as the House had decided by a considerable majority, he would execute the characteristic operation of "backing out." When it was proposed to take a Morning Sitting to consider the case of Mr. Bradlaugh, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire and the Tory Party cared little for the decision of the House. Majority after majority declared they would have a Morning Sitting; but minority after minority obstructed the Government and refused a Morning Sitting. [Sir Michael Hicks-Beach: No, no!] Well, the right hon. Gentleman might not have been present on that occasion. If the right hon. Gentleman said he was not present on that occasion, at least his Party were. Two or three of the right hon. Gentlemen now sitting near the right hon. Baronet were certainly present, and they cared little as to what the opinion of the House was. But now the Tory Party, after having got up a row as to whether there should be a Morning Sitting on Tuesday, found, when it got half-past 2 o'clock, that it would suit their purpose to go to bed; they told the House that as a large majority had decided in favour of a Morning Sitting they would bow their meek heads and go home to sleep. That was not the way in which these things ought to be met. If hon. Gentlemen set out by denouncing the Government as iniquitous for certain proceedings, they ought to be consistent. It seemed somewhat inconsistent to give way because they found themselves in a considerable minority. It was not a question whether the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire was right, but in a minority, but whether he was in the right. If the right hon. Gentleman was in the right at the onset, he was in the right now, and ought to continue his opposition to the Morning Sitting. He (Mr. Healy) never cared a button whether he was in a minority or majority. He and his hon. Friends were so used to finding themselves in a minority that it did not matter much to them how they were situated. Passing from that point, however, he must remind the House of the inconvenience they suffered from discussing these questions in the absence of the authorities who were competent to deal with them. They were dealing with a number of Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench who had got instructions to get a Morning Sitting on Tuesday next. They knew there was an important Irish question down for consideration on that day, and they would be glad to know what the decision of the Government was going to be. If they knew the decision was going to be in the direction which many hon. Members desired, there would be no objection on the part of those hon. Gentlemen to grant a Morning Sitting, because they would know they would not occupy more than an hour with any remarks they would have to make on the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Wigton Burghs (Sir John Hay). But they were altogether in the dark, and because they were in the dark they were obliged to resist the proposal to take a Morning Sitting on Tuesday. The most straightforward course for the Government to have adopted would have been to have announced earlier what their action was going to be with respect to the "suspects." If they had told the House that day, in reply to the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Joseph Cowen), what their intention was, they would not now be wrangling about a Morning Sitting. He had no objection, on principle, to the Government having a Morning Sitting; but he did object that on special occasions, such as next Tuesday, the day should be whittled away by the Government scooping out the most material part of it. The Prime Minister himself was absent, and the right hon. Gentleman now on the Treasury Bench had not power to deal with the question; therefore, there was to be a Morning Sitting on Tuesday. He was sure that if the Prime Minister, who, as regarded the convenience and time of the House, had an open mind, were present, he would see the force of the observations which had been addressed to the Government during this debate, and would yield to the wishes of a large number of hon. Members.

MR. CHAPLIN said, that when the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) talked of his right hon. Friend (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) "backing out" after the Tories had got up a row, he must remind the hon. Member of how the discussion arose. As an Amendment to the Motion made by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Frederick Cavendish), he (Mr. Chaplin) took the liberty of moving that the words "Two o'clock" should be omitted; and he stated at the time that he did so in order to have an opportunity of recording his protest against the course which was being adopted by the Government. During the debate he also stated that there was no intention whatever on the part of hon. Gentlemen sitting in that quarter of the House to prolong the discussion. He had no desire to engage in a fight with the large battalions he saw sitting opposite; but he had taken part in the division, and was satisfied with having entered his protest against the action of the Government in the matter.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN said, he would not have arisen at that time, were it not for the observations which had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). The right hon. Gentleman had informed them that out of the few hours which the Government proposed to place at the disposal of the House for the discussion of the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Wigton Burghs (Sir John Hay) a large number of English Members wished to occupy some time; that a considerable number of English Members wished to take part in the debate; and he asked if it was possible to suppose that a considerable number of English Members could intervene in the debate without uttering a great deal of contentious matter, and giving rise to a great deal of exasperation on that side of the House? If the Prime Minister made a conciliatory speech—a speech which would be in some degree satisfactory to the Irish Members—it would inevitably be unsatisfactory to the Conservative Members. If, however, the speech was pleasing to Conservative Members, it would, unquestionably, be displeasing to Irish Members. However that might be, it was impossible to suppose that a considerable number of English Members could intervene without giving the Irish Members occasion, which they could not resist, to reply to them. If English Members attacked the Irish Members, if they attacked the "suspects," if they attempted to traduce the Irish National Land League, it would be the business of the Representatives of Ireland to reply, and, of course, they would discharge their duty. It was entirely ridiculous to suppose that the debate on the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir John Hay) would only last three or four hours; therefore, the Government would act wisely in giving them more time.

MR. SEXTON said, the question could be put in a very narrow compass. That day the Prime Minister said he would make a statement on Irish affairs on Tuesday next. That statement, whatever it might be, would be of great importance; but, in the interval between now and then, he (Mr. Sexton) confessed he was unwilling to draw the House into a sustained contest on a collateral issue. He did not know what the statement might be; he hoped it might be of such a character as to call for no reply from his hon. Friends and himself. Let the Evening Sitting on Tuesday be sufficient or insufficient, he confessed he was willing to abide by the decision then arrived at. He understood the noble Marquess to entitle him to infer that if a large number of Members found it imperative on them to speak on the question the Government would not oppose an adjournment until Thursday for the purpose of concluding the debate. On that understanding, he should be disposed not to quarrel with the arrangement made. If the speech of the Prime Minister were satisfactory to the Irish Members, they would not be under the necessity of entering into a debate at all; and, therefore, he would suggest to his hon. Friend the Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) the desirability of withdrawing his Motion.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, however anxious he might be that this controversy should terminate, he should be unwilling it should terminate under any misapprehension; and there were two misapprehensions he thought it his duty to correct. It had been altogether erroneously assumed throughout the discussion that the Prime Minister had announced an intention of making a general statement with regard to Irish affairs on Tuesday next. All his right hon. Friend said, in reply to the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Joseph Cowen), was that he thought it would be more convenient to answer the Question put to him by that hon. Gentleman on the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Wigton Burghs (Sir John Hay), because that Motion would give an opportunity, if necessary, of debate. His right hon. Friend never said that it was his intention on Tuesday to make any general statement with regard to Irish affairs. The other misapprehension was that he (the Marquess of Hartington) had given any undertaking that the debate would, if it was thought desirable, be adjourned from Tuesday until Thursday. What he said was that it was utterly impossible, until the debate had taken place, for them to come to any decision as to an adjournment. Of course, if it was the desire of a large portion of the House that the debate should be adjourned, the Government would not offer any unreasonable opposition; but he had never said—indeed, it was not within his power to say—that the debate should be adjourned until Thursday. He did not know what the arrangement of the Business for next week would be, and it was quite out of his power to give any undertaking as to an adjournment of the debate.

MR. BIGGAR said, that, after the appeal made to him by his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), and after the explanation of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India, he begged leave to withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committee *deferred* till *Tuesday* next, at Two of the clock.

QUESTIONS.

CORRUPT PRACTICES (DISFRANCHISEMENT) BILL.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether he could state on what day it would be possible to take the second reading of the Corrupt Practices (Disfranchisement) Bill? It was a Bill on which it was obviously necessary that there should be considerable discussion; and he thought it was also desirable that before long that discussion should take place. He did not know that it was possible for the Government to say when the Bill would be taken; but he hoped they would be able to say that it would be before a certain day.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I am afraid it is impossible to say when that discussion can take place.

WAYS AND MEANS.

MR. R. N. FOWLER asked the noble Lord the Secretary to the Treasury, If he could say when Ways and Means would be taken?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, he thought the hon. Gentleman might have seen by what had taken place that it was perfectly impossible to say.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

⁂

PATENTS FOR INVENTIONS (No. 2) BILL.

(*Sir John Lubbock, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Compton Lawrance.*)

[BILL 104.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK, in moving the second reading of the Bill, said, it was necessarily one of much detail; and he would suggest that it should be read a second time, and then be referred to the same Committee as the Bill about to be introduced by the Government. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had been good enough to say that the Government would agree to that course; and he (Sir John Lubbock) hoped the House would also consent to it. The Bill had been very carefully prepared by the Society of Arts, and in their name he asked the House to consent to the second reading. It was of a comprehensive character, and went into the whole question very fully; but it was made up of a great number of separate points, which could be better dealt with in Committee than by the House.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—*Sir John Lubbock,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* 22nd May.

JUDGMENTS (INFERIOR COURTS) BILL.

(*Mr. Monk, Mr. Norwood, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Corry, Mr. Reid, Mr. Serjeant Simon.*)

[BILL 44.] CONSIDERATION AS AMENDED.

Order for Consideration, as amended, read.

Bill, as amended, *considered.*

On the Motion of Mr. MONK, new Clause brought up, and read a first and second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be added to the Bill."—(*Mr. Monk.*)

MR. WARTON said, he objected to the clause being added.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, the Amendment was introduced in order to produce complete reciprocity between the Three Kingdoms, in which at present the jurisdiction was not the same. The words of the clause were—

> "Nothing contained in this Act shall authorize the registration in an Inferior Court of a certificated judgment for any greater amount than might have been recovered."

MR. SPEAKER: I must point out to the right hon. and learned Gentleman that Notice ought to be given of a new clause brought up on the consideration of a Bill. Therefore this new clause cannot be proposed without Notice.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, he would agree to the Motion.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

MR. MONK said, he would name Monday for the further consideration of the Bill.

MR. WARTON said, he objected to Monday decidedly, and complained that the Bill had been hurried on, simply because of the rapid action and low tone of voice of the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk). The other evening he (Mr. Warton) had done what he could to help this Bill; but it was very awkward for the hon. Member for Gloucester to try, by sharp practice, to pass the Bill through the House. He therefore asked that time should be allowed for considering the effect of this clause, and if the hon. Member would consent to name Thursday that time would be obtained. He was not going to have Bills passed in that way. He always accepted what the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland said; but there must be proper time given for consideration.

MR. BUCHANAN hoped the hon. Member in charge of the Bill (Mr. Monk) would listen to this appeal. The new clause had not been put on the Paper; but it affected the interests of Scotland, and he hoped the hon. Member would accede to the request.

MR. MONK said, the Amendments made to the Bill had been on the Paper for three weeks. [Mr. WARTON: Not this clause.] That new clause had been approved by the right hon. and learned

Lord Advocate; and he (Mr. Monk) understood from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland that it only affected Ireland. He, therefore, should name Monday for the further consideration of the Bill.

Mr. WHITLEY said, he understood from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland's explanation that the proposed limitation would affect the whole of the United Kingdom. He, therefore, hoped the hon. Member (Mr. Monk) would allow the Bill to stand over until the following Thursday.

Mr. MONK said, if it was the general wish of the House he would postpone the Bill until next Thursday.

Further Consideration, as amended, *deferred* till *Thursday* next.

House adjourned at Three o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 1*st May*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—Select Committee—Claims of Peerage, &c., The Lord Monck *added.*

Public Bill—*First Reading*—Pluralities Acts Amendment* (74).

STATE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS — THE IRISH POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT — THE LORD LIEUTENANCY OF IRELAND.—OBSERVATIONS.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: My Lords, I have waited some minutes in the full expectation that the Leader of the House would have vouchsafed some explanation as to the prodigies which have appeared in the political sky; but, as the noble Earl is silent, I am compelled, according to what I believe is the usage, to ask whether any explanation will be given of the resignation, if it is true, by a Member of your Lordships' House whom we all highly respect, of the highly responsible Office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; whether it is true that the Office is to be held *in commendam* as a subordinate Office of the Lord Presidency of the Council by the noble Lord who now occupies that post; whether such a junction, if it be a fact, is to be held to indicate that the arrangement is provisional, or that the existence of the Lord Lieutenancy is provisional, or that the existence of the Lord Presidency is provisional; also, whether we are to infer from this change that any change is also about to take place in the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Ireland; and whether they have any new measure or new proposals to announce with respect to the appalling condition into which Ireland has lapsed? But, first of all, and most of all, for what reason it is, if a reason can be given, that the Lord Lieutenant has resigned?

Earl GRANVILLE: My Lords, I have been some time longer than the noble Marquess in this House, and I am not aware of the precedent on which he rests for asking nine Questions without the slightest Notice, either public or private. If the noble Marquess will repeat his nine Questions on Thursday, I will endeavour to give an answer.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: My Lords, I wish to give Notice that I will ask the noble Earl, in order to give him time to ascertain the facts, which, no doubt, he has not had an opportunity of ascertaining, whether Lord Cowper has resigned; whether Lord Spencer is to hold the place, *in commendam;* and whether Her Majesty's Government have any new policy in regard to Ireland; and what are the reasons for Lord Cowper's resignation? I can perfectly understand that the noble Earl is ignorant on these subjects.

Earl GRANVILLE: My Lords, as the noble Marquess has reduced the number of his Questions from nine to four it will make it easier for me to answer them.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: I will ask the Questions to-morrow.

OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION—THE STATUTES —RELIGIOUS TEACHING AND WORSHIP.—OBSERVATIONS.

The Earl of CARNARVON rose to call attention to the provision made for religious teaching and worship in the Statutes laid on the Table of the House by the Oxford and Cambridge Universities Commissioners. The noble Earl said, that they were within two days of the time when it would be necessary for their Lordships to express assent to, or dissent from, the Statutes which lay on the Table of the House; and, therefore, now or never, the House should express its opinion on the subject. Those Statutes, taken in combination with the Acts constituting the powers of the Commissioners, effected a material change in the studies, discipline, worship, and religious instruction of the Universities; but in his observations he should confine himself entirely to the religious question and the University of Oxford. In former years the system of religious instruction and worship in Chapel was a clearly defined system, though different Acts of Parliament had been passed, and had greatly modified that system. First, there was the great University Reform of 1854. Since that time various provisions had been made by the Legislature, the most important of which was the Act of 1871, by which tests were abolished in the Universities. Finally, there was the Act of 1877, upon which the present Commission was appointed. In all those Acts there were very distinct provisions for promoting the designs of the Founders and benefactors of Colleges in our Universities; and the Acts required that the Universities should be mainly what they were in former days—places of religion and learning. In the Preamble of the original Act, to which he had referred, it was laid down that the object in view was to promote the main designs of Founders and donors. The Act of 1871, in its Preamble, defined the Universities as places of learning and religion. In the enacting part it was said that nothing was to interfere with the system of worship and discipline, according to the Established Church. Lastly, provision was made for the performance of religious service in the College Chapels. The Act of 1877 re-affirmed all those principles even more strongly. Clause 14 referred to the designs of Founders and donors; Clause 15 declared that the Commissioners should have regard to the interests of religion; Clause 59 re-affirmed the clause in the original Act of 1871, to which he had called attention. In addition to that, distinct assurances had repeatedly been given to quiet all alarm on the subject. He called attention to these facts, because, partly by direct legislation, partly in consequence of the powers given to the Governing Bodies, all those promises had practically come to nought; and no such safeguards now existed for religious teaching and discipline as had been promised. He next came to the Statutes themselves, as framed by the University Commission. There was a good deal of difference in the Statutes as regarded the different Colleges. Those Statutes contained provisions—first, regarding Clerical Headships; secondly, regarding Clerical Fellowships; and, thirdly, regarding College Chapels. The question of Clerical Headships he regarded as an important one, and now more important than ever, though he should not discuss it. It had, on former occasions, been much debated, and his opinion remained unaltered. But the case of Clerical Fellowships was even more important, because in the Fellows rested the whole teaching and influencing power in the Universities. He would take the case of Christ Church. In the old days there were 101 students, of whom 97 were in Orders, and four faculty or lay students. Now there were to be only three in Orders, and all the rest would probably be laymen. He mentioned this to show how great was the revolution proposed. Brasenose had formerly six Fellows in Orders; now the number was limited to one. Lastly, as he had said, there were the College Chapels. In old days the Chapels might be described as the Parish Churches of the undergraduates. They had now ceased to have any such character, and attendance at Chapel was now optional. He would observe, also, that, under the old system, all the authorities of Colleges that directed and controlled the Chapel belonged to the Church of England. What were now the Governing Bodies of the Colleges? They were composed partly of resident and partly of non-resident members of the Universities, and these latter had little or no knowledge of the actual state of the Colleges; nor was there any reason whatever why the members of those Governing Bodies should profess any religion at all. Yet those Bodies appointed College Chaplains and dismissed them at pleasure. Further, they had full power to regulate the Services in any fashion they pleased; they could provide how and when the Communion was to be administered, and arrange any detail of the Services. Whatever religious discipline there might be lay with that Body to enforce or not. They had even the very remarkable power of altering, varying, or abridging Services as they pleased. The result was that the power of regulating the whole religious teaching and discipline of the University had been placed in the hands of men not necessarily professing any religious belief whatever, even in the existence of a Supreme Being. There was thus nothing left of the original purposes of the Founders. In many of the Colleges there had been a complete revolution in religious feeling. The old learning and religion had been absolutely divorced, and the old relations between culture and Christianity had been severed. He should not overstate matters when he said that numbers of young men in recent years had returned from the University with their belief in religion gone, and their faith sapped, in consequence of their connection with their Colleges. It might be said that this had arisen from many other causes, and especially from that atmosphere of doubt which pervaded every department of inquiry in the present day. It was, doubtless, true in part; but the change mainly arose from the legislation which had been pressed on for Party purposes, and in a Party spirit, the results of which had been repeatedly predicted, and were now all but verified. None had been more active, unfortunately, than the Dissenters, and they were already beginning to learn that on them the blow must fall first and heaviest. It might be said that under the old system there was often little real religion, and that the Chapel Service was, in fact, but a mere roll-call. In certain cases he believed that was true; but there was this great difference between the two cases. In former days they had all the machinery for religious life, though often unused; now it was the intention to sweep that machinery entirely away, and to leave all the surrounding influences adverse to religion. The leading objections that he had to the Statutes were, first, that the responsibility on the part of the authorities of the College in religious teaching would cease to exist; secondly, that the machinery of religious influence and teaching had been swept away; thirdly, that the teaching would be taken out of the hands of the Governing Bodies; and, fourthly, that it would be placed where no Clerical Fellow could be got to undertake the instruction, in the hands of a clergyman to be appointed for that purpose. This clergyman, who was to be the sole representative of religion in these matters, was in many cases a man receiving an utterly inadequate stipend, and his position would be a feeble one against the great forces arrayed against him. The position of such a clergyman would be very similar to that of a chaplain in the houses of the rich in the 17th century, as described by the great Whig historian of England. He would be a tame Levite, whose first duty it would be to make himself agreeable to the common rooms of the future, and whose religious attributes might easily be limited to his black coat and white necktie. It was not his intention to move to omit these objectionable clauses from the Statutes, as he believed that the Universities needed rest after the long period of Parliamentary agitation through which they had passed; and he would not, therefore, be a party to throwing them back into that state of agitation. He accepted those Statutes simply because he bowed to superior force; but he protested against them, and he distinctly wished it to be understood that he was no consenting party to legislation which he believed to be both dangerous and wrong.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY said, that their Lordships would, no doubt, allow him to say a few words on that subject, especially when they knew that he rose to give Notice, on behalf of the right rev. Prelate (the Bishop of Lincoln), that he would, on Friday of next week, move the rejection of the Statutes which had been framed by the Commissioners for Lincoln College. He thanked the noble Earl for the speech which he had just delivered. He did not think, however, that the effect of the Statutes would be to sweep away religious teaching so entirely as the noble Earl seemed to fear, because, inadequate as the arrangements were, they still furnished some means by which, under a happier state of things, the religious life of the University could be maintained. As regarded Lincoln College, however, he thought that there was nothing to be done but to reject the Statutes, in the hope that a better scheme might be prepared and adopted. There was one point to which he would venture to call attention, which was connected with the legal aspect of the whole matter. But he would pronounce no opinion, because, of course, he was not in a position to decide so difficult and technical a question. Representations had been made to him to the effect that the Commissioners, in making these Statutes, had exceeded the powers which had been conferred upon them by Parliament. That contention, whether right or wrong—and on that he expressed no opinion—involved this further proposition—that no power to remove disabilities or tests was conferred by the Act of 1877, and that in such matters the Commissioners were referred back to the Test Act of 1871. It was further contended that in the Act of 1877 there was a distinct clause that the Test Act of 1871 should be binding upon the Commissioners appointed in 1877. When the Test Act of 1871 was referred back to, certain provisions were found in it, which appeared to apply, in the first instance, merely to a single clause; but, on examination, that clause turned out to be the really governing clause of the whole Act, and was the only one which conferred upon the Commissioners the power of doing away with those tests. That clause was as follows:—

> "Nothing in this section"—*i.e.*, the governing section of the Act—"shall render a layman or a person not a member of the Church of England eligible to any office or capable of exercising any right in any of the said Colleges, which office or right under the authority of any Act of Parliament, or of any Statute or Ordinance of such College in force at the time of the passing of this Act, is restricted to persons in Holy Orders, or shall remove any obligation to enter into Holy Orders, which is by such authority attached to any such office."

Rightly or wrongly, it was contended that there was nothing in the subsequent Act repealing that restriction, and that, therefore, the Commissioners, by this wholesale abolition of union of Clerical offices with the Fellowships, had gone beyond the provisions of the Act; and special attention was drawn to the repeated admonitions which were contained in both Acts that regard should be paid to the maintenance of religious instruction and of Chapel Services in the Colleges. For his own part, he should be very glad if this matter were cleared up, because it had left a very unpleasant impression on the minds of those who took an interest in it. He could not himself see in the Act of 1877 any distinct power given for superseding the Act of 1871; on the contrary, it appeared to him that the Act of 1871 was re-enacted and strengthened by certain clauses of the subsequent Act. But, however that might be, there still remained the objection to some of these Statutes, especially when it was remembered that the Commissioners were called upon to use their best endeavours to maintain religious instruction and religious services in the Colleges. What was contended was that the peculiarly unfortunate mode which, in the case of Lincoln College, the Commissioners had selected for securing the continuance of those Services, and of giving that instruction, would lead to utter and entire failure, and that the hiring of two persons at a salary of £100 a-year between them, persons who were to be removable at pleasure, and who would not have the power of speaking with authority to the undergraduates, would end in making the whole religious service and instruction ridiculous and impracticable.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, that the noble Earl who introduced this subject had uttered a very gloomy prophecy with regard to the Universities, and more especially the University of Oxford. He hoped that the prophecy would not be realized. It was rather unfortunate that the noble Earl did not enter a little more into detail, and point out how the various Colleges had failed so entirely, as he had represented, to fulfil the letter and the spirit of the Act of 1871. Being himself an Oxford man, he (the Earl of Camperdown) had paid more attention to the Statutes of that University. He had taken 10 Colleges, in order to see how the Act was carried out. Those included Brasenose, Balliol, Christ Church, Exeter, &c.; and, in every case he had examined into, the result was that it was necessary to appoint a Fellow in Holy Orders to perform the duties of Divine Service. In every single Statute for every College in the University of Oxford it was expressly stated that Services should be performed, and, he thought, in almost every instance, in the morning and in the evening in the College Chapel. The noble Earl had seemed to propose that the Colleges should revert to the old, exploded practice of appointing to Fellowships only those persons who were in Holy Orders; but such a retrograde step was impracticable in these days, and would hardly commend itself to any one. The noble Earl had complained that no provision had been made that the chaplains should be members of the Colleges; but there the noble Earl was again in error, inasmuch as in the Statutes of a large number of the Colleges it was provided that one or more of the Fellows must be in Holy Orders, and in others that the chaplain should be a Fellow if possible. The abridgment of the Service of which complaint had been made was to be done by the Governing Bodies, with the assent of the Visitor in almost every case. Such was, at all events, the case at Cambridge.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, he particularly limited his observations to Oxford.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: And, after all, who, he would ask, was more fit to undertake the government of the Colleges than the Governing Bodies? No other mode of government was possible, unless they chose to accept some unknown form of government from outside. For his own part, he did not think it so absolutely essential that the chaplain should be a Fellow of his College. Undergraduates appreciated clearly the distinction between those Fellows who attained to their position by open competition and those who came in by some other door; and it was a mistake to suppose that a Clerical Fellow obtained by virtue of his position any additional influence in the College. He thought it would be undesirable, on the evidence before them, to assume that the Colleges had failed to comply with the Statutes of 1871.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, that, as he had at one time been a Commissioner for the University of Oxford, it might, perhaps, be expected that he should say something upon the subjects which the noble Earl had introduced. In the first place, he must shortly say that there was no ground for the doubt, which the most rev. Prelate had stated to be felt by some persons, as to the power of the Commissioners to abolish Clerical restrictions on Headships and Fellowships. The 17th section of the Act of 1877 expressly authorized the Commissioners to make provision for altering and regulating the conditions of eligibility to any endowment or office held in, or connected with, a College, and the conditions of tenure thereof. Headships were not within this power, when the Bill was first introduced by the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury); but it was made to include them in consequence of great pressure, with the very object of removing Clerical restrictions, both within the Universities and in the House of Commons. With respect to the provision for religious instruction and Chapel Services, which it was the duty of the Commissioners, under the 59th section of the Act (repeating the enactments for that purpose of the Tests Abolition Act) to make, the Commissioners had, in all Colleges where there were Fellows under the obligation of taking Holy Orders, retained one or more Clerical Fellowships, for those purposes. But there were several Colleges in which no Fellowships were so restricted; and, as to these, the same section prohibited the Commissioners from making, either directly or indirectly, the entering into Holy Orders, or the taking of any test, a condition of the holding of any office or emolument not so restricted at the time of the passing of the Act. In those Colleges, the Commissioners were, therefore, prevented by law from requiring that there should always be one or more Fellows in Holy Orders charged with the duty of religious instruction. At New College, for instance, there were for a long time a certain number of Clerical Fellows; but there being also in the Statutes the power of making alterations, the College, before 1877, obtained the consent of its Visitor to do away with the requirement as to Clerical Fellowships altogether; and, although there always had been, and probably always would be, Clerical Fellows in that noble Foundation fit to undertake the duties of religious instruction and Divine Service, the Commissioners could not require that this should be a condition of election to any Fellowship there. Passing to the observations of the noble Earl with respect to the abolition of Clerical Headships, which the noble Earl stated to have been effected in every College except Christ Church, he pointed out that at Pembroke, at least, this was not the case, a Canonry in Gloucester Cathedral being attached to the Headship of that College. There might be differences of opinion as to whether it was desirable to remove those restrictions; but there could be no question that it was done in accordance with an almost unanimous opinion in the University itself. In every, or nearly every, case, the two Commissioners who were appointed from each College to assist in the consideration of the new Statutes reported the prevailing opinion of their own Society to be against retaining the Clerical qualification, as necessary, for the Headship. Under those circumstances, it could not be a matter of surprise to their Lordships that the Commissioners yielded to such a general desire of the Colleges themselves, and acceded to their request. With regard to the other points, it was invariably provided, for the purpose of religious instruction and for the maintenance of the Chapel Services in those Colleges in which the Commissioners had power so to provide, that there should be at least one Clerical Fellow. At Christ Church there were three, and at Magdalen two such Clerical Fellows. He was himself very strongly impressed with the importance of intrusting these duties to a member of the Governing Body of the College, and not to a stranger to that Body, whenever it could be done; and he knew that the same opinion was entertained, before he became a Commissioner, by one who thoroughly understood the wants of the University, and was a most liberal-minded man, the present Dean of Westminster. The noble Lord was in error in supposing that any of the Statutes gave the Governing Body powers to abridge the Chapel Services. That power was conferred by the Acts of 1871 and 1874, which enabled the Governing Bodies to abridge the morning and evening prayer on any day except Sunday, with the consent of the Visitor. Upon the general question, as to the abolition of Clerical restrictions, except when they were retained for Fellowships having Clerical duties annexed to them, he would only say, that it was not so clear, even from a Churchman's point of view, as to some it might perhaps appear. It might well be doubted whether the maintenance of those Clerical restrictions had in past times tended to increase the influence of religious principles in the Universities. Under the old system gentlemen who had obtained Clerical Fellowships either went away from the Universities to country curacies, or remained long in the University, often without taking part in the work of education, and ultimately accepted College livings. Since that state of affairs had been changed, appointments to College livings had been made on more satisfactory principles. At the same time, he would point out that there was nothing in the new Statutes, of any College, to prevent the College from electing as many Clerical Fellows as they pleased, or to prevent gentlemen elected to Fellowships from taking Holy Orders if they pleased. He did not think in any case that the new Statutes would prevent the majority of young men in College from remaining subject to very much the same influences as they had always been. They were told that the present state of things as regarded religious instruction and worship was deplorable. He could not but feel that, as to some individual cases of persons now holding College emoluments, there might possibly be some ground for that statement; but he was unwilling to believe that the picture drawn by the noble Earl (the Earl of Carnarvon) represented the general state of things at the Universities, especially among the undergraduates. But, if it were true that there was, at the present time, that general deleterious influence which his noble Friend who introduced the subject had supposed, he would like those who objected to the new Statutes to consider, whether that state of things had come to pass under the new Statutes, which put an end to many of the Clerical restrictions which were previously maintained, or did it come to pass under the system of Clerical restrictions? It came to pass under the system of Clerical restrictions. If influences were now abroad which tended to unsettle men's minds, would it not be a greater evil that such consequences should take place among those who had taken Holy Orders to qualify themselves to hold particular endowments? and was it not better that there should be freedom for those who, unfortunately, were not in a state of mind which would induce them to take Holy Orders from choice? He could not but help thinking that if such influences existed, they had arisen, not out of the removal of Clerical restrictions, but from other causes, which, he hoped, would pass away.

THE BISHOP OF WINCHESTER said, that there was a great difference, in regard to the religious instruction of a College, between having that instruction provided for by the Governing Body, and only having it provided for by a chaplain appointed from without. At Cambridge they had had a certain number of such chaplains in some of the Colleges, and he could say from his own experience that those chaplains exercised no sort or kind of influence over the young men of the College; whereas the Clerical Fellows and Clerical Heads of the Colleges often exercised a very great influence. He entirely agreed with the noble Earl who had spoken first that it would not be desirable to try to oppose the passing of those Statutes, because if those Statutes were thrown out it was possible, considering how rapidly opinion in regard to theology was running in the present direction, they might be left in even a worse position than they were now. It should, however, be remembered that many of the Colleges were founded in old times for the special purpose of giving religious instruction. Out of the five Colleges at Oxford of which he was Visitor, all were founded for that special purpose, and three of them by eminent predecessors of his own. He did not say that religious instruction would not be given after the passing of those Statutes; but the only provision for it was that there was to be one Fellow who might be a clergyman, or there might be a College chaplain appointed from without. Although he was inclined to acquiesce in the recommendations of the Commissioners, with the exception of the case of Lincoln College, he could not but fear that their tendency must be to impair the influence of religious teaching. It was said that the Fellows of Colleges took Holy Orders often merely to obtain Fellowships. That might be so in some instances, but, he said, that a body of Clerical Fellows was almost without exception a body of well-conducted men; and he feared that they would not have the same restraining influences in a body of Lay Fellows.

The Marquess of SALISBURY said, he did not desire now to express any opinion with respect to the matter under discussion, because it seemed to him they would have a more convenient opportunity of discussing the question more fully when the Motion, of which Notice had been given by the most rev. Prelate, was before the House. With respect to the general operations of those Statutes, he had only to express his general concurrence and sympathy with his noble Friend behind him, who introduced the subject. There was, however, one point which he could not pass over, and it was for that reason that he ventured to trouble their Lordships with a very few words. He could not help thinking that the provision by which, in the case of most of the Colleges, a Clerical Fellow was to be appointed, in order to provide for religious instruction, was not a valueless or an unimportant provision. On the contrary, he regarded it as one of the very highest importance. He earnestly regretted that the Commissioners did not see their way to give them more in the same direction. But still the fact that they were, for whatever reason, unable to come to that decision, ought not to blind their Lordships as to the great importance of having among the Governing Body of the College a man whose duty it was to superintend the religious instruction, which it was the duty of the College to give; and such a man, selected, as he would doubtless be, with a due sense of the responsibility of the selection, must exercise a valuable influence over those committed to his charge. It was the importance he attached to that provision which had induced him, for one, to abstain from bringing any of those Statutes under the consideration of their Lordships. If their Lordships had been asked to vote against the Statutes in which that provision existed, and if they had acceded to that suggestion, the result would have been that those Statutes would simply have been swept away; and the old Statutes, in a more or less mutilated condition, would have revived to take their place. The consequence of that would have been to throw the whole legislation of the Universities into the crucible again. As far as he was able to ascertain the opinion of men of all the parties connected with the University, that would not be regarded as a desirable, or even a tolerable possibility. He was bound to look to the probabilities which there were of the substitution of improved provisions for those which, under the hypothesis he had suggested, were to have been repealed. With regard to the appointment of Clerical Fellowships, he was compelled to express his opinion that whatever any of their Lordships might individually think, there had been for many years past, and he was certain there was now, a very strong and growing feeling against the arrangement which had existed up to the present time—namely, the arrangement that had been reported on by the Commissioners in 1854. He believed that opinion was strong; and that it was so was evidenced by one circumstance that he would mention. In the original draft of the Act of 1877 a power of dealing with Clerical Headships was not included; but when the matter came to be discussed in the House of Commons, which was certainly not then an exceptionally Radical or Liberal House, it was found that the pressure of feeling was so strong that it became necessary to consent to a modification of the Bill. If the House of Commons of 1877 was not fully prepared to accept the system of Clerical Fellowships, it would be a matter of very great doubt, if they now repealed all the Statutes and framed new Statutes, whether the present House of Commons would consent to more favourable terms than the present. He would not discuss the peculiar provisions that had been inserted into the Statutes; but speaking of the Statutes generally, though he sympathized with his noble Friend behind him, he thought it very doubtful whether any interference would result in the Statutes being rendered more advantageous to religious teaching and worship than they were at present.

TUNIS—BOMBARDMENT OF SFAX—INDEMNITY TO BRITISH SUBJECTS.

QUESTION. ADDRESS FOR PAPERS.

EARL DE LA WARR rose to present a petition from British subjects residing and carrying on business at Sfax in the Regency of Tunis; and to ask if Her Majesty's Government intend to take any steps to procure relief or indemnity for the losses which have been sustained in consequence of the bombardment of that city by the French; also to move an Address for papers and correspondence relating to the International Commission held at Sfax in August 1881 to inquire into the pillaging and destruction of property after the entry of the French troops; also for the Reports of M. Galea and M. Leonardi on the same subject; and for Papers and Correspondence relative to the affairs of Tunis since the last papers were presented. He wished to add that the Petition, which was numerously signed by British subjects, merchants, and others engaged in business at Sfax, stated that in the months of June and July last the city of Sfax was bombarded, and afterwards occupied by the French Forces; that the Petitioners had all suffered great damage and loss by the injury or destruction of their habitations, as well as by the pillage of the city; that the allegations of the Petitioners were fully substantiated before an International Commission held at Sfax during the months of August, September, and October, 1881; that, although several months had passed since then, the Petitioners (many of whom were completely ruined) had received no indemnity or relief, although the Natives of Sfax had been compelled to pay a large war contribution; and the Petitioners prayed that their Lordships' House might be pleased to take their case into consideration, and direct such representation to be made to the Government of the French Republic, and to that of His Highness the Bey of Tunis, as might result in their receiving the indemnity due to them for the loss they had sustained. He thought the Petitioners had a strong claim upon their Lordships' attention, and that of the country generally, under the very trying and peculiar circumstances in which they were placed. The British trade in Tunis had been hitherto carried on upon most favourable terms. It had been protected by Treaties; and British subjects, especially from Malta, had been induced to invest their capital in trade and other ways. The most friendly feelings had existed, of which he could speak from personal knowledge, between the Government of the Bey and the Government of this country. There had also been a kindly feeling between the Native population and the English. It had been enough for an Englishman to declare his nationality to insure a hospitable reception. The climate was one of the finest in the world, and a large field had been at all times open to British industry. This applied especially to Sfax, the most important city in the Regency of Tunis, as regards commerce, and where the trade was chiefly in the hands of British merchants. But what had happened? The country had been unexpectedly invaded by a friendly Power in alliance with Tunis and England;

and British subjects found themselves, without any declaration of war, bombarded by a French fleet, their property destroyed, and their houses afterwards pillaged by French troops in consequence of the patriotic resistance which was offered to the invaders by the Native Arab tribes, as related by an eye-witness as follows:—

> "In the narrow streets of the Native town, house after house was only occupied after a desperate hand-to-hand conflict."

The effect of this upon the trading and commercial part of the city could readily be imagined; and although the European and Jewish quarter was separated from the Arab, both seem to have suffered alike. Another narrator, speaking of what took place, for whose accuracy he could vouch, said—

> "There can be no doubt that the French soldiers who drove the Arabs out of Sfax on the 16th of July, 1881, followed up their triumph by an indiscriminate pillage of both the European and Arab quarters of the town. What was done happened in the face of day, and can neither be gainsaid nor denied."

The same witness said—

> "We next entered the European *faubourg*. Most of the houses were much damaged and knocked about by the shells; but on the pretext that some Arabs had fired from the dwelling of M. Gili, a Maltese merchant, an order had been given to break open the doors of every habitation in the quarter; and as soon as this was done a general pillage ensued. I was an unwilling witness of all that happened. The soldiers (*i.e.*, the French) took or spoiled everything they could carry away, and broke or defaced what they were unable to move. None of the officers seemed disposed to interfere, and the whole business was a sad contrast to the measures taken by the insurgents (*i.e.*, the Native population) to preserve our property."

This witness of what took place further added—

> "July 19.—This morning I went to visit the Grand Mosque. Its minaret is disabled, and it is turned into a barrack. I saw the soldiers cooking in various parts of it. Throughout the Moorish town the traces of the sack were painful to witness. . . . . Valuable Arabic manuscripts were torn up and their pages distributed as *souvenirs* of the siege."

After many other particulars, he went on to say—

> "In short, the Maltese Colonists of Sfax have been the chief sufferers by the pillage of the town committed in the manner I have described. Some of them have, indeed, lost their all; hardly one has escaped unscathed. As an eye-witness, I have recorded what really happened in broad daylight and in the sight of hundreds of people. The only hope of the half-ruined British community is in the support which they feel sure their claims must inevitably have from the British Government."

He could give many further details; but he thought he had said enough to justify the words of the Petition as regarded the losses which had been sustained by British subjects at Sfax in consequence of the bombardment of that city by the French and the pillage which ensued. The Petition concluded by stating that the allegations were fully substantiated before an International Commission, which was appointed to inquire into the circumstances of the case; but that, notwithstanding several months had elapsed, no relief or indemnity of any kind had been afforded them, although the Natives of Sfax had been compelled to pay a large war contribution. The Commission here referred to was appointed, he believed, in September, 1881, and was composed of Count Marquessac, captain of the French ship *La Reine Blanche*, who acted as President; Caid Jelluli, the Governor of the city; Captain Tryon, of Her Majesty's ship *Monarch*; and Captain Conti, of the Italian frigate *Maria Pia*. After sitting several weeks, the Commission was abruptly dissolved. Sir Charles W. Dilke stated in "another place," in March last—

> "That the proceedings of the Sfax Commission were brought to a close by the French Chairman, on the ground that the British Commissioner had recalled a witness who had been already examined, and whose second deposition differed from that previously given."

This was a somewhat unusual way of terminating an important Commission where considerable interests were at stake—by the *ipse dixit* of the French Chairman. He asked that the proceedings of the Sfax Commission, together with the Report of M. Galea and M. Leonardi, might be laid upon the Table of the House. He further asked for Papers and Correspondence relative to the general affairs of Tunis since the last Papers were presented, including Correspondence upon the still unsolved question of the Enfida Estate. With reference generally to these questions as affecting British interests, it was impossible to pass unnoticed the recent Decree of the President of the French Republic, dated the 22nd of April, which amounted to the virtual annexation to France of the Regency of Tunis. By this Decree the various branches of Government in Tunis, as far as they related to France, were placed under the corresponding Ministerial Departments in Paris. There remained, therefore, but one step more—namely, to include other nationalities—and the annexation was complete. The Kroumir phantom had disappeared, and, in the words of M. de Freycinet, upon whose Report this Decree was founded—

> "Le moment semble venu d'adopter une organisation plus en harmonie avec la nature des choses."

He asked the attention of the House, and especially of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to these words—for, if they meant anything, it must surely be that the protectorate of Tunis which France had assumed would shortly pass into annexation similar to that of Algeria. They had heard much lately of the danger to this country of the proposed Channel Tunnel; but this question seemed to him to sink into insignificance when compared with that of the annexation of Tunis to France, which would give her possession of what might become two of the finest harbours in the Mediterranean, Bizerta and Porto Farina, and would thus virtually give a naval preponderance to France from Gibraltar to Malta, which, in the event of war, might prove most disastrous to this country. In conclusion, the noble Earl moved that the Petition be laid upon the Table.

Moved, That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for papers and correspondence relating to the International Commission held at Sfax in August 1881 to inquire into the pillaging and destruction of property after the entry of the French troops; also for the reports of M. Galea and M. Leonardi on the same subject; and for papers and correspondence relative to the affairs of Tunis since the last papers were presented.—(*The Earl De La Warr.*)

Earl GRANVILLE said: My Lords, in answer to the noble Earl's Question, of which he gave Notice, but which he has put with some development, I have to say that I regret that the Commission of Inquiry at Sfax led to no practical result. Her Majesty's Government at once put themselves in communication with the French Government on the subject of the British claims. Those claims are now nearly prepared, and will be diplomatically communicated to the French Government through our Ambassador at Paris. As to the Motion of the noble Earl, I cannot agree to it. The Papers will be prepared and presented when the communications which are now going on have come to an end.

Earl DE LA WARR: If the noble Earl will present the Papers at the earliest possible time, I shall be happy to withdraw my Motion.

Earl GRANVILLE: They will be presented when the communications are concluded.

Earl DE LA WARR: There are other Papers—*i.e.*, Reports of what occurred.

Earl GRANVILLE: They will be presented.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

THEATRES AND MUSIC HALLS (METROPOLIS)—PRECAUTIONS IN CASE OF FIRE.—ADDRESS FOR PAPERS.

The Earl of MILLTOWN rose to move that an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Copies of the Report made to the Home Office by Captain Shaw, chief officer of the London Fire Brigade, with regard to the dangers to which the public are exposed from fire in the Metropolitan theatres, and as to the means of exit provided for them. The noble Earl said it could not be denied that these dangers actually existed to a serious extent. Nothing could be more fallacious than to imagine themselves safe merely because they chose to shut their eyes to the perils around them. It had been stated that Captain Shaw's Report on the subject was of a very alarming character or description; but that was no reason for concealing its purpose. The dangers that existed were, to some extent, shown by the fires and panics which had recently occurred in different parts of the world; and if it had not been for the characteristic courage of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, on a recent occasion in London, when a bag of gas burst in connection with the limelight in a theatre, there might have been a great loss of life. The lessees of the theatres were bound to take reasonable care for the protection of the public in this matter; and if they failed or neglected to do so, he submitted that their licences should be refused and their theatres closed. The noble Earl concluded by moving his Motion.

Moved, That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for copies of the Report made to the Home Office by Captain Shaw, chief officer of the London Fire Brigade, with regard to the dangers to which the public are exposed from fire in the Metropolitan theatres, and as to the means of exit provided for them.—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY said, the noble Earl was not rightly informed that the Report of this Committee was addressed to the Home Office. It was addressed to the Metropolitan Board of Works, in whose cognizance that Report was at the present moment.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN: It is in the Home Office, I understand?

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY said, no, it was not in the Home Office; it was in the hands of the Metropolitan Board of Works. He would state what had occurred. In December last, the Home Secretary urged upon the Metropolitan Board of Works the necessity of some inquiry into the state of the London theatres. The Board of Works desired Captain Shaw to make a Report. That Report was issued last March. Since that time the Board of Works had taken the matter into their consideration, and forwarded copies of the Report to all persons interested, including the lessees of theatres reported upon. Since that time the Home Secretary had again urged the question upon the Board of Works. By 41 & 42 *Vict.*, c. 32, the Board of Works had ample power to deal with the question. If the Metropolitan Board of Works could not see their way to take efficient action in the matter, it would be necessary for the Secretary of State to take such steps in regard to it as he might think desirable and the importance of it demanded. At the same time, he could not agree that it was conducive to the public interest to produce the Report at the present moment; because, until the result of the action of the Board of Works was known, there was no good reason for producing a Report, which, as the noble Earl had surmised, was not wholly of a satisfactory nature.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

PLURALITIES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the Acts relating to the holding of Benefices in Plurality—Was *presented* by The Lord Bishop of EXETER; read 1ª. (No. 74.)

House adjourned at a quarter before Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 1st May, 1882.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2)* [145]; Local Government (Gas) Provisional Order* [144]; County Courts Act (1867) Amendment* [146]; Educational Endowments (Scotland) [147].

Second Reading—Military Manœuvres [134]; Public Health (Scotland) Act Amendment* [115].

Committee—Report—Militia Storehouses [116].

Considered as amended—Places of Worship Sites* [97].

Third Reading—Turnpike Roads (South Wales) [101], *debate adjourned;* Commonable Rights* [23], and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — MR. HENRY O'MAHONY, AN AMERICAN CITIZEN DETAINED UNDER THE ACT.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Henry O'Mahony, an American citizen, has been prevented by the Governor of Monaghan Gaol from writing to the United States representatives and has been told that he cannot make complaints as to his treatment except through the Chief Secretary?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, there was no truth in the statement that Mr. O'Mahony had been prevented from writing to the Representative of the United States.

MR. HEALY said, the right hon. Gentleman had not answered his Question. He had asked him whether Mr. O'Mahony had been prevented from making any complaints as to his treatment in prison, except through the Chief Secretary?

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he thought the hon. Member's Question related to communications with the United States. It was true that the Governor of the gaol informed Mr. O'Mahony that he could address the Chief Secretary if he had any complaint to make; but Mr. O'Mahony replied that he "would have nothing to do with the Chief Secretary." Had he complied with the regulations, his letters would have been duly forwarded.

MR. HEALY: I would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman, if he thought my Question referred only to American citizenship, why he obtained information as to the latter part of it?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I thought the first part of the Question was most important.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—SEARCH FOR ARMS.

MR. CALLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he issued a warrant under the provisions of the Arms Act of last Session to search the residence of Mr. John Connolly, Town Hall, Dundalk, a pensioner of the 19th Regiment, who lost his arm at the Alma; and, if so, whether he issued the said warrant upon sworn informations, or on the mere "reasonable suspicion" of Mr. Supple, Sub-Inspector Royal Irish Constabulary, Dundalk?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the warrant had been issued upon credible and trustworthy sworn information.

INTERNATIONAL FISHERY CONFERENCE—POLICE OF THE NORTH SEA.

MR. BIRKBECK asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the Governments who were represented at the International Fishery Conference held at the Hague last autumn, have approved the recommendations made by their delegates with regard to regulating the police of the fisheries in the North Sea; and, whether it is probable that any Convention will be concluded on this subject between the Maritime Countries whose coasts abut on the North Sea?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: All the Governments who were represented at the International Fisheries Conference held at the Hague last autumn, with the exception of Sweden and Norway, from whom no final reply has yet been received, have approved generally of the draft Convention which was recommended by the delegates, and which was, in the main, based on the suggestions made by Her Majesty's Government before the Conference assembled. I have every reason to hope that an International Convention will be concluded in a few days; and Mr. Trevor and Mr. Kennedy, who conducted the negotiations on behalf of this country with great ability and complete success, have been appointed Her Majesty's Plenipotentiaries for signature of such a Convention, and will leave to-morrow for Holland. Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, and the Netherlands will also be represented on this occasion. The Papers will be laid on the Table as soon as practicable; and I anticipate with confidence that the establishment by this Convention of efficient police regulations will be sufficient to check the disorders which have, unfortunately, been too frequent among the fishermen in the North Sea.

MAIN ROADS (ENGLAND)—LEGISLATION.

SIR MASSEY LOPES asked the President of the Local Government Board, If he can state when he proposes to introduce the Bill, referred to by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the expenses of main roads?

MR. DODSON: In answer to the hon. Baronet, I have to say that I hope shortly to be able to make a statement as to the mode in which it is proposed to distribute this grant. I also hope that, as it is a financial arrangement, it will be found practicable to give effect to it without any special legislation.

PUBLIC HEALTH—SHEFFIELD SMALL-POX HOSPITAL.

MR. W. LOWTHER asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is true that the resident surgeon, one of the nurses, and the cook, at a lately erected small-pox and fever hospital at Sheffield, were attacked by small-pox; and, whether he has any information that these officials were vaccinated before entering on their duties?

MR. DODSON: It is true that the resident surgeon and the cook at this hospital have recently been attacked with small-pox; but none of the nurses have been attacked. The medical officer had been vaccinated and re-vaccinated; the cook had been vaccinated in infancy, but, having afterwards suffered from small-pox, was not re-vaccinated on entering the hospital. Besides the medical officer and cook, one of the ward servants was attacked. She had been vaccinated when a child and re-vaccinated after coming to the hospital, but with only partial success. In all these three instances the attack was in a modified form, and, in the cases of the medical officer and the ward servant, scarcely any rash appeared. The infection seems to have been derived from a very severe case of confluent hemorrhagic small-pox, where the patient had never been vaccinated, and this is the only case which has terminated fatally in the hospital.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND)—OLDHAM BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

Mr. W. LOWTHER asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether three members of the Board of Guardians at Oldham lately bought the carcase of a pig which the medical officer had ordered to be killed and burned; whether the carcase of the pig was sold to a butcher for twenty-five shillings by these three guardians; whether, on the facts becoming known, the money was handed over to the master of the workhouse; and, whether those three gentlemen continue to act as guardians?

Mr. DODSON: I have caused inquiry to be made into this matter; but it does not appear that the medical officer ordered the pig in question to be killed, although, assuming that it was suffering from the same malady as another one which had been taken ill, he suggested that the carcase should be burnt. It is right, however, to say that he does not appear to have seen the pig; and the Guardians afterwards called in a veterinary surgeon, who examined the carcase and distinctly stated that it was fit for human food. The pig was subsequently taken away and sold by three of the Guardians for a sovereign, and the amount paid by one of them to the master of the workhouse. The three Guardians who took away the pig still continue to act as Guardians.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS FOR THE RATHDRUM UNION.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If, as President of the Local Government Board, he is aware that Mr. Gaskin, of Newtownboswell, Ashford, county Wicklow, has memorialized the Board, complaining of the conduct of the clerk of Rathdrum Union, in his capacity of returning officer, at the late election of guardian for the electoral division of Killosky, in that Union, and asking for a scrutiny of the votes; whether Mr. Gaskin had a large majority of the votes of rated occupiers, but was defeated by proxy votes; whether the validity of many of such votes was questioned by Mr. Gaskin, but, no professional agent being present on behalf of the rated occupiers to press the objections, all the proxy votes were admitted; whether, at the election for the adjoining electoral division of Wicklow, where a professional agent was employed, a large number of proxy votes were presented, and were objected to; whether the returning officer asserted they were all right, and wanted to record them; but, the objector insisting on examining them, many were rejected, being irregular, and the other candidate was returned; whether the Local Government Board have, on the ex parte statement of the officer whose conduct is impugned, refused Mr. Gaskin the inquiry sought for; and, whether, in justice to the rated occupiers, he will cause a strict investigation to be made into the circumstances of the case?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, it was the case that Mr. Gaskin had memorialized the Local Government Board; and the latter, having made inquiry into the matter, were satisfied with the explanation of the Returning Officer. In the absence of evidence in support of Mr. Gaskin's statements, they did not think further inquiry necessary.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. MICHAEL RYAN-WALL.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the case of Mr. Michael Ryan-Wall, at present detained under the Coercion Act in Naas Gaol, has been considered; and, whether he will order his release?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: This case has been reconsidered; and I regret to state that the Lord Lieutenant cannot, at present, recommend his release.

WAYS AND MEANS—RESOLUTION 3—COFFEE.

Mr. STEWART MACLIVER asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, after the proposed Resolution has become Law, prohibiting the mixture with coffee of any other ingredient than chicory, a drawback will be allowed to manufacturers upon other vegetables hitherto used for mixing, and upon which the same Duty as the Duty upon Chicory has been paid?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: The Government will be prepared to refund the duty in all cases in which such vegetable substances are still in charge, after the duty has been paid thereon. But where the duty has been paid, and the goods have been delivered for home consumption, Her Majesty's Government must adhere to their invariable practice of not making repayment.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—CO. MONAGHAN.

Mr. LEWIS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in the town of Monaghan, it is a fact that of a force of over twenty men all are Roman Catholics but three, and that the head constable, the sub-inspector, and the county inspector are also Roman Catholics; whether this is in accordance with the usual practice in the distribution of the force; and, whether he will direct any change to be made?

Mr. CALLAN: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, I beg to ask him, Whether it is a fact that in Dundalk, where nine-tenths of the population are Catholics, the County Inspector, the Sub-Inspector, the Head Constable, and the majority of the constables are Protestants; and, whether this is in accordance with the usual practice in the distribution of the force?

Mr. SEXTON also asked the right hon. Gentleman, Whether he was aware that in Cookstown the Constabulary Force was entirely composed of Protestants; and that in Armagh, Downpatrick, Enniskillen, and several other towns in Ulster all the police officers were Protestants?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had no knowledge of the facts referred to in the Questions of the hon. Members for Louth and for the county of Sligo; but they enabled him to state, in reply to the first Question, how exceedingly inconvenient it would be if the police were distributed and located according to their religious persuasion. Any attempt thus to distribute them would, he believed, be most disadvantageous to the good government and the efficiency of the force. As regarded the facts mentioned, he was informed that the actual number of constables in Monaghan was 21, of whon five were Protestants, which was about the same proportion as existed between the two religious persuasions in the place. The Head Constable, the Sub-Inspector, and the County Inspector were Roman Catholics. The County Inspector and Head Constable had been several years in the town, and the Inspector General was not aware of any reason for their removal. To remove a police officer from one district to another solely on account of his religion would not be expedient.

Mr. MACFARLANE inquired, whether the Chief Secretary had received any complaint of misconduct on the part of the Sub-Inspector which would justify his removal?

Mr. HEALY asked further, whether it was not the practice to send police to the South from the North, and to the North from the South?

[No answers were given to these Questions.]

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—PENSIONS.

Mr. LEWIS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, having regard to the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown in the late Government with reference to the claims of those members of the Royal Irish Constabulary Force who retired before August 1874 to the increased scale of pensions provided by the Act of 1874, the Government will consent to the appointment of a Select Committee of this House to consider and report upon such claims, and the justice or expediency of satisfying the same?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that this was a matter which had been very carefully considered by his Predecessor and himself, and the conclusion arrived at was that there was not a sufficient case for the appointment of a Select Committee.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1854—THE CHANNEL STEAMER "ALBERT EDWARD."

CAPTAIN PRICE asked the President of the Board of Trade, What number of passengers the "Albert Edward" is licensed to carry in her trips across the Channel, and what number of these could her boats accommodate in case of an accident; whether he is aware that in the United States of America a Law exists compelling all passenger ships to be provided with such numbers of boats, rafts, life-preservers, &c., as shall best secure the safety of all persons on board such vessel in case of disaster; and, whether it would be possible for the Board of Trade to issue an order by which the establishment of boats, rafts, &c. in passenger vessels should bear some relation to the number of passengers carried, instead of having reference solely to the size of the ship, as at present is the case?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The passenger certificate issued by the Board of Trade in the case of the *Albert Edward* authorized that vessel to carry 364 passengers. She was provided with boats in accordance with the Merchant Shipping Act of 1854; and these boats would, in accordance with the American rule, be deemed sufficient for 83 persons. I am aware that the law of the United States requires life-jackets, &c. to be on board, sufficient, together with the boats, to float all the passengers; and it is not an uncommon thing for English steamers to be provided with life-jackets for all on board. The owners of the *Albert Edward* have complied with the letter of the law, and I have no power to compel them to do more than they have done in the matter of boats. But I am advised that there are many methods by which seats and deck fittings may be made buoyant and capable of keeping persons afloat; and I hope that the attention which this Question has called to the subject will lead the Companies whose steamers cross the Channel to adopt some such method.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—SEC. 10.

MR. FITZ-PATRICK asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881" prevents the landlord and tenant of a future tenancy, created after 1st of January, 1883, from contracting freely for such lease as they please, or whether such a lease should conform to the requirements of a judicial lease, under the tenth section of the Act?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER), in reply, said, the Question referred to the construction of certain clauses of the Land Act. He did not think it desirable, or in accordance with precedent, that an official opinion should be pronounced in the House on an abstract question of law, which could not at present assume a practical form, and which afterwards might become the subject of legal proceedings.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1876—EMIGRANT SHIPS.

MR. A. MOORE asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been called to the Reuter's telegram from New York, which states that—

> "The surgeon of the steamship ——, which has arrived here from ——, reports that the steerage passengers brought by her were, at the time they embarked, in a very weak state from want of food. Seven of them died on the passage;"

whether it is really a fact that they were in an exhausted state at the time of their embarkation; and, if so, how they came to be passed by the medical officer at the port of clearance; and, if this statement be not correct, whether he will order a searching inquiry into their treatment on the voyage?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: My attention has been called to the telegram referred to. I have made inquiries. A telegram has now been received from New York, which corroborates the statement that seven persons died on the voyage out; but these deaths do not seem to have been connected with the alleged want of food. One woman died in childbirth; one man died of consumption; three children died from diarrhœa (one of them a cabin passenger), and one from marasmus, and another from worms. Two of the children were under one year old, and two others under four years old. Of the remaining 903 passengers, all are reported as arriving in good health, and as having made no complaints. The Sanitary Inspector and the Emigration Officer report that they made a careful inspection of the emigrants before starting, and that the passengers were not in an exhausted condition. The passengers, the ship, and the food were inspected before the ship left. There were no cases of infectious disease found among the emigrants, the accommodation was found to be good, and in accordance with the statutory enactment bearing upon it, and the food, which was sufficient for 32 days', was found to be good. The passage lasted 12 days. If the hon. Member will give particulars of any special point on which he thinks inquiry ought to be made, I will consider it; but, as at present advised, I cannot see anything calling for further inquiry.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—LABOURERS' COTTAGES.

Mr. VILLIERS STUART asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will lay upon the Table a Return of the number of cases in which the Commissioners under the Land Act have ordered the building or improvement of labourers cottages with the addition of garden allotments; in how many cases their orders have been carried out; and, whether he will inform the House what penalty the Commissioners are empowered to inflict in case of non-compliance with their orders?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the House had ordered a Return of the provision made for labourers on the 28th of January last, and that Return would give all the information which could be supplied up to that date. A further Return would be prepared. The Commissioners informed him that they had no means of knowing what provision for labourers had been made. The penalties for non-compliance with the orders of the Commissioners were of the ordinary kind—namely, attachment of the person or sequestration of goods.

Mr. HEALY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, If it is not a fact that there is no machinery provided by the Land Act to compel farmers to comply with the order of the Court regarding cottages and garden allotments?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER was understood to assent to the statement.

RUSSIA—PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, inasmuch as the course hitherto pursued by Her Majesty's Government with regard to the outrages on the Jews in Russia has failed to bring about a cessation of these outrages, Her Majesty's Government will now, following the humane example of the Government of the United States, consider the necessity of making a representation, either in conjunction with the other Great Powers in the form of a Collective Note, or otherwise, demanding that Russia shall discharge the common obligations of justice and humanity towards the Jews?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: As to the addition which the hon. Member has just made to his Question, I have to say that though paragraphs have appeared in the newspapers to that effect, we know nothing with regard to the truth of the statement. I can only say, in answer to the Question as it appeared on the Paper, Her Majesty's Government had reason to believe that official representations would do more harm than good. The further Reports which have been received will be presented to Parliament.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MICHAEL WHITTAKER AND THOMAS DUNPHY.

Mr. LALOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, nearly five months ago, Michael Whittaker and Thomas Dunphy were arrested under the Coercion Act, on the same charge of "inciting others to an act of intimidation;" whether the parish of Aghaboe, in the Queen's County, where the Messrs. Whittaker and Dunphy reside, has been entirely free, both before and since their arrest, from crime and outrage of any kind; and, is it not a fact that Thomas Dunphy has been released from prison, while Michael Whittaker is still detained there; and, if so, why has Mr. Whittaker been treated differently?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the cases referred to by the hon. Member were under consideration.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—RICHMOND PARK.

Mr. MOLLOY asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he has now obtained information as to the restrictions against hackney carriages entering Richmond Park, and what steps he has taken for their admission?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: I stated a few nights ago that I believed that hackney carriages were permitted to enter Richmond Park; I find upon inquiry that a subtle distinction is drawn between hackney carriages, numbered by the police and standing for hire in the streets or at the station, and those standing at livery stables; and that the former are not permitted to enter the Park. I have communicated with His Royal Highness the Ranger on the subject, and he agrees with me that this distinction cannot be justified. Henceforth, therefore, hackney carriages of all kinds will be permitted in Richmond Park.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—CHARGE OF CONSPIRACY TO MURDER.

Mr. CALLAN asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the report which appeared in the "Freeman's Journal" of Monday last, of the proceedings in the Dunleer Petty Sessions Court on Tuesday, April 20th, when a number of the most respectable tenant farmers of the County Louth were, on the information of a person named Rue, charged with conspiracy to murder Sub-Inspector O'Callaghan of Drogheda; whether upwards of twenty individuals resident in the district were named in the sworn depositions of Rue with being parties to the conspiracy; and, if so, why is it that five only, out of the twenty so named, were charged before the magistrates; whether it is true, as admitted by the informer, on cross-examination by Mr. Rogers, the attorney for the parties,

> "For four months I have been in the pay of the Government, getting information for the police. Gave in all the names of the parties present at the meeting to Mr. O'Callaghan, as well as the five defendants; they were nearly all Lord Bellew's principal tenants. Expects the Government reward if the defendants are convicted;"

and, whether, in view of the fact that Captain Keogh, R.M. after the investigation, which was held in private, having remanded the case until 2nd May, allowed the defendants to stand out on the "nominal bail of £25 each," he will direct that the proceedings on Tuesday next shall be in open Court, and have an official shorthand writer in attendance, in order to facilitate a prosecution for perjury in the case, if the magistrates so direct?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson), in reply, said, in consequence of this Question he had looked into *The Freeman's Journal;* but having no other information on the subject, he might state, on the authority of that newspaper, that on the occasion referred to four persons were charged with conspiracy to murder before two magistrates in Dunleer. They decided to hear the cases in private, according to the statutable authority which magistrates possessed; and, therefore, there could be no report of the evidence taken before them. But, according to *The Freeman's Journal,* "from our own Correspondent," it appeared that the cases had been adjourned till the 2nd of May, which would be to-morrow. He had no power to direct that the inquiry should then be held in open Court; and if he ventured to so direct the magistrates would inquire under what authority he did so, to which he probably would not be able to give a satisfactory answer. The hon. Member knew very well he had no power to direct that an official shorthand writer be present. But there could be no miscarriage of justice, because the evidence of the witnesses must be reduced to the form of depositions, and be signed by the witnesses in presence of the accused. These depositions would come before himself for direction as to future proceedings, and if there were not sufficient grounds for proceeding he would not direct a prosecution.

Mr. CALLAN said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman had forgotten to answer the second paragraph, which alleged that 20 persons were named in Rue's depositions, but that only five were prosecuted.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): The second paragraph of the Question I know nothing whatever about. The number of persons charged, according to the report, was five.

Mr. CALLAN gave Notice that he would draw the attention of the House to this proceeding, and also to another proceeding last month, in which, notwithstanding the evidence of this information, no prosecution took place.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—RULES RELATING TO VISITS TO PERSONS DETAINED UNDER THE ACT.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he would consent to modify the rules relating to visits to prisoners detained under the Coercion Act, so that visits of wives to their husbands might take place in an ordinary room instead of the cage, and be extended beyond fifteen minutes in every case where a promise has been given by the visitor not to bring out any letter, or otherwise infringe the regulations?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that, as he stated on a former occasion, the 15 minutes allowed for each visit would be extended in any case in which reasonable representations were made to the Governor of the prison.

Mr. REDMOND said, the right hon. Gentleman had not dealt with that part of the Question which related to visitors promising not to convey away letters.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Representations must be made in each case.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—REV. THOMAS FEEHAN.

Mr. MARUM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in reference to the case of the Rev. Thomas Feehan, C.C. now detained in Maryborough Gaol, in default of entering into bail for good behaviour, his attention has been called to the following circumstances:—That the High Court of Justice of the Queen's Bench in Ireland has, upon application for a certiorari, with the view to have the committal quashed, granted a conditional order, on the ground of the rejection of legal evidence in the Court below, that is to say: the refusal to hear the reverend defendant himself, as a witness on his own behalf, in order to show cause why he should not be put under a rule of bail; that one of the three presiding justices, viz. myself, dissented from such ruling, but, upon asking counsel for the reverend defendant for some authority for the procedure, was informed that none existed upon the point, although the Statute of Edward III. under which the proceedings were laid, has been in operation for over five hundred years; that it is laid down in Coke's Institutes, 4, p. 181, that bail under the Statute shall be demanded for "the prevention of offences before they be done," and therefore the reverend defendant was a competent witness on his own behalf, and should have been heard; that the reverend defendant has now been in custody for upwards of one month, and his curacy has lapsed in his regard, inasmuch as another clergyman has been appointed in his absence to the mission of Rathdrasay; and, whether, under all the circumstances of the case, he will consult the Law Officers of the Crown; and if, in their opinion, the committal and detention be not warranted in Law, he will forthwith take proper steps to have the Rev. Thomas Feehan at once released from prison, instead of being obliged to await the dilatory process incidental to a decision of the Court of Law?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, a Provisional Order had been granted by the Queen's Bench for a review of the question of the legality of this gentleman's detention. The matter had been decided by the Court as the proper tribunal, and it was impossible for the Irish Executive to interfere.

LANDLORD AND TENANT (SCOTLAND) —EVICTIONS IN THE ISLAND OF SKYE.

Mr. FRASER-MACKINTOSH asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he will order that the Skye Crofters, now committed for trial, shall, instead of being tried summarily, have the privilege of being tried by a jury of their countrymen, and that the presiding judge shall be one disconnected with the exceptional proceedings attendant on their recent apprehension?

Mr. DICK-PEDDIE asked, Whether it is the case that instructions have been given that the five Crofters recently arrested in Skye, and now released on bail, be tried summarily; whether they have applied through their agent to be tried by jury; whether he intends to comply with their application; and, whether he will give directions that the trial shall take place at Portree instead of Inverness?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): I see no reason for recalling the order for trial before the Sheriff summarily, which was made, after full consideration of the case, by my hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General for Scotland and myself, when it was first reported during the Easter Recess. Knowing that the people of Skye are generally peaceable, honest, and law-abiding, and having reason to believe that they had been misled by evil counsel into resisting an officer of the law executing a legal warrant, we thought that the offence would not be repeated if it were made clear to them, as speedily as possible, that the law would be vindicated, though for the first offence the sentence and punishment might not be severe. A summary trial before the Sheriff is the proceeding appropriate to the least grave offences reported to the Crown Office. It can be held with the least delay, and imprisonment for 60 days is the maximum punishment which the Sheriff can award in such a trial; while it is, of course, within his competency to pronounce even a lighter sentence, if he thinks it will meet the justice of the case. As regards the last part of the Question, I have to say that it is intended that the trial shall proceed before Sheriff Blair at Inverness. He has not hitherto taken part in the measures which have, unfortunately, become necessary for vindicating the law in Skye. I may also add that this arrangement was made before the present Question was put. In answer to my hon. Friend's (Mr. Dick-Peddie's) Question, I have to say that I shall communicate on the subject, and ascertain whether the trial can take place at Portree.

Mr. FRASER-MACKINTOSH said, the Lord Advocate had not answered the last part of his Question.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): The solicitor or agent for the accused did make such an application.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE—THE CHANNEL TUNNEL SCHEME.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the President of the Board of Trade, If it is to be understood that Her Majesty's Government have determined not only to refuse permission to construct a Channel Tunnel without the consent of Parliament, but also to prohibit the mere boring of an experimental hole of limited dimensions under the sea, in order to ascertain the nature of the strata, at the risk and expense of the borers?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, Sir; the Government have come to the conclusion that it is desirable that what is called the experimental boring of the Channel Tunnel Company should be stopped, and that further expenses should, as far as possible, be saved until Parliament has come to a decision whether the Channel Tunnel is to be made or not.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. MOLLOY.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has received an application from Mr. Molloy, a prisoner under the Coercion Act in Dundalk Prison, for release on parole to attend to some necessary farming operations; whether the men arrested in the district of Wexford County, to which Mr. Molloy belongs, have not all been released; and, whether he will reconsider his case?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, the release of this prisoner had been ordered.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—CAPTAIN PLUNKET, R.M.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the Report, in the "Daily News" of 28th April, of certain observations made by Captain Plunket, R.M. at the Petty Sessions Court of Castleisland, county Kerry; whether Captain Plunket stated, amongst other things, that the

> "people had lost all sense of honesty, decency, and religion,"

and that

> "if any persons were found in his district attempting to establish a branch of the Ladies' Land League, he would issue a warrant for their arrest;"

and, whether it is a fact that recently Captain Plunket issued orders to the police in his district, whenever they found more than two men assembled upon the road to disperse them, and, if necessary, to use their weapons in doing so?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, there was another Question on the same subject by the noble Lord (Lord Algernon Percy)—Whether his attention has been called to the following statement in the "Dublin Daily Express" of the 28th of April:—

> "The Hon. Captain Plunkett, the special resident Magistrate of the South-Western District, delivered an address yesterday from the Bench at Castleisland Petty Sessions Court, county Kerry, on the terrorism prevailing in the country, and the cowardice of the farmers, who will not combine against it. Captain Plunkett said there was no case on record in the history of the world where the people had become so demoralised in a short time;"

and, whether he proposed to take any further steps to put a stop to the system of terrorism at present existing in Ireland? He should like to answer both Questions. He had received a telegram from Captain Plunkett, who informed him that he did say—

> "The people had lost all sense of honesty, decency, and religion;"

and that—

> "If any persons were found in his district attempting to establish a branch of the Ladies' Land League, he would issue a warrant for their arrest;"

but he did not give orders to the police to disperse parties of two or more assembled upon the road. He did say that the intimidation prevailing was appalling, and that—

> "There was no case on record in the history of the world where the people had become so demoralized"—[Mr. HEALY: Bosh!]—"in so short a space of time."

He did not say that it was impossible for the Government to cope with the outrages; but he did say that people who did not assist in their own protection and in the repression of crime did not deserve any protection. He (Mr. W. E. Forster) did not know that he should exactly have recommended the use of these words, had he been consulted; but he thought that in the meaning of them, and in what they were understood to imply, they were very correct statements.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR inquired whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the County Kerry was the most rack-rented county in Ireland, and that the Land Courts reduced the rents in many cases in the proportion of £17 to £4?

[No answer was given.]

LAW AND POLICE—THE SALVATION ARMY—RIOTS AT OLDHAM.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is true that on Wednesday last the roughs of Oldham made an organised attack on a meeting of peaceable citizens by throwing burning materials into the building where they were assembled, and then savagely driving back those who attempted to escape from the danger; whether any of those taking part in these proceedings have been arrested; and, whether, in view of these constantly occurring and recurring savage scenes, he contemplates introducing any measure for the repression of outrages in England and in Scotland?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am happy to inform my hon. Friend—and I am sure he will be glad to hear—that the Report of the Chief Constable states that the newspaper report on which his Question is founded is entirely untrue. The service was continued without interruption. Mr. Cooper Clay, a leading member of the Salvation Army, was present during the whole of the service, and states that when he saw the newspaper report on Thursday morning he immediately wrote to *The Manchester Courier*, contradicting the statement. That, however, has not prevented its being re-printed in many other newspapers. The whole foundation for this story is that some mischievous person inserted some burning cotton with Cayenne pepper into the orifice of the ventilator leading into the room, which caused some of the people to sneeze; a proceeding, no doubt, much to be reprobated. I would say to my hon. Friend and others, there appears to be an increasing demand for sensational paragraphs. When there is a sensational paragraph, there is a sensational article founded on it—[Mr. WARTON: And a sensational Question!]—and the people give credit to it that it does not deserve, and form an exaggerated notion of the state of the country and of dangers that do not exist.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. LUKE ARMSTRONG.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that the Governor of Enniskillen Prison is in the habit of detaining letters written by suspects on purely personal or business affairs, and declining to give any reason whatever for his conduct; whether he imposes a rule that no communication shall be made to the Chief Secretary except by way of petition, and that the terms of the petition shall be dictated by himself; whether this Governor, on the 18th ultimo, stopped and detained a letter from Mr. Luke Armstrong, of Tubbercurry, county Sligo (who has been detained under the Coercion Act in Enniskillen Prison for the past four months), demanding to be put on trial, before any tribunal the Chief Secretary may appoint, for the offence of which he is suspected; and, whether, as Mr. Armstrong's business is being ruined by his prolonged imprisonment, and as there is nobody except his sister, a very young girl, to look after his affairs, the Government will either bring him to trial or release him?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he was not aware that the Governor of Enniskillen Prison was in the habit of detaining letters written by "suspects" with regard to purely personal matters, nor did he impose any such rule as the Question alleged. It was a fact that on the 18th instant the Governor stopped a letter written by Mr. Luke Armstrong. He had been given the option of appealing to the Chief Secretary. Mr. Armstrong's case was re-considered on the 18th ultimo; but it was decided that at present he could not be released.

UNIVERSITY REFORM (SCOTLAND).

Mr. DICK-PEDDIE asked the Lord Advocate, Whether any determination has yet been come to as to the appointment of an Executive Commission for dealing with University Reform in Scotland?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): Yes, Sir; the appointment of an Executive Commission has been resolved on. A Bill on the subject has been prepared, and will be introduced at at the earliest possible opportunity.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—ERECTION OF HUTS FOR EVICTED LABOURERS AT RHODE, KING'S CO.

Mr. MOLLOY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it be true that on Monday the 24th ultimo at Rhode, in the King's County, the erection of huts to shelter poor labourers evicted by David Kerr was prevented by force under the orders of the resident magistrate; if it be true that these evicted labourers were thus left without any shelter, and without any means of subsistence, and under what law or by what authority the resident magistrate acted; and if he will take all necessary steps to prevent all further opposition to the erection of these huts, and against a repetition of such action; whether on the above occasion a most respectable farmer named O'Brien was taken into custody by orders of the resident magistrate, and then and there sentenced to a fortnight's imprisonment with hard labour for questioning the right of the magistrate to prevent the erection of the above huts; and, if he will order his immediate release?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that in March the labourers at the place in question struck for an increase of wages, and a number of Scotch labourers were obtained to take the place of those who left. Protection to these men had been necessary, and a military guard was accordingly sent down. On the 25th of April materials for huts arrived at Rhode, and several people arrived to erect them. The Sub-Inspector and Head Constable swore informations that the huts were being erected to intimidate Mr. Kerr and his workmen. Mr. O'Brien, who was erecting them, was accordingly arrested, and called upon to enter into recognizances to be of good behaviour. That he refused to do, and was sent to gaol. The addition of "hard labour," he thought, could not be correct. If the Resident Magistrate acted without sufficient authority, the Superior Court would overrule his decision. He now wished to make a correction with regard to an answer given to a Question asked on the 4th of April. On that day, his hon. and learned Friend (the Solicitor General for Ireland), in reply to a Question by the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) relating to John Reynolds and Patrick Gannon, stated they were detained on suspicion of maiming cattle. John Reynolds had written to say he was arrested on suspicion of intimidating persons not to pay their rent. The mistake arose in consequence of there being two Gannons, one of whom was arrested on suspicion of maiming cattle; but as the one arrested with John Reynolds was not the one arrested for that act, it was only right that he should make this statement to the House.

MR. HEALY: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it makes any difference to the man what he was arrested for, so long as as he is kept in gaol?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Evidently this person — and very naturally — did think it made a difference whether he was arrested for maiming cattle or intimidation, as he had written complaining of the accidental mis-statement.

MR. HEALY: Nobody would believe either charge.

TURKEY—ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether there is any truth in the statement, which has appeared in several newspapers, to the effect that the Sultan has recently taken steps to effect reforms both in his Asiatic and European Dominions; whether it is proposed in such reforms to introduce into European Turkey the institutions drawn up by the Commission, of which the noble Lord the Member for Calne was a member; and, whether any Papers can be laid upon the Table on the subject?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Nothing very definite is known as to the intentions of His Majesty the Sultan with regard to the introduction of administrative reforms; and I cannot, therefore, say whether the reforms contemplated extend to the whole Empire, nor can I state their probable nature. His Majesty has, however, given Lord Dufferin repeated assurances of his determination to introduce reforms; but it would not be advisable to lay on the Table, at the present moment, any Papers upon the subject.

THE REVENUE—THE WINE DUTIES.

EARL PERCY asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he contemplates the readjustment of the Duty on Spanish wine in the direction indicated in his Fiancial Statement on June 10th, 1880?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The question of the Wine Duties has been, and is still, under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

INLAND REVENUE—RAILWAY PASSENGER DUTY—THE CHEAP TRAINS ACT, 1844.

MR. BUXTON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, considering that he has declared himself unable to repeal the Railway Passenger Duty, and that his predecessor has admitted that

> "The state of the Law on the subject is one which cannot be permanent, and ought not to be permanently maintained,"

he is prepared to bring in a Bill for the better regulation of the Exemption from the Duty, which may be capable of enforcement?

MR. BROADHURST asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, considering that he is unable to repeal the Railway Passenger Duty, and that the Cheap Trains Act of 1844 has been practically abrogated by judicial decisions, which, though only partially put in force, have increased the duty on third class passengers from £70,322 in 1873, to £333,032 in 1880, he will at the earliest opportunity bring in a Bill to carry out the intention of the Cheap Trains Act, namely, to exempt from duty the fares of "the poorer class of travellers" when such fares do not exceed the rate of one penny per mile.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, considering that a Select Committee of this House reported in 1876 that the Board of Inland Revenue make arrangements with the Railway Companies respecting the exemption from Passenger Duty, based on three different plans, "which are all entirely outside the Cheap Trains Act," and that the same Committee recommended, inter alia, that until the finances of the State warrant the abolition of the Tax, it should be restricted to fares over a penny per mile, he will bring in a Bill which will carry out this recommendation, or, at any rate, will establish a harmony between the intentions of the Legislature and the practice of the Board of Inland Revenue?

MR. R. BIDDULPH MARTIN asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, since by 5 and 6 Vic. c. 79, s. 4, it is enacted that the Company of Proprietors of every Railway in Great Britain shall cause copies of the accounts of their respective Railways to be delivered to the Commissioners of Stamps and Taxes, verified by affidavit, and Duties to be paid thereon monthly, and since such Duties have been from time to time further settled and enacted, Whether it is competent for any Railway Company to charge such Duties on the passengers; whether any such Duty so charged on the passenger does not become part of the fare payable, and is itself liable to a Duty, provided that the fare and Duty together do not exceed the maximum toll authorised to be levied under any public or private Act; whether his attention has been called to the fact that the South-Eastern Railway Company charge their season ticket holders with the amount of Duty payable, in addition to the advertised fare; and, whether he has collected or intends to collect from the South Eastern Railway Company (and any other Company whose practice is identical) the Duty on the fare collected under the name of Duty, and on all arrears thereof?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GLADSTONE): In answer to the first Question, there is no doubt it will be necessary at some future time to modify the provisions of the Cheap Trains Act, in order to adapt them to the changes in the mode of conducting passsenger traffic. But I do not think I can hold out any expectation of being able to legislate on the matter at present. I am truly concerned at being compelled, from week to week, to make the state of Business in Parliament a reason why the legitimate demands of the country, quite apart from Party distinction, should be postponed; but my hon. Friends are judges of the circumstances along with myself, and I think they will understand my answer. In answer to the second Question, the Cheap Trains Act of 1844 has not been practically abrogated by judicial decisions, but rather confirmed; and those decisions have only led to an increased charge of duty in cases where the Act, in the view of the Board of Inland Revenue, had not been complied with according to its full meaning. The increase in the duty on third-class passengers from £70,322 in 1873 to £333,032 in 1880 was not entirely due to increase charge, but was largely due to the immense increase in the number of third-class passengers. The intention of the Cheap Trains Act, which exempted from duty the fares of the poorer class of passengers, is, in the opinion of the Revenue Department, fairly carried out at present, but, as they think, with possibly somewhat less strictness than the law warrants or even might require. As to the third Question, I have to say that the restriction on the Passenger Duty to fares above 1*d.* per mile would involve a loss to the Revenue, I am sorry to say, of £250,000 a-year. As to the fourth Question, it is quite within the competency of any Railway Company to charge duties on fares from passengers, provided they do not exceed the limit laid down in the Act; and there is no provision in law to prevent the Company from dividing the charge as between them and the passengers into two portions—one portion being for the fare and the other for the duty.

IRELAND — ADDRESS OF THE DOMINION HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MR. CALLAN asked leave to postpone the following Questions, which stood in his name on the Notice Paper:—

"To ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the telegraphic Despatch in the "Times" of April 22nd, under date:—

'Ottawa, April 20th.

'In to-day's sitting of the Dominion of the House of Commons, Mr. Cortigan, a Conservative, moved that an Address should be presented to the Queen, praying that a form of Self-Government should be granted to Ireland similar to that enjoyed by Canada, and that clemency should be extended to the political prisoners in Ireland. Mr. Blake, the leader of the Opposition, made a powerful speech in favour of Home Rule for Ireland. Sir John Macdonald, the Premier, also supported the Resolution proposed by Mr. Cortigan, which was unanimously adopted. Sir John Macdonald stated that he would see that the necessary steps were taken to have the Address prepared, in order that it might be sent to the Senate for concurrence;'

whether he will have any objection to direct that a Copy of the said Address be laid upon the Table of the House; and, whether he purposes taking any action in the matter?"

MR. GLADSTONE: I think that when such a Question relating to a public body has been for some time on the Paper it is necessary that it should be answered as soon as possible, and I propose to answer, at any rate, so much of the Question as is before us.

MR. CALLAN: I wish to make an addition to the Question, and to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware that since my Notice was first given the Canadian Senate, or Upper House, has confirmed the Resolution?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; I am not aware that the Senate had concurred in the proceedings of the Assembly. The Address has not been transmitted to us in the regular manner. We are cognizant of the Resolution having been passed and of its contents, but only by telegraphic report. We cannot present it to the House, because we are not in possession of the document. With regard to the substance of the Resolution, the hon. Gentleman has called upon me to enter upon a matter which is fitter for debate than a mere reply to a Question; but, of course, I may observe that although, no doubt, the Assembly of Canada desired to assist our deliberations, the question referred to in the Address appertains exclusively to the Imperial Parliament and the Imperial Government; and I may add that so much of the subject-matter as touches the discretion of the Executive Government—for this is part of the subject-matter—had our close and constant attention before the intimation of the wish expressed in the Address, either from that quarter or any other quarter, had reached us in the shape of any suggestion.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether Sir John Macdonald, the Premier of Canada, is not a Member of the Privy Council; and whether, as such, he is not responsible for any advice he may tender to the Crown?

MR. GLADSTONE: Perhaps that is a Question, Sir, on which, I think, before answering it, I ought to take the advice of the Law Officers of the Crown; but as my own impression is undoubtedly that although a gentleman becomes a Minister of Canada, and, as such, is responsible only to the Canadian Parliament, yet directly he becomes a Member of the British Privy Council, unquestionably he must come under every responsibility in exactly the same degree as any other Member of the Privy Council.

THE LAND COMMISSION (IRELAND)—DECISION UNDER THE LAND ACT.

MR. HEALY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been called to the cases of Dillon and Hanrahan versus Knight of Glin, reported in the "Freeman's Journal" of the 31st ultimo, in which the landlord appealed to the Land Commission from the judicial rent fixed by the Sub-Commission, and in which Mr. Justice O'Hagan stated that the Land Commission found themselves compelled to increase the judicial rents, as fixed by the Sub-Commission, by sums of £4 a year and £3 a year respectively, in consequence of the judgment of the Court of Appeal in the case of Adams versus Dunseath, deciding that, as regards tenants' improvements made prior to the Land Act of 1870, mere user of them by the tenant must be regarded as to some extent a compensation for them; whether he is aware that the present Lord Chancellor of Ireland, then Attorney General, in refusing to consent to an amendment to the recent Land Act proposed by Mr. Parnell, which would have prevented this, declared it "absurd" to think that the Courts could come to such a decision; whether he himself expressed an equally strong opinion; whether, in spite of this, the tenants Dillon and Hanrahan will now be compelled to pay the increased judicial rent for fifteen years; whether he can give any assurance that, in the vast number of applications to fix a fair rent now pending, steps will be taken to prevent decisions contrary to what has been stated to have been the intentions of the Government when the Act was passed; whether any amending legislation which the Government may bring in to carry out these intentions will be retrospective, so as to give tenants like Messrs. Dillon and Hanrahan the benefit of it; and, whether it can be speedily introduced to prevent further cases of the same kind?

MR. GLADSTONE: I must avail myself of the aid of arithmetic to follow the paragraphs of the hon. Gentleman's Question. The first paragraph is, I believe, perfectly accurate. With regard to the second, I do not think it is quite accurate. I have communicated with the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and he does not recollect using the expression quoted in the Question; and as a reference to the reports of the debates shows—so far as they can be considered an authority, and, of course, in connection with the discussion of details, they cannot be taken as an absolute authority—it does not appear that he took part in the discussion referred to by the hon. Member. As a matter of fact, however, he had no apprehension that any such decision would be arrived at. Thirdly, I believe my own expression was that I had no doubt that this was nothing short of impossible. Perhaps that was too strong a term to use about the interpretation of an Act of Parliament; but I did contend that the matter was perfectly plain, and did not admit of doubt. The answer to paragraph 4 is, "Yes." The answer to paragraph 5 is, that I am not able to give the desired assurance, inasmuch as fresh legislation would be required, and as in considering the expediency and policy of introducing amending legislation at this early date we must necessarily take into view the comparative importance of different subjects and the difficulty of adjusting them. With regard to paragraph 6, as far as I am advised by the best legal authorities, the case which the hon. Member has very naturally, and not unfairly, quoted, is very much in the nature of an isolated case, and is not likely to form a fair or probable representation of the ordinary working of the law.

Mr. HEALY remarked, that it was a mistake for him to have represented that the Lord Chancellor's statement was in reply to his hon. Friend (Mr. Parnell). It was in reply to himself (Mr. Healy).

STATE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS—THE IRISH POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT.

Mr. GORST asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government have, as promised before the Easter Recess, taken into their consideration the increase of agrarian crime and the general collapse of the administration of justice in Ireland; whether the Government are yet prepared to state to Parliament the measures they intend to propose for restoring peace and order in Ireland; and, whether he will indicate the time at which such statement on behalf of the Government will be made?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I think, Sir, the hon. and learned Member has put this Question in ignorance—which is no wonder—[*Laughter*]—no wonder respecting either him or any other Member of this House, considering the voluminous nature of our proceedings—in ignorance that a similar Question was put to me by the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Cowen) on Friday last. ["No!"] Well, perhaps not a precisely similar Question, but a Question with respect to which the answer falls under the same category. With regard to the Question put by the hon. Member for Newcastle, and still more with regard to this Question, which refers to a statement of our intentions, I can only say that I could not undertake to enter into that subject in reply to a Parliamentary Question. Though it would not require any very detailed explanations, considered as a matter of speech, it would certainly amount to the character of a speech, and for that a very convenient opportunity will, I think, offer itself to-morrow.

Mr. J. LOWTHER: Might I ask, having regard to the fact that a discussion of very considerable importance must obviously arise in consequence of the Ministerial Statement which has been promised for to-morrow night, whether the right hon. Gentleman will re-consider the proposal for a Morning Sitting to-morrow, and thus allow the House to meet when an opportunity will be afforded for a full discussion of that important subject? At the same time, I would wish to address a Question to my right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay). It is whether, having regard to the facts to which I have just referred, he will feel justified in bringing forward so important a Motion as his is at a time when it could not be fully discussed? I cannot expect an answer to this Question now, for, no doubt, he would like to consult his political friends, and perhaps the Government, on this matter; but before the rising of the House I trust he will be in a position to answer.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The Question put to me is really whether I will ask the House to rescind a decision come to by a considerable majority after a long discussion? I am not prepared to ask the House to rescind that decision, more particularly as I do not think that the time has yet arrived when a full examination of the proposals which it may be the duty of the Government to make some little time hence, could be entered upon with any benefit to the Public Service.

Mr. GORST said, he wanted an answer to the third paragraph of his

Question. He asked at what time a general statement of Irish policy would be made by the Government? The noble Lord on the Front Ministerial Bench (the Marquess of Hartington) had said on Friday that no such general statement would be made on Tuesday night, and that the statement then made would be about the release of the "suspects." The Government ought to indicate to Parliament the time when they would be prepared to make a general statement.

MR. HEALY: I rise to Order. I wish to ask whether a general statement on the question as to the collapse of justice in Ireland is not a matter of argument, and whether such a question ought not to appear on the Votes of the House? I put this Question because, if Irish Members import into Questions anything of the nature of argument, it is immediately struck out.

MR. GLADSTONE: I might myself take exception to one part of the Question. I am not disposed to admit the alleged promise which I am supposed to have given. What I stated was that the whole subject had been and would continue—not during the Recess in particular—under the consideration of the Government. My noble Friend was perfectly right in guarding the House against the idea that a general statement of policy would be made. A general statement of policy, as those terms are usually understood, would be held to mean a statement which would occupy a very considerable period, and would open up many branches of questions with regard to the general condition of Ireland. I am not sure that in that sense it will be our duty to-morrow to make a general statement; but I have no doubt we can conveniently indicate to the House that which, as at present advised, we are inclined to think will have to be proposed or not proposed. The proposals which we may entertain we shall desire to proceed with at as early a period as the necessary Business of the House will permit. It would be quite impossible to indicate them in detail at the present moment.

SIR JOHN HAY said, the right hon. Gentleman might not be aware that Notices of Amendment to his Motion had been given Notice of by the hon. Members for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) and Glasgow (Mr. Anderson). He had not had the pleasure of being in the House when the subject of the Evening Sitting was discussed last week, and as far as he had been able to gather—["Order, order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: I must point out to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman that this matter cannot now become the subject of debate.

SIR JOHN HAY said, he wished to renew his appeal to the Prime Minister, and in doing so he wished to reply to the Question which was put to him by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther). He felt it would be unfair to the House to allow him to suppose that, even if the Government did not make an alteration, he should abstain from going on at 9 o'clock. He (Sir John Hay) proposed going on at 9 o'clock, whatever might happen; but he thought it very inconvenient to commence the discussion of so important a Motion at an Evening Sitting, and that, perhaps, it would lead to an adjourned debate.

STATE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS — THE LORD LIEUTENANCY OF IRELAND —EARL COWPER.

MR. ONSLOW: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether Earl Cowper has retired from the Office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland on private or political grounds?

MR. GLADSTONE: I think it is my duty simply to say that Earl Cowper has resigned the Office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. In reply to the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire, I thought I had indicated the sufficiency of the occasion that we shall have to-morrow night for the Business which shall come before us; and, so far as I can judge, there will be no public advantage in an alteration of the arrangements of the House.

THE LIBERAL ASSOCIATION OF IPSWICH AND IRISH LANDLORDS.

MR. BELLINGHAM asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been drawn to the account of a meeting recently held at Ipswich, at which the secretary of a Liberal Association is reported to have used the following language:—

> "I feel a sort of satisfaction in hearing the Irish people have taken to shooting landlords. If anybody ought to be shot in Ireland it is the landlords;"

and, whether, since such opinions were expressed in the presence of the leading Liberals of the town, including the president and ex-president of the Liberal Association and three members of the council, without rebuke, and are of a character calculated to incite to a breach of the peace and encourage murder, some steps cannot be taken by the Government to prevent a repetition of similar language at public meetings at Ipswich or elsewhere?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The hon. Gentleman has put a Question to me, with respect to which I must say I hope I am not to be made a tribunal of appeal as to language, of which I may approve or disapprove, that may be used by any independent person in the country. A censorship of speech is a function which cannot be conveniently added to the duties I am called upon to discharge. I shall only, by way of information, inform the hon. Gentleman one thing. Of course, I am bound to say that if the words which the hon. Gentleman has cited were used as they stand without any qualifying connection to alter sense —[*Laughter, cries of* "Oh, oh!" *from* Mr. Warton *and other Members of the Opposition, and* "Order!"]—I must beg the hon. Member for Bridport—[Mr. Warton: I am not alone; *and cries of* "Order!"]—to permit me freedom of speech. [Mr. Warton: With pleasure, Sir.] If the words cited by the hon. Member were used without any context which would essentially define and alter their apparent construction, they are words upon which too severe a censure could not be passed. I am, however, assured by a gentleman who is acquainted with Ipswich that they were not so used; that they were not understood by anyone who heard them in the sense that the hon. Member has not unnaturally attached to them; and, finally, that the hon. Member has not correctly described this gentleman, because, as I understand, he is not secretary of the Liberal Association, as has been stated in the Question.

Mr. BELLINGHAM stated that, in consequence of the answer of the Prime Minister, he should, on Tuesday or Thursday, put this Question to the Home Secretary.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I ought to have stated that if the Question of the hon. Member is, whether it is the opinion of the Government that a prosecution ought to be instituted, far be it from me to say that it is not a Question which he is not entirely entitled to put; but I did not conceive that that was his meaning.

OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION—THE OXFORD STATUTES.

Mr. THOROLD ROGERS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, having regard to the fact that the Statutes for the University of Oxford were not ordered to be printed until March 3rd, and not distributed to Members till March 27th, and the Act gives twelve weeks during which this House may address the Crown, he will afford this House an opportunity for criticising those statutes on which its judgment is invited by the Act in question?

Mr. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, he was afraid he could not find time for the discussion of these statutes in the interval between the 27th of March and the 21st of May.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman when he expects to take the second reading of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill? I should also ask the Financial Secretary to the Treasury if he can accelerate the distribution of the Paper usually published giving the Financial Statement?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I will give an answer to-morrow at 2 o'clock.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: As to the Financial Statement, I will make inquiries.

STATE OF IRELAND—ALLEGED RIOT AT FRANKFORT, KING'S CO.

Mr. GIBSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he had received any confirmatory telegrams with respect to a statement of an alarming character which appeared in the evening papers in reference to Ireland? The statement was to the effect that at a riot at Frankfort, King's County, on Saturday, a number of persons who were reported to have paid their rent were attacked and beaten in a fearful manner. The police succeeded in arresting 30 men, and, under the command of the resident magistrate, proceeded to clear the streets at the point of the bayonet. He wished to know if the right hon. Gentleman was aware whether order had been at present restored to the town, and what was the condition of the people who were said to have been beaten in a fearful manner?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had not seen the evening papers, and as he had not been at the Irish Office he had not received any confirmatory telegram on the subject.

MR. GIBSON said, he would ask the Question to-morrow.

LAW AND POLICE — THE SALVATION ARMY (HAMPSHIRE).

MR. CAINE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department a Question of which he had given him private Notice, with reference to the imprisonment with hard labour for one month of a member of the Salvation Army in Hampshire for an alleged assault on the police, and the refusal of the magistrate to state a case for an appeal.

No answer having been given, the hon. MEMBER said he would repeat the Question to-morrow.

TUNIS—BOMBARDMENT OF SFAX—INDEMNITY TO BRITISH SUBJECTS.

In reply to the Earl of BECTIVE,

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The Commission of Inquiry into the losses arising out of the bombardment of Sfax did not lead to any particular result, and Her Majesty's Government have since been in communication with the French Government on the subject of the British claims. These claims have been prepared for presentation to the French Government through Lord Lyons, and are nearly ready for transmission. Pending the conclusion of negotiations Her Majesty's Government do not propose to lay the Papers before Parliament.

PRISONS BOARD (IRELAND)—CAPTAIN BARLOW.

MR. SEXTON: Mr. Speaker, with reference to a document issued this morning as a Parliamentary Paper—namely, a letter from Captain Barlow, Vice President of the Prisons Board—I have to repeat a Question which I asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland some time ago, and to which I did not then obtain a direct and satisfactory answer. I wish to ask whether, considering that a matter involving the character of the Irish Executive and their agents has now come into controversy between the Irish Executive and a Member of this House. the Government will grant an independent inquiry?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that if the hon. Member brought the Question before the House, it would form a proper subject of discussion; but until the House had come to a decision upon it, he should not recommend an inquiry.

MR. SEXTON said, that he should bring before the House the quibbles, prevarications, and falsehood contained in the letter of Captain Barlow.

STATE OF IRELAND—ALLEGED MURDERS.

MR. LEWIS asked, Whether the Government were in possession of information as to the truth or falsity of the report of murders which were committed in Ireland last night?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Perhaps the hon. Member will put the Question in the usual way, and will say what murders.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (PUTTING THE QUESTION).

RESOLUTION. ADJOURNED DEBATE.

[SIXTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [20th February],

"That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, to be the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

MR. O'DONNELL said, that the Amendment he intended to move had reference to one particular feature of the 1st Rule. It was proposed that when it should appear to Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of Committees, that it was the evident sense of the House that the debate should close, the Speaker or the Chairman should put a certain Question forthwith, and on the vote of the House the debate should be closed. His Amendment was, after the words "Mr. Speaker," to insert these words—"after an appeal to his judgment by a Minister of the Crown." He had originally intended to have moved the omission of the words "Mr. Speaker," and to substitute for them the words "a Minister of the Crown;" but he found that in consequence of a previous Amendment having been negatived, the words "Mr. Speaker" had been ordered to stand part of the Question. He was, therefore, obliged to fall back upon the next best alternative. The effect of his Amendment, if adopted, would be that, instead of the proceedings for closing the debate being put in motion by the Speaker, or at the Speaker's initiative, they must openly, unmistakably, and undeniably come from a Minister of the Crown. He desired that a Motion for silencing the Opposition and for precipitating the decision of the House should be made by an authority commensurate with the responsible and grave nature of the proposal. The Speaker was not a responsible person to the House in the sense in which a Minister of the Crown was responsible both to the House and to the country. The Speaker was, practically, irresponsible—that was to say, through the choice of the House and the authority reposed in him he was quite above ordinary responsibility. As was repeatedly stated in the debate upon the Rule now upon the Standing Orders with reference to the naming of a Member, although the vote of the House was called in to ratify the decision of the Speaker, yet, in reality, the decision of the Speaker ought to be considered quite above discussion. If the Speaker's conduct were to be called in question, it must be done by a special Motion, so as to leave his authority absolutely free from challenge. The Speaker was not responsible to the country, and, therefore, he ought not to take the initiative in closing a debate which might be of interest to the country. For the same reason he objected to an Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), who proposed to throw the responsibility upon the Member in charge of the subject under discussion. There were numbers of subjects introduced by hon. Members for which they themselves were in no sense responsible to the country. A strange confusion was to be traced in the mind of the Government, for the reasons could not be the same which influenced them in proposing that the initiative should be taken by the Chairman of Committees as well as by the Speaker. While the Speaker was chosen, not by a Party, but by the Whole House, the Chairman of Committees was the choice of the Ministerial Party for the time being. It was in order to remove all obscurity, and to enable the House and the country to know on whom the responsibility rested, that he proposed that the Speaker should not exercise the functions which the Rule would devolve upon him except upon an open and undisguised appeal to his judgment by a Minister of the Crown. In any case it would be a Ministerial appeal, and it ought not to be passed off upon the country as anything else. Under the present plan, under cover of the Speaker, the Government would, in reality, however innocent their intentions might be, be parties to an attempt to hoodwink the country as to the real significance of the Motion before the House. If the Government considered a debate had been sufficiently prolonged, what reason was there in common sense, in Constitutional Law, or in the practice of Parliament, why they should not openly ask, on their own responsibility, that the Question should be forthwith put? If the Motion were a fair one, a necessary one, and demanded in the interest of Public Business, why should the Government of the day be ashamed to put it in force, or shrink from doing their duty? He proposed that the initiative should be openly taken by a Minister of the Crown, because that was the only means of preventing the Speakership from becoming an appanage of the Ministerial Bench. Of late currency had been given to erroneous ideas concerning the relationship of the Speaker to the House. For a considerable time successive Speakers had deserved the highest credit as impartial arbiters of debate between Party and Party; but they must not close their eyes to history. The dignified, impartial, trusted position of the Speaker in that House was a plant of modern growth, and of comparatively recent development. He doubted if the impartiality, dignity, the unquestioned authority of the Speaker could be traced back for more than a century—certainly not for more than a century and a-half Down to the time of the Revolution the Speakership was an appanage much more of Royalty than of the House of Commons; under the Tudors and the Stuarts the Speaker watched the proceedings of the House in the interests of Royalty rather than as an impartial arbiter or defender of its privileges. According to Mr. Reginald Palgrave, Charles I. had placed himself far beyond excuse or palliation when the Speaker (Lenthal), on the occasion of the King's attempt to seize the five Members, had the courage and the resolution to refuse to be a Royal minion, and determined to speak as the mouthpiece of the House alone. Hitherto the Speaker had been the servant of the King against the House, and the King must have proved himself most culpable when even the Speaker turned against him. The conversion of the House into a Committee of the Whole House, was an innovation designed, among other reasons, for the purpose of getting rid of the Speaker. The authority of the Speaker had assumed its present dignity and purity very slowly and gradually in a House of Commons, which last century was notoriously corrupt, and in which it was as well known that there was a market for Members to be bought by the Treasury as it was that there was a market for fat cattle at Smithfield. He agreed with all that had been said on both sides of the House with such grave emphasis and unctuous frequency to impress Irish Members with regard to the dignity and impartiality of the Speaker in recent times. It would be hard if just when, by the confession of both political Parties, the Speakership had reached its highest point and culmination, it was by the proposal of a Liberal Government to be thrust back into a position lower than that from which it had been lifted. The Speaker had long ago ceased to be the minion of the King. But if this Resolution passed as it was at present worded, the Speaker would become the minion of the Ministry of the day, and would be as absolutely the mouthpiece of the majority as the Presidents of Continental Legislative Chambers. Nor would it be in any way derogatory for future Speakers to hold such a position, seeing that the right hon. Gentleman's Successors in the Chair could not be judged by the canons of political morality of the present day. Partizans they would undoubtedly be, just as the Whips were partizans, and in closing a debate a Speaker of the future would be merely giving effect to the Whip's instructions as to a division. He proposed, therefore, that the initiative in this matter, which must necessarily belong to the Government in reality, should proceed from them openly and avowedly. In whatever way the Speaker was to gather the evident sense of the House—whether by a discreet whisper from the Treasury Bench, or by uproarious clamour of the House—it would equally come from the Government of the day; and the only result of putting the initiative in the hands of the Speaker would be to produce confusion in the public mind, and lead the people to imagine something had been done on the pure initiative of the Speaker, which had really been planned in the office of the Government Whip. Now, a doubt existed as to the object of the *clôture*. According to some, it was intended to put down a small band of desperate conspirators against the Constitution; according to others, it was to stifle legitimate opposition. In either case the Government might have the courage of their convictions and take the initiative upon themselves, whether they desired to overwhelm a regular Opposition, or to silence a clique of malcontents. There was, in truth, not a single rational argument against his Amendment; and it would have the very great merit of fixing responsibility on the right persons, and of avoiding the scandals that would some day prevail of divisions unfairly snatched at critical moments, after which the Government of the day would throw the odium on the Speaker, while the Opposition denounced equally both Speaker and Government. If ever there was a country where burning questions were likely to arise and multiply, and temptations to Party passions and Party unscrupulousness to abound, it was this country. Here they had an ancient Constitution approaching a great crisis, and certain to undergo great transformations. They would have the grave questions of religion, of authority, of the distribution of power before them in the near future; and, if in foreign countries these questions called forth such Party passions, how could it be expected that this country should escape them. They need not wonder at the high distinction and impartiality of the Speaker of the British House of Commons hitherto. One reason for it was that he never had the power of being partial. The Speaker was the lord and arbiter of order; but, above all things, the protector of minorities and of individuals. He was, in fact, the mouthpiece and the champion of minorities. They were entitled, therefore, by a sort of reverse reasoning, to conclude that, when the whole character and nature of the Speakership was altered by this unmanly Rule of *Clôture*, the impartiality of the Chair would disappear. With the view of leaving the responsibility where it ought to rest—namely, with the Ministry of the day—he begged to move his Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, after the words "Mr. Speaker," to insert the words "after an appeal to his judgment by a Minister of the Crown."—(*Mr. O'Donnell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, he had an Amendment on the Paper, the earlier part of which was identical with that of the hon. Member (Mr. O'Donnell), and he rose to move as an Amendment to that of the hon. Member the latter part of his Amendment. If the House were to accept this, with some other Amendments further down, the Resolution would run—

"When it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, after an appeal to him by a Minister of the Crown, or by the Member in charge of the subject under discussion, or to the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, after a similar appeal, that the question under discussion has been fully debated, and that it is evidently the general sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the question be now put, he may, if he thinks fit, so inform the House or the Committee."

He thought there was great force in many of the arguments of the hon. Member (Mr. O'Donnell); but he thought they ought to place other Members on an equality with the Ministers in this respect, and not establish a difference between Ministers of the Crown and other Members which did not at present exist. He before asked the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair whether it would be in Order to move to omit the words "Mr. Speaker." He desired to move the omission of these words, because he thought that if there was to be this power of silencing the minority it ought to be dissociated from the functions of the Chair; but, unfortunately, the last division not only negatived the Amendment of the hon. Member (Mr. Marriott), but practically affirmed that the Speaker was to be associated with this Rule, though this was not what they had discussed. He was, therefore, driven to move this Amendment, which, in one sense, was inadequate; but if any hon. Member should propose anything stronger he would support it. He believed it was an established principle that if any alteration in the Rules or Standing Orders of the House was proposed and the Party in power allowed such alteration to be made without protest, they were to a certain extent responsible for it. What he wished to point out was how exceedingly mischievous must be the result if they chose deliberately to take the Speaker out of his proper sphere of action and to associate him with this Resolution. The Government informed the House that they could not be responsible for the further conduct of affairs unless they had the power of imposing restraint upon Members of the House other than themselves. That power had not been asked for by any preceding Ministry; and he would go a step further, and say that if the proposal had emanated from any Ministry other than the present Government, the Members of the present Government would have opposed it tooth-and-nail. When a Government admitted their inability to carry on the affairs of the country without coercive powers, the House was ever ready to grant those powers; but only upon one condition—that the Government should be made responsible. They were now asked to assent to a Resolution which was a standing Coercion Act. There was no Coercion Act passed during the present century which could have, or was intended to have, such a far-reaching and abiding effect. It was a Resolution which placed the minority at the mercy of the majority. [The Marquess of HARTINGTON dissented.] The noble Marquess seemed to deny that. Could the noble Marquess deny that the Prime Minister had stated that the 1st Resolution, when it was passed, would be used for the purpose of passing the other Resolutions?

MR. GLADSTONE: I never said anything of the kind.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: It is difficult always to understand the Prime Minister. When he was asked if this was intended, he declined to reply.

MR. GLADSTONE: Quite so.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: This Resolution, therefore, would be used to carry or amend certain other Standing Orders that were upon the Notice Paper; and, consequently, if it was competent for the majority to alter any Standing Order, it was equally competent to revise this one when it was passed. The minority of the House would be placed absolutely at the mercy of the majority; and the only control which the minority could exercise would be regulated by the forbearance of the majority. It was a tremendous power to give to the Government of the day. And yet the Government asked them to give them this power dissociated from those safeguards which they might reasonably expect. The Government were not to be made responsible; but the Speaker and his Successors were asked to assume the odious task of silencing the minority. The Government were, therefore, attempting to deprive the House of two safeguards—namely, the responsibility of the Government and the impartiality of the Chair. He feared it would not remain as impartial in the future as it had been in the past. If a Speaker was to be impelled to put in force coercion, having for its object the silencing of a minority, the exercise which he would make of that Resolution would benefit the Government and embarrass the Opposition. Again, the action which the Speaker might take must form part of the indictment of the Government at a General Election. The Secretary of State for India had admitted that, because he had said that this would give an effectual cry with which to go to the country. Well, if it did, it gave the Opposition a cry which would not be against the Government, who was not responsible, but against the Speaker, who was responsible. [Mr. JOHN BRIGHT: No, no; against the majority.] Therefore, it was quite clear, if anyone was to be made responsible out-of-doors, it was the Speaker of the House of Commons. But if the Speaker was to be publicly attacked, he must be publicly defended. He might consider it necessary to defend himself. In such a case they would have the Speaker stumping the country in defence of his action in that House. Whether the Speaker was absorbed into the ranks of the Ministry or not, he would generally be regarded by the public as a partizan. But let them take the other side of the question. He was prepared to find that the Speaker declined to defend himself on the ground that he was a Judge. But the Government could not allow him to remain without defence. He could see the Prime Minister of the day coming down, with a countenance arranged for the occasion, and denouncing the indecency of anyone calling in question the judicial functions of the Speaker. If the Speaker was to be subject to criticisms, he must degenerate into a partizan; but if, on the other hand, he was not subjected to criticisms, there was no safeguard whatever against his rulings. It would become a little more clear when they considered the position of the Speaker now. The present Speaker had informed them that he was the servant of the House. He thought by that language that the Speaker intended to convey that the Speaker had no inherent power except what he derived from the Standing Orders and past practice of the House. Therefore, it was quite clear that whatever power in future in excess of this was derived from these Rules must be derived from the Resolution under discussion. It was necessary to inquire carefully into the effect of this Resolution. If they took the first part of this Resolution and joined it on to the latter part they would find what it meant. It was that a majority of 1 in a full House could stop the discussion of a question by the minority. But if a majority hereafter took that view, in what position would the Speaker be? The majority would say they had a right to silence the minority; but the Speaker, by declining to take the initiative, was refusing to grant them that right. Therefore, it might be said the Speaker was making a partizan use of his power. He contended that it would be a great mistake to associate the power in the manner proposed with the Speaker. The Resolution as it stood was not clear; it was scarcely intelligible. The difficulty of working it would be enormous. It had been well shown in a letter from Mr. Baden Powell to the Prime Minister. Mr. Powell said—

> "My difficulty is that this Rule seems for a certainty to legalize such results as the following. If 201 Members vote for and 200 Members against the closing a debate the debate is closed; if 200 Members vote for and 41 against closing a debate the debate is not closed; if 100 Members vote for and 2 Members against closing a debate the debate is not closed, and there are, of course, the intermediate results in their due order. In other words—firstly, in all cases where more than 200 Members support the Motion, a bare majority of 1 suffices to stop discussion. Secondly, in all cases where some 101 to 206 Members support the Motion, discussion is not stopped, unless a majority of four-fifths is in favour of so doing. Thirdly, it is impossible to stop discussion unless more than 100 Members vote for so doing."

He thought no Member would dispute that Mr. Baden Powell had accurately interpreted this Rule. He did not believe that it would be possible for the President of any Foreign Assembly to work that Resolution; and he ventured to say it was absolutely impossible for the Speaker or Chairman of Committees to work it without the assistance of the Government Whips. They sat longer in that House than any other Assembly; and, in the second place, the accommodation in the House was not sufficient for all the Members. How would the Speaker know how many Members were in the House? He held that it would be impossible to carry out the Resolution, except by the help of the Government Whips, with whom it was inexpedient that the Speaker or Chairman of Committees should come into contact, as the Whips must necessarily be partizans. The primary duty of the Speaker was to maintain order; but "the evident sense of the House" must be conveyed to him by noise and interruption, so that that high dignitary would, in a manner, be associated with the disorderly, who were exactly the people who ought not to lead the House. Rhadamanthus himself, if in the Chair, could not, under the proposed new conditions, conduct himself with propriety and dignity. The stronger an hon. Member's lungs the more efficient would be the aid which he would render his Party. It was all very well now, when they were talking calmly, to say that the *clôture* would only be applied in exceptional cases, and with the consent of both sides of the House. But his experience was that it was just when men ought to be heard that the disposition to silence them was greatest. This struck him very much the other day, when there happened to be a painful incident. Mr. Bradlaugh had committed certain offences, and it was proposed to punish him by expulsion. Mr. Bradlaugh asked to be heard. His request was met by a stentorian "No" from both sides of the House; and if this Rule had been passed, the Speaker would have had no option but to say that this represented "the evident sense of the House." There was no doubt that at the French Revolution the Jacobins, who were numerically a small body, gained their ends by organized clamour, and Constitutional forms, &c., degenerated into the Reign of Terror. It was a curious notion to entertain that an official in a judicial position could be fitted to perform his duties more successfully by becoming a partizan. There was a singular parallel in the case of Charles Fox, who, after the death of Mr. Pitt, occupied a similar position to the present Prime Minister. Mr. Fox had assailed his opponents with an animosity nearly equal to that with which the Prime Minister, when in Opposition, assailed the late Government; and Mr. Fox had only been in Office for two months before the exigencies of his Government made him forget his previous professions, and he then suggested the monstrous proposal that the Lord Chief Justice of England should become a Member of his Cabinet. If such a proposal had been made by Mr. Pitt, it would have been denounced almost as loudly as the proposal of the *clôture*, if it had emanated from Lord Beaconsfield, would have been assailed by Her Majesty's present Ministers. Mr. Fox's proposal was supported by the Liberal Party of that day, just as the *clôture* was now supported by the present Liberal Party, because of the tremendous pressure brought to bear on them; but the result, as far as the reputation of that

Government was concerned, was not a fortunate one. He asked anyone to consider whether it would be possible for the Speaker to have the confidence of the minority without incurring the animosity of the majority? His strong impression was that the course which was proposed would put the Speaker in an intolerable position, and that in the end he would, perhaps, forfeit the good opinion of both sides of the House. The Amendment which he proposed raised no Party question, nor did it affect the Resolution under discussion. He trusted, therefore, that an effort would be made to save out of the wreck of their Parliamentary traditions the position which the Speaker at present occupied.

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment,

To add, at the end thereof, the words "or by the Member in charge of the subject under discussion."—(*Lord George Hamilton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. GLADSTONE: I am afraid it will be my fate to speak in a much cooler tone than that which was adopted by the Mover of the Amendment or the Mover of the Amendment of the Amendment. There is, I know, an exaggeration of conjuring up fears which it is difficult to measure, and which magnifies every subject of the most moderate dimensions into a gigantic question, involving, commonly, the very life of the Constitution, or of our Parliamentary system. Now, in my opinion, this is a very limited matter, and the sentiments I shall deliver upon it will be entirely without heat. I must, however, regret that the noble Lord has not pursued, except in the last sentence of his speech, a similar course. On the hon. Member who moved the Amendment I make this observation, that though he was undoubtedly copious in the performance of his work, yet he limited himself to the question of his Amendment, and he likewise observed a strict impartiality as between Parties. The noble Lord has not thought fit to abstain from introducing considerations of Party into what ought to have been a perfectly temperate and dispassionate discussion. The noble Lord undertakes to say that all of us who sit on these Benches would have opposed that proposal if made in any other quarter. I am not going to enter upon that subject. In my opinion, it is a strange thing for the noble Lord to make that accusation, considering that, as far as my recollection goes, when a demand was made by the late Government for some power in a penal direction, as far as I am concerned—and I believe I may say the same thing of my noble Friend (the Marquess of Hartington)—I did nothing except in a few sentences to support the demand, and to commend the spirit in which it had been made. But why is it necessary to introduce these matters? Do they really assist us in the consideration of the question. Then the noble Lord goes on to speak of the immense results which, as he says, this Resolution is intended to produce. Is it wise, is it expedient, does it promote harmony or expedition in our proceedings to charge upon any Party in this House views diametrically opposed to those they had emphatically proclaimed? We had always said that none of those large results would be produced by the Resolution; and I submit, if good manners permit, that that kind of contradiction is certainly adverse to Parliamentary policy and expediency. Upon the speech of the noble Lord, I must observe that it is a speech partly against the entire Resolution, and partly against the introduction of the Speaker into the Resolution. The noble Lord entirely forgot, in the whole of his speech, the Amendment, which is the only subject of discussion. Now, I will give only one instance of how exaggerated fears distort powers of judgment naturally acute enough. The noble Lord said that the tendency of this Resolution is to encourage noise on the part of certain noisy Members in the House. [MR. BIGGAR: Hear, hear!] Everybody knows who they are, and, as I understand the noble Lord, he implied that they are persons whose conduct is generally condemned and disapproved by the House. But then the noble Lord goes on to say these are the men whose conduct will guide the conduct of the Speaker. [MR. BIGGAR: Hear, hear!] These noisy Members of the House—a handful of individuals, unknown and unnamed, but supposed to exist—will be mistaken by the Speaker, and interpreted by him as the arbiters of the "evident sense of the House." I do not think the remark is quite relevant to the present debate. I own I think it shows a state of mind much heated by unnecessary apprehension, when a speaker of ability thinks it necessary to hold that a certain limited number of Members of the House, whose conduct is known to be irrational, will be the people whom the Speaker in the Chair will take as representing the sense of the whole House, and accept them as his guide. Now, let us really endeavour to deal with the question before us, as between the Amendment of the noble Lord and the Amendment of the hon. Member for Dungarvan. There is, I think, a good deal to be said in favour of the Amendment of the noble Lord, because the Amendment of the noble Lord proceeds upon this basis—that if there is to be an initiative apart from the Speaker, it ought not to be exclusively in the hands of the Government. As far as that proposal goes, I certainly am not disposed to take any exception to it. I think there is a good deal of difficulty in the Amendment of the noble Lord, as it stands; because, although I understand the responsibility of a Member in charge of a Bill, yet when we speak of a Member in charge of a subject; and recollect that that subject would, I apprehend, be held to involve every description of Amendment moved in any proceeding of the House in Committee of Supply, in Committee on a Bill, or anything else—perhaps a Motion for the adjournment of the House—I think it is a question whether they would not require some limitations. But I am not going to dwell upon minute distinctions between the two Amendments, because, upon the whole, though I do not take up the subject with any warmth, I recommend that the House will do better not to adopt them. But I do so by no means upon the ground that the question of the initiative is not a question for argument and for fair consideration. I quite understand that it is a serious question whether the responsibility of initiating the sense of the House, which alone can decide a closing of the debate, should rest with the Chair, or should rest with some Member or number of Members in the House. That is not the question before us; and, further, I will say that undoubtedly the form which now stands in the Resolutions was adopted in the full belief, which they continue to entertain, that there would be a fear of the abuse of the closing power, if it were left simply in the hands of the Government, or of a certain number of their supporters, to invoke exercise of it; but that by placing it in the hands of the Speaker they were affording the very best security in their power against its possible abuse. There are those two systems—the one system that of giving the power of initiative to the Government apart from the Chair, and leaving to the Chair no duty except that of putting the Question; and the other system is to take the Resolution as it stands, and say that upon the Speaker shall be the responsibility of making the appeal to the House. The noble Lord said we must not have the Speaker put under compulsion. Upon that we are entirely at one with the noble Lord. But to guard against that, in our view, there are two things. First of all, the Speaker must be convinced of a certain state of facts as to the sense of the House. Secondly, the Speaker must be of opinion that the apparent demand, or the evident sense of the House, is in conformity with justice. But what the Amendment proposes is neither the one nor the other. The Amendment proposed to us is to clap on a responsibility of the Minister of the Crown, or of some other Member of Parliament as well as the Minister of the Crown, upon the back of the responsibility of the Speaker, to make it necessary for them to invoke his aid, but still to leave upon him the responsibility which the Resolution at present places in his hands. Upon the whole, we are of opinion that this system is less safe than the system embodied in the Resolution as it stands. The hon. Member for Dungarvan argued on the assumption that by this Resolution the power is to be placed really in the hands of the Government, and the Speaker is to act really as the organ of the majority of the House. If that were true, I would not only accept at once the Amendment, but I would refuse to admit any Resolutions in which the Speaker appeared at all, because I agree entirely that those who are to exercise the power ought to bear the responsibility. But I differ respectfully from the hon. Gentleman, and affirm that no power whatever is given by the Resolution to the majority for influencing the Speaker of the House. The special duty of the Speaker of the House is to avoid giving scope to his mere sympathy, if he has a sympathy, to the majority of the House. But, then, says the hon. Member—"Do not let us have our Speaker discredited by being forced into relations with the Government." "Do not let us have him placed," says the noble Lord, "in connection with the Government Whips." I entirely agree with the noble Lord. But I am sorry to say that it appears to me that the Amendment has a decided tendency in that direction. If we pass a Resolution which makes it the duty of the Speaker to determine in his own mind what is the sense of the House, and whether that sense is the just sense, then I can understand that the action of the Speaker may be a spontaneous action. But if we say the Speaker is to act upon the suggestion and demand of the Minister of the Crown, what is the immediate effect? That the Minister of the Crown must, and will have to, put himself in communication with the Speaker before he makes that suggestion to the Chair; and, therefore, undoubtedly, as I apprehend, it is the duty of the Minister of the Crown to be in communication with the Government Whips. This Amendment, I am afraid, instead of relieving the Speaker from any of his difficulties in that respect, would result in establishing a channel of communication between him and the Government Whips, and thereby of exposing the Speaker to the suspicion and reproach from which the noble Lord and others are justly most anxious to shield him. Now, I shall not meet reproach by reproach, nor insinuation by insinuation, nor will I go back into any pluperfects of the potential mood for the sake of entangling this, I think, very simple argument in considerations that may be connected with temper and with feeling. I do not at all disguise that there may be fair choice between the use of the Speaker and the use of private Members or of Ministers of the Crown as wielding the initiative in this case. I believe we have made the right choice as between these two, and the Amendment before us is neither one nor the other. It proposes to double the responsibility, and it would lead to those communications I have described, which would be eminently unsatisfactory to the House, and which, let me say to the hon. Member for Dungarvan, would exactly open up that danger that he is justly desirous to avert—namely, that we should be in a condition to attempt, at least, to exercise a pressure on the Speaker, and therefore to take some benefit, or supposed benefit, from the action of the Speaker, from which, as the Resolution now stands, he is entirely free. I believe it to be a small matter. Had there been a clear and general view of the House, an evident sense of the House in favour of a change of this kind, I do not see that we could have taken upon ourselves to refuse it; but I frankly own that, in our opinion, the Resolution is better as it stands.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY quite failed to see that the Prime Minister had made out his argument that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) would lead to communication between the Speaker and the Government Whips. For his own part, he preferred the Amendment as unamended, although there was much force in some of the remarks of the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton), especially when he said that the distinction between a Minister of the Crown and any other Member of the House was a novelty and an innovation. But they had already gone so far on the way of change that they need not stickle at one or two more innovations. The object of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Dungarvan would be entirely marred by the manner in which the noble Lord proposed to amend that Amendment. If the initiative in closing the debate were taken by the Speaker, he would become the organ of the majority. The majority was, in its turn, governed by the inspiration of the Prime Minister and his Colleagues, and the Speaker would become the mouthpiece of the Prime Minister and the majority. For his own part, he would have preferred that the Prime Minister, and not the Speaker, should be the mouthpiece of the majority. The words "evident sense of the House," used in the Resolution, were misleading. It meant the sense of a majority which might be scattered in various parts of the House, and it might very often lead to enforcing a wrong conclusion. The "evident sense of the House" had been employed against many great statesmen and thinkers in the House. It had declared against many a policy which afterwards proved to be most wise and just. He supposed the "evident sense of the House" was against Burke in his great speeches against the Stamp Act, when he argued against those measures which contributed to bring about the severance of England and America. He supposed it declared against Fox in some of his wisest appeals for a policy of peace, and for a time against Cobden on the question of Free Trade. Indeed, the evident sense of the majority was more than once against the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister himself when, a short time ago, he justly opposed the Foreign Policy of the late Government. Thus, with a strong majority in the House, the Speaker for the time being would, under the New Rules, become its mere instrument. Under such conditions, it was utterly impossible that a Speaker could retain his present position and high popularity, or be regarded as an impartial Officer of the House. A Speaker was impartial now because he had hardly any temptation to be otherwise. If they gave a Speaker the power of closing a debate at any time, it would be giving his impartiality a strain which no ordinary man could long endure. Before long it was certain that he would be accused in the country of partiality. It could not be satisfactory that any great Officer of the House, or any great public man, should have the power of frequently doing acts for which he could not be assailed, and for which he could not be defended. If he were not to be assailed, they were raising an official to a position of perilous immunity; and, on the other hand, if he were open to attack, they were reducing the Speaker to the level of an ordinary Minister exposed to friendly and unfriendly criticism, and who merely performed the duty of a partizan and a Party Leader. Under those circumstances, it would be impossible for the dignity of the Chair to remain as unassailed and as perfect as it now was, and the Speaker would become the mere mouthpiece of a temporary majority. The responsibility ought to rest with a Minister of the Crown. In his opinion, the proposed change was not of the unimportant nature the Prime Minister had described. It would introduce into the House an authority similar to that of the despotic President of a Continental Assembly. Such a power ought not to be placed in the hands of an official who, up to the present time, had been a person of strict impartiality; but who, if these Resolutions were passed, would be no longer regarded as impartial in the eyes of the public.

MR. BRYCE, who had the following Amendment to the 1st Resolution on the Paper:—

> "Line 5, leave out all after 'may,' to 'put,' in line 6, and insert 'upon the request of a Minister of the Crown, or of the Member in charge, either of any original Motion then under discussion, or of any amendment thereto, give leave to such Minister or Member to move 'That the Question be now put,' and if such Member shall so move,"

said, when it was arrived at it might possibly be ruled out of Order, on the ground of its being substantially the same as that now before the House, and he would therefore say now what he had to say upon the subject. If the two Amendments were nearly the same in principle, the terms of his Amendment were, probably—as being somewhat more precise, and more clearly throwing the initiative on the Member who desired that the discussion should close—to be preferred. He could not help feeling that it would have been much better if the Chair had not been brought into the matter at all. With regard to the argument of the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), that the Resolution meant in substance that a majority of 1 was to constitute the "evident sense of the House," it went far to discredit the other arguments which accompanied it. The noble Lord had presented such an exaggerated view of the results of this Resolution as to make it much more difficult for Members on this side of the House to support his Amendment. He (Mr. Bryce) thought the present Resolution not strong enough, instead of too strong, and proposed to amend it only because he thought it better that the responsibility of ascertaining the "evident sense of the House" should be fixed upon the Government of the day, and that it should lie upon a Minister, rather than on the Speaker, to move primarily in the matter. If a Minister put the Speaker in motion, the responsibility was, to a certain extent, shared. No one who prized, as they all prized, the impartiality of the Chair, would like the Chair to incur censure. The Speaker might, if the responsibility rested with him alone, make a mistake as to what was the evident sense of the House, though, as the Resolution required the "evident" sense, this, perhaps, would not be very likely to happen; but, supposing such a mistake did happen, would not the blame rest upon the Speaker alone? And, if so, would he not, on a future occasion, be more slow to exercise his power? He thought, therefore, it would be better that the responsibility of the initiative should rest with the Minister or Member who sought to close the debate, so that the Speaker, if a mistake were made, might feel that the Minister shared the responsibility of it. He believed the effect of such an Amendment would be to strengthen the Resolution, and make it a somewhat more efficient engine against Obstruction; and it was for that reason, fearing that a *clôture* which proceeded from the Speaker alone would be too rarely used, that he supported this proposal.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, that the Prime Minister had made some observations on the tone of the speech of the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), and had said that such remarks were calculated to impede the course of the debate. But, at the same time, the Prime Minister himself indulged in language of exactly the same kind, and had characterized one of the arguments of the noble Lord as irrational. That argument was that the Speaker, in deciding what should be the "evident sense of the House," would be reduced to two sources of information, the one being the knowledge which he obtained from the Government Whips, and the other being the noises which were going on in the House at the time. But he contended that it was perfectly impossible for the Speaker in the latter case clearly to interpret the desire of the House; and in the former case the Speaker would necessarily be biassed by the information afforded to him by the Whips. On previous nights they had discussed the effect of the *clôture* on a minority; but they had now introduced the question of the position of the Speaker if the Rules were passed. He would remind the House that the Speaker of the future could not possibly ever occupy the position which the Speaker of the past had occupied. He thought the Government were somewhat to blame in this matter. They had concluded that all future Speakers would be as impartial as the right hon. Gentleman then in the Chair. But the contention of those who sat on that side was that the Speaker of the future would be by no means so impartial. They said that the fact of putting these new powers in his hands would entirely alter his character. He felt sure that the effects of the Rule would be to make future Chairmen Government nominees. He thought that the Government honestly believed that by giving the Speaker the initiative in that matter they were protecting the right of minorities; but he wished to point out that the result of the operation of the Rule would probably be, not to protect minorities, but to give the Speaker authority whereby he might screen the action of the Government majority. The noble Lord the Secretary of State for India said no Minister would ever think of abusing the power of the *clôture*, because the responsibility would be brought home to him with crushing effect. The noble Lord seemed to argue instinctively that the Speaker of the future would act as a tool of the Government. It must be remembered that by the initiative of the Speaker the Ministers of the day were entirely screened from any responsibility in the matter. He himself was strongly of opinion that no such power as that proposed to be given ought to be placed in the hands of Mr. Speaker; and he thought that if they were able to exclude his name from that Rule they would have done the best they could to smooth the way for the Government to adopt the Amendment which proposed that the *clôture* should only come into force when voted by a majority of two-thirds.

SIR EDWARD COLEBROOKE said, he thought that when the alarms which were now felt with regard to this subject had passed away, Members of that House would be more inclined to take an equitable view of the subject than they were now. He did not think that the proposition to give the initiative to the Government would in any way relieve the Speaker from his responsibility in the matter, for it would produce a divided responsibility, and a responsibility of a most objectionable character. Neither did he think the matter was mended by the proposition of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce), that the Speaker should merely give permission to take the initiative, for that would come to the same thing. The judicial decision as to what was or was not the "evident sense of the House" would have to be put from the Chair, and thus the responsibility would be divided with the Speaker. He felt, with many hon. Members who had already spoken in this and former debates, that it was most objectionable that a question of this kind should be left to the Chair, and he could not conceive how such a system could work. A Predecessor of the Speaker had said on a memorable historical occasion that he had neither eyes to see nor tongue to speak except what was suggested to him by the House, whose servant he was. He held that that principle applied with equal force at the present day. It was impossible for the Speaker to ascertain what was the sense of the House until that sense had been declared by a division. The Speaker ought not to listen to any noises that might come from the Back Benches, nor to any private suggestion that might be made by the Government or its supporters. He could only decide upon that sense as expressed in a division, and that occasion would be afforded by every debate. A Motion would be made to adjourn, the Government would oppose it, and there would be a majority. But how was the Speaker to act? If it was a bare majority, he presumed the Speaker would not accept that as the sense of the House; and if it was a large majority, there would, of course, be no difficulty. If it were a Ministerial majority, whether large or small, it would give rise to insinuations and complaints against the conduct of the Speaker, and would put the Speaker in a position which he never ought to occupy. He therefore strongly objected to the initiative resting with the Chair. He gave full credit to the Government for endeavouring to cover such a Resolution in every way, by means of protecting the Motion from any suggestion of Party Spirit whatever; but he thought when the question was further advanced the House would arrive at a better means of deciding what was the "evident sense of the House." When they had to consider the Motions of the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) and of other hon. Members who proposed that the evident sense must be a preponderating sense, that was a question which the House ought not to shirk; they ought to express their opinion decidedly as to whether the "evident sense of the House" was to be a bare majority, or one something more than even a Ministerial majority. He would not anticipate that discussion; but he thought it was a point upon which the Government might make some concession, and in that way many of the difficulties which surrounded the question would pass away. He earnestly appealed to the Government to consider that question fairly and broadly, for he deeply regretted that it should have given rise to so much Party feeling. It was a question upon which a great body of the House felt strongly that something ought to be done to prevent such scandals as had recently occurred; and he believed that if it was fairly considered they would be prepared, even though some risk might attend the question of introducing the *clôture,* to sacrifice some part of their liberties for the sake of the remainder. The House was in a difficult position. They had fairly responded to the demand outside the House; and he thought they would be cordially supported in the House in some attempt to bring the matter to an issue, and that some concession on this point would lead to a satisfactory decision.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH was convinced of the necessity for taking some steps to prevent a recurrence of the scandals of last year, when they had Sittings on more than one occasion which lasted all night. These scandals reflected upon the dignity of the House, and ought certainly to be prevented from occurring again. If, however, the *clôture* was to be introduced with that object, it should be made more akin to the old Forms of the House. It might have been done in some form of the Previous Question, thus keeping the initiative out of the hands of the Speaker. If, indeed, this Rule was frequently applied, a confusion would un-undoubtedly arise from its similarity to the Motion of the Previous Question. To the initiative being left with the Speaker there were grave objections. He should prefer to support the Amendment of the hon. Member (Mr. O'Donnell) that the initiative should rest with the Government. The Government possessed means of knowing what was the general sense of the House far beyond those which were in the power of the Speaker. It might be that a large number of Members were in the precincts of the House, and that they might take a different view of a subject under discussion than was held by a few Members in the House itself. Of this fact the Government would be aware, while it was utterly impossible for the Speaker to know it. With regard to the Amendment of his noble Friend (Lord George Hamilton) he felt in some difficulty, and he hoped that his noble Friend would not ask the House to divide upon the additional words which he had proposed. Those words were extremely ambiguous; and as they stood it seemed to him that the initiative might be taken by a Member who, by proposing a hostile Amendment, had taken the subject out of the hands of the Member who originally introduced it. He could not, even now, help expressing a hope that this Resolution might ultimately take a shape that would be less offensive than it was at present to a large number of Members of the House.

Mr. HUGH SHIELD said, he was surprised to find the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) and the noble Lord opposite (Lord George Hamilton) proposing to engraft upon the Resolution an expression of Ministerial initiative. He objected to that Amendment, because it struck at the safeguards which were proposed in the Rule. *Clôture* pure and simple would never be defended; but the safeguards with which it was surrounded precluded the possibility of any dangerous consequences. What was the action which the Resolution called upon the occupant of the Chair to take? When the occupant of the Chair had arrived at the conclusion that the evident sense of the House was in favour of closing the debate, he might put that Motion to the House. How was he to judge of the evident sense of the House? He would avail himself of every means; he would not be excluded from attending to the noisy cries raised on this side of the House or that, though he was not to be limited to them. Access to the Speaker's Chair would not then, any more than now, be denied to hon. Members; indeed, the Speaker would be put in possession of the feelings of the House by all the means now open to him. His own fear was that the Speaker would hesitate to apply the Rule, even on occasions when it could properly be applied. That defect, however, the noble Lord was determined to cure with a vengeance, by proposing that the initiative should be absolutely in the power of the Minister. They ought not to hear any more about the despotic Minister after that; and although he was himself in favour of the proposal, he did not think public opinion was prepared for such a step, and, therefore, he objected to it *per se.*

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, that when the Prime Minister introduced that Resolution for establishing the *clôture,* he said that the Speaker was the pivot on which the whole business turned, and that on his initiative depended altogether the beneficial exercise of the Rules. Other Gentlemen had followed in the same strain, and had spoken of the impossibility of any Speaker becoming confederate with any Ministry or any Party, or taking interest in any Party manœuvres. They described him as a person who must always stand above the level of political factions and their controversies. Instead of indulging in grandiloquent language, it would have been well if hon. Gentlemen had studied the history of Parliament, which would have led them to a very different conclusion. Now, let him give the House a few historical facts. Take the first great Speaker after the Restoration, Sir Harbottle Grimston, an old Commonwealth man. No sooner had the King been brought back than Sir Harbottle Grimston went over to the other side, and on being presented to the King after his election to the Chair grovelled in the dust in such a way that Charles II.—a man not unaccustomed to flattery—said to him, "Stand up old rebel, and speak like a man." Speaker Charlton was supposed to have had a sum of money to give up his Chair. Speaker Williams was fined and imprisoned by the Order of the House, and was succeeded by Speaker Trevor, who had a strange peculiarity in his vision—one eye looking one way, one another. He suffered the singular degradation of being obliged to put from the Chair the Question whether he had been guilty of taking bribes. That Question was instantly voted in the affirmative by the House of Commons, and Speaker Trevor was expelled from the House for corruption. But he was expelled only to take his seat as Master of the Rolls; whereupon it was said "that justice was blind, but corruption only squinted." He was followed in the next Reign by the first Speaker Onslow—Sir Richard Onslow—who, according to contemporary descriptions, was a trifling, vain man, of ludicrous figure, and full of Party zeal. Speaker Sir Fletcher Norton, an organ of the Whigs, was a violent Party politician, and was at last dismissed from his Office. He was shortly succeeded by Speaker Cornewall, who had an unfortunate habit of taking too much porter, which resulted in much inconvenience. In the next Reign two Speakers—Grenville and Addington—both left the Chair to mix in the very heat of Party politics; the one to be Prime Minister, and the other to be a Secretary of State. Almost in our own times Speaker Mitford was removed from the Chair by a new Government with an indecent haste, in no way creditable to the Whig Administration. Speaker Manners Sutton was removed from the Chair, because he had busied himself with the subversion of the previous Government, and had assisted with others in the formation of a new Ministry. The present Premier was in the House at the time (1835), and would remember these words used by Lord John Russell on that occasion—

> "There was this fact that the political bias of the right hon. Gentleman had not remained entirely inert, but it had got the better of him, and had induced him to concur in acts, which, as Speaker of the House of Commons, he had much better have avoided."

The next Speaker was removed from the Chair after a very short time, owing to the evil circumstances in which he was elected. These were some of the precedents which it was well to recall, because if they wanted to know what the Speakers of the future would be, they should take some account of what the Speakers of the past had been. The Prime Minister, knowing a little more history than his followers, took care not to allude to antecedents. The Prime Minister had asked them to accept his Resolution, because they had the assurance of the present Speaker's own character, and there, perhaps, the right hon. Gentleman stood on better and stronger grounds. But the right hon. Gentleman had insisted on introducing into the debate the painful incident of the 2nd of February, 1881, and had called on them, on account of the action taken on that day, to intrust a large and elastic power to the hands of the Speaker. He hardly liked to trust himself to say what he thought on that occasion. He preferred to quote the words of the right hon. Gentleman himself—namely,

> "You took into your hands the exercise of a power not committed to you, either by the Orders of the House or the Usage of the House."

In other words, the Speaker broke the law. He whose bounden duty it was to maintain inviolate the Usages and Orders of the House, violated them. [*Murmurs.*] He to whom the minority of the House, however small, looked for support, took a jurisdiction that was not given to him to suppress a minority. The Speaker had, in the Standing Orders of the House, Rules which were sufficient for the occasion; he had been appealed to in the debate to put in force those Rules and Orders which would have enabled him to suspend individuals; but he refused, and his Deputy in the Chair through that long debate likewise refused to do so. The Speaker was the master of every individual in the House; but he was the servant of the House. He had the right to check individuals; but he had no jurisdiction over the House that was not committed to him. ["Order!"]

Mr. W. M. TORRENS: I rise, Sir, to Order. I have really borne this as long as I could. I hardly know how to express the sense I entertain of the repugnance with which I, in common I presume with the rest of the House, have listened to this attack on the person we most honour in this Assembly; and, even although it may be a matter personal to yourself, I hope, Sir, you will call the hon. Member to Order.

Mr. SEXTON: On the point of Order, Sir, I only rise to say that, as the matter no doubt does relate to yourself personally, it may safely be left in your own hands.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am bound to say that, under the circumstances, I have not thought it right to interpose; but the hon. Member must be perfectly aware that the observations which he has ventured on lately are not relevant to the subject-matter now before the House. The Question is the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, in the words of the Prime Minister, the Speaker thereby earned an additional measure of respect by the action he took on the occasion referred to, and that was now urged as a reason why still greater powers should be given to him. The Prime Minister used the words "an additional measure of respect and gratitude." These words were received with cheers; and he wished those who gave them had been a little discriminating, and that they had apportioned praise and blame to whom praise and blame were due. For he put this Question to the Government, and asked for an answer—Had the Speaker on that occasion any accessories? Had he any confederate on one side or the other of the House? ["Oh!"]

Mr. Dodson and Sir R. Assheton Cross rose with the Speaker, to whom they gave way.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must again remind the hon. Member that the Amendment before the House is the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex, and I must call upon him to adhere to it.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON: I ask you, Sir, whether——

Mr. DODSON: I rise to the point of Order. I was about to rise when you, Sir, rose to point out that the hon. Member was not discussing the Question before the House, and also at the same time to express the feeling which I will take the opportunity of expressing now—that it is my belief that hon. Members on both sides of the House have heard the remarks of the hon. Member with unfeigned regret. ["Order!"]

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: On the point of Order, I also rose as you yourself rose some time ago; but, of course, your rising rendered my rising unnecessary, and the point of Order having been disposed of, I do not think the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Dodson) should have made those remarks.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, he wished plainly and without offence, if he were in Order, to refer to the argument that had been used—that a certain action of the Speaker in the present Parliament was a reason why they should give to the Speaker large and elastic powers. It appeared to him that this must be relevant when the Prime Minister himself had alluded to this very incident. It appeared to him that an independent Member might also allude to and express an opinion about it without giving offence. The Prime Minister was supporting this very Resolution which he was now objecting to, and if the incident could be appealed to in support of the Resolution, he thought he might appeal to it in opposition to the Resolution. If, after this explanation, he was ruled out of Order, he would pass away from the subject. He wished to impress upon the House that he had been quoting the words of the Prime Minister, and he had followed the Prime Minister's argument almost sentence by sentence in referring to this incident. What he desired to impress upon the House was that they should not give the proposed power to the Speaker, because he might confederate with the Ministry of the day, with the majority of the day. He wished to show from this very incident that, so far as he could judge, the Speaker had confederated with the Ministry of the day, and that he had accessories in the House on that very occasion. He appealed to the Prime Minister to say whether he was not one of the accessories? An accessory was a man who knew that a breach of the law was about to take place, who did not disclose the fact, and who did not use his utmost endeavours to prevent it. He asked the Prime Minister whether he did not know beforehand that something was about to occur at 9 o'clock on that Wednesday morning? He hoped the Government would answer that question. It was a singular thing that all the Members of the Government were in their places at that unreasonable hour of the morning, when the *coup d'etat* took place.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I rise to Order, Sir. It appears to me that the hon. Member is not obeying the injunction received from the Chair, to speak to the Amendment which is before us. ["Oh!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member, I understand, is calling in question the conduct of the Speaker upon the occasion to which he refers. In so doing I cannot say I think the hon. Member is out of Order. At the same time, he is wandering very much from the Question, and I would seriously advise him to speak more closely to the Question before the House.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, that what he maintained was simply that, under this Rule, the Speakers of the future would be in the hands of the Ministry of the day; and he maintained that this would place the Speaker in a wholly false position. He drew attention to what happened on that occasion in order to show that, as far as he could judge, the Prime Minister was accessory to what was going to happen; for, as soon as the Speaker had stopped discussion, and had appealed to the House to give him greater powers, the Prime Minister pulled out of his pocket an elaborate Resolution of 20 lines, which exactly met the appeal of the Speaker. This was what made him think that the right hon. Gentleman knew what was going to happen. Yet the incident would have been of some advantage if it showed what surprises might be in store for us under the large and elastic discretion which this Resolution would give the Speaker. He feared that behind the Speakers of the future there would be a secret mentor and voice, invisible and inaudible to the House, telling them what they were to do. It must be remembered that the quality of the Speakers would depend upon the quality of the majority in the House which elected them; if that majority was violent, the Speakers would be violent, too. Under this Rule the Speaker would hold a somewhat judicial position. We were never able to get rid of judicial corruption until we abolished the power of the Crown to remove Judges at pleasure. Yet the Speaker would hold Office by the insecure tenure of the will of the majority; and, as we approached to democracy, did any one suppose that our political conscience, would be purer, our political methods less violent, our political partizanship less extreme? If we were to keep in the Chair Gentlemen whose characters were free from suspicion, we must dissociate their already arduous duties from the invidious exercising of a function upon which the fate of Parties and Ministries would in future depend.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) had assumed his favourite attitude of a political Jeremiah, warning the House and the country of the terrible plots that were being devised against liberty by the Prime Minister. His noble Friend rather reminded him of the description given by one of our comic poets of certain persons who went about asking—

> "Who made the stocks to fall, and prices rise,
> And filled the butchers' shops with great blue flies?"

And the answer of the noble Lord always was "The Prime Minister." It was, no doubt, encouraged by his example; but the hon. Gentleman the Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) had favoured the House with a quotation from Isaiah. For himself he should have been very glad to keep the ball rolling, and if only he could have found anything relevant in their works to have given the House a quotation or two from the minor prophets; but the fact was that any such attempt had been rendered wholly superfluous by the extraordinary histrionic performance of the hon. Member for Shropshire (Mr. Stanley Leighton) to whom the House had just listened. In one of Mr. Dickens's novels there was a description of the old Court of Chancery and of an unfortunate man who rose at 4 o'clock every day, and, waiving his arms wildly at the Chancellor, said, "My lord;" whereupon the ushers ordered him either to keep his seat or to leave the Court, and this person was known as "the Man from Shropshire." Now, it was his rooted belief that, owing to the reform of the Court of Chancery, the man from Shropshire had found the place too hot for him, and had taken up his abode in the House of Commons. As for the debate on this Amendment, anyone who had listened to it without having read the Order Book would have thought that it referred solely to the question whether the initiative should be left to the Speaker or to the Government, while, in point of fact, that was neither the only nor the principle matter to be decided. Both the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex and the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) proposed to retain the words relating to the Speaker.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, that he should have been out of Order if he had omitted them.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Those words remained part of the Resolution, and yet, as he was pointing out, everyone would have imagined from the debate that that question was still unsettled, and that it was in the power of the House to strike them out. The real point at issue was more limited—whether the responsibility of the Speaker was to be sole or divided. Now, he demurred altogether to the description given by the noble Lord of the Office of Speaker. The noble Lord, following the views expressed by the hon. Member for Cork City (Mr. Parnell) in the last Parliament, had attempted to argue that the Speaker's duty was practically confined to expressing the sense of the House.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, that was the view taken of his functions by the Speaker.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: He did not think so; but, in any case, that was the position combated at the time by his noble Friend the Secretary of State for India, who pointed out that the Speaker, as guardian of the rights of the House, of minorities, and of individual Members, had many other equally important duties to perform. He had no doubt that the Government, in proposing to invest the Speaker with new and important duties, were conscious of the fact that they were observing the Constitutional traditions of his high Office. The Speaker was always regarded as the natural protector of oppressed minorities and individual Members, and he believed that none of the right hon. Gentleman's Successors in the Chair would be likely to abuse that trust. A long catalogue had been given of the high crimes and misdemeanours of former Speakers; and men who had been supposed during the debate of the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott) to have possessed all the virtues, were now declared to have been the corrupt creatures of the Crown. The hon. Member for Dungarvan contended that the *clôture* ought not to be put into operation except at the suggestion of a Minister of the Crown. As a private Member he protested against that most unconstitutional doctrine. It was one of the most important rights and privileges of Members of Parliament that, as Members, all were equal, with the exception that Ministers alone were privileged to propose money Votes on their own responsibilities as Ministers of the Crown. The Crown, however, had nothing whatever to do with the Question before the House. The privileges of Members that were now being debated had often been asserted against the Crown, and there could not, therefore, be any more unconstitutional proceeding than to enlarge the Parliamentary powers of Ministers by the adoption of the Amendment. The noble Lord the Member for Middlesex made, indeed, a proposition to which the objection he had just made could not apply. But, then, the speech of the noble Lord, like that of the hon. Member for Dungarvan, was almost entirely confined to what should be the rights or duties of Ministers of the Crown in this matter; and, apparently, he brought in the private Member as a sort of bogey in the background, in order to meet the objection which he foresaw might be made, while it enabled him to make that great diatribe against the Prime Minister with which he favoured the House. He hoped, however, the Government would not make a greater concession to the noble Lord than to the hon. Member for Dungarvan. The private Member was not the man the noble Lord had in his eye; his object was that the Speaker should act in conjunction with a Minister of the Crown. But he would thereby incur the very risks to prevent which the noble Lord and his Friends pretended they were making this proposition. He would ask anyone acquainted with the ways of the House, whether the Speaker would be in a more independent position if he was to be looking to the right or to the left and asking either a Minister of the Crown or some hon. Member—perhaps the noble Lord himself and his Friends—whether the moment had come when he was to consult the opinion of the House, or if he was to act on his own undivided responsibility? This proposition, if carried, would make the Speaker almost necessarily the slave of faction, and he could not understand how it could have been brought forward from any wish to preserve the integrity of the Speaker's high Office and those traditions which were its glory. For these reasons he would most unhesitatingly vote against this proposition, and upon the most Conservative grounds, though he sat on the Liberal side of the House.

Mr. PLUNKET said, that not many days ago the noble Lord who had just sat down performed with considerable effect the office of Jeremiah to his own Party; but when a political opponent ventured to make a few criticisms on the policy of the Prime Minister, the noble Lord was extremely indignant. The noble Lord found fault with his noble Friend the Member for Middlesex for having discussed the matter as if the words "Mr. Speaker" had not been already introduced into the Resolution. But the line taken by his noble Friend the Member for Middlesex was that the words "Mr. Speaker" had been unfortunately introduced, and, as it was not possible for him to strike them out, he desired to minimize the evil, and, as far as possible, take from the Speaker the initiative in this odious procedure. With regard to the two Amendments now before the House, his own opinion was rather in favour of that of the hon. Member for Dungarvan, because, while regretting that this machinery for the silencing of Members should be put in motion, he thought if it was to be done it should be done in the most solemn manner by those who would not only feel the responsibility, but who could be made responsible to the House. But, said the noble Lord who had just sat down, "who ever heard of introducing in such a case a Minister of the Crown?" Had the noble Lord ever heard of the Rules of Urgency, which were only to be applied on the initiative of a Minister? He did not find that the noble Lord had all those misgivings of unconstitutional action to which he had just given utterance when those Rules were passed.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, that they were only passed as a temporary measure.

Mr. PLUNKET said, the whole of the argument amounted to this, thrash it backwards and forwards how they would, whether under the circumstances in which the words "Mr. Speaker" were introduced into the Resolution, the conditions upon which the Speaker was directed by the subsequent part of it to act would not oblige him to have regard to the sense of a bare majority of the House at any time. If that were not so, of course the initiative of the Speaker would be a great protection, and he would be the last person in the world to fear the oppression of an impatient majority. On the other hand, if it could be shown, as he thought it could, that the inevitable effect of the Resolution as it stood would be to tie the hands of the Speaker so that he would be obliged to consider the sense of a bare majority of the House, the case was different. That was the point upon which they were to make up their minds, and upon that point the noble Lord the Member for Calne did not meet the arguments of his noble Friend the Member for Middlesex. There was another consideration which had been glanced at by other Members. While the introduction of the Speaker's initiative was really no protection to one of the great Parties against whom the *clôture* might be applied, and while its necessary tendency was swiftly and effectually to degrade the Speakers of the House, it went far to deprive those who were aggrieved of that very ally which some found in public opinion out-of-doors. A great deal had been said of public opinion out-of-doors as a security against any abuse of the *clôture* in the House of Commons. For his own part, so far as Members had been recommended to betake themselves to the Press and to the platform when they were dissatisfied with the decisions of the House through the agency of the *clôture*, he must decline to accept that recommendation. As regarded the Press, it must be remembered that probably every nine people out of ten who read the newspapers only heard one side of the question; and it was only in the reports of the debates in Parliament that the whole subject was carefully presented to them. With all respect to the Press, therefore, he could not consent to rely upon that as a protection against abuse of the *clôture*. Neither could he accept the protection of the platform. It was in the House itself that the protection must rest. It would be no satisfaction to a great political Party to be told, when a question was carried over their heads through the exercise of the *clôture*, that they might appeal to public opinion out-of-doors after the thing had become an accomplished fact. If the *clôture* now recommended for adoption were used in an unfair manner against a political Party in the House, they might appeal to public opinion out-of-doors, and if they did not obtain satisfaction, they might, at all events, have retaliation. The intervention and initiative of the Speaker as proposed in the Resolution practically would deprive them of the protection of public opinion out-of-doors, because when they charged the opposite Party with having acted unfairly, the answer would be that it was done by the Speaker in the discharge of his duty. It was therefore desirable, as far as possible, to withdraw the Speaker from all initiative in the position in which the Resolution now stood, because it was inevitable that the force of the language used in the latter part of it would compel the Speaker to adopt the sense of a majority of the House, and not of the whole House, as that " evident sense " on which he was to act. The words of the Resolution made this at least clear. His contention was that in the earlier part of this Resolution the Speaker was left entirely free to put what construction he pleased upon the " evident sense " of the House. He wanted to know what House? It was left open to the Speaker to take any point of the relative points of balance of opinion of the House—whether the nine-tenths, or a mere majority of 1. Whatever construction he placed on the latter words of the Resolution, Mr. Speaker was left entirely to his own discretion in the earlier part. Suppose —and it was not a violent supposition— that within two or three years another Radical Government were in power who thought it of great national importance to carry without delay some sweeping measure, the Minister of the day might consider that a Speaker of his own views would be worth a ton of argument. The minority would be placed at a great disadvantage, and Revolutionary measuress might be carried, and carried by a comparatively small and reluctant majority. It had been said more than once that the Speakers of the House of Commons held a position of impartiality which could not be found in the corresponding Officers in any other Assembly in the world. That was so. He remembered very well the incident which happened about eight years ago, when the present Speaker was elected to the Chair by political opponents. He would remind the House that in 1874, when the Conservative Party came into power with a great and unexpected majority, it was in the power of the Prime Minister to name as Speaker whom he would, for any person whom Mr. Disraeli might have named would have certainly been elected; and there were men in the Party who might have justly aspired to that honour. But Mr. Disraeli had sat long in that House—and, whatever might be said against him, no one could deny that he was devoted to the interests and the honour of the House of Commons. He looked upon the position of Speaker as too high a one to be used for purposes of Party advantage. He regarded that position rather as a trust on behalf of all Parties in the House; and in the present Speaker he selected one whom all agreed was the best qualified to fulfil the duties of the Chair. The Speaker had himself been a stout partizan of the Liberals; but his election was proposed by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), an equally stout partizan of the other side. The present Prime Minister, on that occasion, spoke eloquently of the Speaker of that Assembly as one whose position it was difficult for foreigners to realize. The right hon. Gentleman might have added that the scene which was enacted that day in the English House of Commons could not have been presented in any other Legislative Assembly in the world. He (Mr. Plunket) feared it might never be witnessed in that House again. On that occasion the Speaker had used memorable words to the effect that, knowing the House, faithful to its traditions, would sustain the occupant of the Chair in vindicating their rights and privileges, and in securing freedom of debate according to established usage, he would humbly place such services as he possessed at the disposal of the House. Throughout all the calamities that had fallen on the House in recent years, the Speaker's position had shone with undiminished lustre. It was because he feared that those who succeeded to that place would be elected on different principles, that he should resist the introduction of the Speaker's authority in the Resolution, as to some extent it had been introduced—that he should support the Amendment, in order to prevent those evils from arising which he foresaw in the future.

Mr. W. M. TORRENS said, he regretted that the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken should have referred to the possible abuse, for Party purposes, of the Speaker's authority. He wished to resume the thread of the discussion as it fell on the 30th of March. It had wandered very far from the point. He desired to confine his attention to the Question before the House. On the 30th of March the House decided, not on any plan of *clôture* or rigid system of Rules for the future, but simply that the House was prepared to consider the recommendations of the Prime Minister as to whether any system of *clôture* could be adopted consistently with the ancient traditions of the House. Nothing more was decided—unless in the putting of the Question two or three words were added which were not essential to the Question. He put it confidently that the man who, of all men, had the responsibility on his shoulders—the Prime Minister—would readily and cheerfully, especially after his candid speech that evening, modify the Resolution before them if he could be convinced that it would be for the benefit of the House to do so, and it were in consonance with the feelings of the majority on the subject. It would be wholly unworthy of the great career of the right hon. Gentleman to do otherwise. He could not conceive that those who claimed to be a majority in the House would be easily induced to shut up nearly half the Members who sat there. He would not believe that the illustrious man, the last Predecessor but one of the present occupant of the Chair, whose name had been so often quoted as an authority for the Resolution—he would not believe that Lord Eversley would ever have advised a majority in that manner to shut up a minority, or that he would have desired the invidious duty of deciding, silently and without expressed reason, the sense of the House. It was not in human nature that a man should desire to exercise such a power. But what he desired was that the Prime Minister would not lay upon the Speaker such a burden as none of the Predecessors of the present Speaker ever assumed or were ever desirous to assume. All the Speakers of that House, from the Long Parliament downwards, whether good or bad, had considered themselves to be the spokesmen of the House and nothing else. The greatest poet of our language had said that the truest equality was not where all men were equal, but where all had equal liberty; and he would not consent that the House should place itself entirely in the discretion of even the present Speaker. There were some who would winnow the corn and retain the chaff. He was not one of those. He would be neither accuser, nor accessory, nor accomplice, nor adviser; but he simply claimed the right to have his future liberty protected against even the honest desire of the Minister of the day to get on with the Public Business and put down Obstruction. He was not indifferent to Order, and in the last painful Session there was no occasion on which he had not supported the authority of the Chair. He did not see what was to prevent the Whips crowding the Benches with the supporters of the Government, who might, by their conduct, overpower the judgment of the Speaker, and so influence him to call for the *clôture* when in reality it was not required. On the other hand, if they put upon the Speaker the odious duty of watching the House and of seizing a safe opportunity for the Government to choke an Opposition, he would never be able to disengage his mind from that day forward of the idea that it was a moral obligation on his part, a religious duty, to exercise that power. That would render him an object of fear and suspicion, and all confidence in his impartiality would disappear. At present he had no such power, and, therefore, they had no such fear of him. On the contrary, the humblest Member of the House had a free access to the Chair, and had as much right as the most influential among them to ask the Speaker for his advice and assistance. If they took that right away, and once allowed this humble man to think that he was looked upon with disfavour by the Chair, how could it be possible that he could any longer have confidence in him? The present Speaker had discharged his duty so impartially and satisfactorily as to disarm all suspicion, and to render hon. Members less wary than they ought to be with respect to what might take place in the future; but when, perhaps, one less worthy than he occupied the same position, who would venture to ask for his advice or to follow it? He therefore implored the Government not to impose upon him a weight too heavy for him to bear, and under which it was impossible he could stand upright. These proposals were not English—they were things of foreign growth, and he could not see how such exotics could grow and flourish in the fair atmosphere of England. Anyone who had been in the House an hour ago would understand from what then took place how hopeless it was to challenge the decision of the Chair. He would take a case. It was quite possible a small minority might become intolerable to the Ministers of the day. They, very naturally, looked to the passing of their Bills. The Speaker saw—he would be made to see without telegraphic messages or whispers, without nods or winks—that he would do a great service to the public if he would do what was called "shutting out the Opposition," and let the Business of the Government go on. The next time the minority might be larger, and they would be in a similar case. The Whips filled the Back Benches with steady followers; the Benches opposite were half empty, and thus they would be shut out. The next experiment might be the shutting out of a great political Party; and if ever they came to a day when they put the closure upon a Party with a doubtful resemblance in numbers to the present majority, then they might have a House of Caucus, but they would have no longer a House of Commons. He would go further. Unless they believed in the infallibility of the Chair, they must contemplate the possibility of the Speaker making a mistake. Did they believe that if the Speaker attempted to shut down the House, and failed, any man would have the same confidence in him as before? If there was a precious jewel which the House ought to preserve, it was the untainted and undoubted impartiality of the Chair. If they lost that, they were on the highway to lose the independence of the House, because they were on the highway to lose the personal individuality of the House. There was one other subject which he should not like to sit down without referring to. For months he had thought about it, and he felt that it was impossible to leave it unsaid. At an hour like the present, when there was such a strain upon the Empire, and danger was confessedly so near — when distraction was so deep, and alienation had become so widespread and so bitter, he could not shut his eyes to what seemed to him an impending danger—that when they passed the *clôture*, they would inflict the first great blow to the Union between England and Ireland. Let it not be supposed that he said this in exaggeration or in lightness. Members from Ireland were invited to enter that House in the proportion of 100 to 500. In spite of the protest of Mr. Fox, Irishmen were invited—he must say forced—into the Union in the proportion of one to five. One danger was indicated by Grattan in the memorable protest he made in favour of the national life of his stricken country. He said—

> "You can have no security for equal freedom. There may be every disposition to treat you well; I believe in the honour of British statesmen; but you can have no security in such proportion as you form in the House for equal freedom."

To that Mr. Pitt replied that they might trust inviolably the honour and the generosity and the national self-respect of England. She asked Ireland to join her for better or for worse, and she would never put down or trample upon her because she was weaker, but would always listen and attend to her complaints. Mr. Grattan's answer to that should be remembered. He said—

> "When I am asked on behalf of a weaker to trust irrevocably its fortunes and its liberties to the honour of the greater, the greater may have much honour, but the weaker can have no security."

That day had, undoubtedly, now come within sight. For 80 years hon. Members from Ireland, however divided among themselves, however antagonistic in creed and in opinions, had found themselves at home in that great Assembly, and had never found themselves unable to obtain a hearing on account of their numerical inferiority. This he would say, that in 1801, with the bloodshed of 1798 still recent, and even with the unexampled bribery notoriously exercised at that day, if anyone had ventured to tell the stricken, weakened, and emaciated Parliament of Ireland that they would be choked, and choked when they could not retaliate, no power on earth would have forced them to the Union. For the sake of the honour and the liberties of the House, for the sake of the legislation of the future, for the sake of their institutions, and for the honour of the Union, he implored the House to consider well before it rashly adopted a system of unqualified *clôture*.

MR. NEWDEGATE said, he must congratulate the House upon having had from the hon. Member for Finsbury

(Mr. W. M. Torrens) a speech which was worthy of the Whig-Radicals who had in former years been his contemporaries as Members of the House—men of the stamp of the late Mr. Wakley and the late Mr. Duncombe. They had heard how Whig-Radicals were wont to speak; and he hoped the younger Members of the House connected with the Liberal Party would understand that their Predecessors, who had studied the elements of freedom, were not satisfied with mere platform oratory based upon fallacies and not upon proofs. The hon. Member for Finsbury had clearly pointed out that this, which the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had called a "trifling question" at the beginning of the evening, really involved the freedom of debate. [Mr. GLADSTONE: No, no.] If he understood the right hon. Gentleman, he certainly spoke of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell), and the Amendment upon that of the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), as involving a "small point." These, he believed, were the right hon. Gentleman's words, and he thought the hon. Member for Finsbury had shown that it was not by any means a "small point." He must say, also, that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Dungarvan threw into plainer light the real meaning of leaving in the hands of the Speaker a discretionary power that was altogether unprecedented. When, on the 4th of February, 1881, the Speaker, in acknowledging the confidence which the House had placed in him by trusting him to draw up the Rules of Urgency, the right hon. Gentleman used these words—

> "The House has intrusted to me great and unprecedented powers, and I accept them with a grave sense of the responsibility imposed upon me. I shall endeavour to carry them out in such a manner as to maintain freedom of debate, which is one of the most cherished traditions of this House, and at the same time to restrain any abuses of that freedom."—[3 *Hansard*, cclviii. 162.]

The House adopted, at a period of emergency, what the right hon. Gentleman himself termed an unprecendented course; and on the 4th of February, 1881, when the right hon. Gentleman also presented the Rules of Urgency, he used the expression that no Speaker ought to use those powers unauthorized again. What the House was now asked to do was this—to make the measures, which the right hon. Gentleman stated to be unprecedented, the ordinary Rules hereafter in this House. On the 2nd of February, 1881, the Speaker, in acknowledging the confidence of the House in sanctioning the unprecedented power he had used in an emergency, said—

> "Future measures for insuring orderly debate I must leave to the judgment of the House. But I may add that it will be necessary, either for the House itself to assume more effectual control over its debates, or to intrust greater authority to the Chair."—[*Ibid.*]

The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had chosen the latter alternative without even attempting the former. He had preferred the *clôture* to every attempt to regulate debate, and they had before them the probability of the *clôture* in its most dangerous form. If the *clôture* could be made more dangerous by any manner in which it was introduced, it was by placing it first in order, and first for their consideration; so that every measure for regulating debate was postponed to the adoption of the *clôture*. It was evident that the Speaker considered that the House ought to have first discovered and to have adopted Rules for the regulation of debate, perhaps analogous in some degree with the Rules of Urgency, and not first to adopt the *clôture*, which was liable to the reasonable interpretation that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Dungarvan conveyed. The hon. Member had, in that Amendment, put in plain light the course that would be pursued, if the Resolution before the House were to be adopted as it stood. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister did not like to have this glaring light thrown upon his scheme. The noble Lord the Member for Middlesex had a glimmering of the vice of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Dungarvan. It would limit the *clôture* to the initiative of the Minister of the Crown, and the noble Lord proposed that the origination of the *clôture* might be exercised by any Member in charge of the subject under discussion. The effect of this Amendment was that, although in the right direction, it did not go far enough. Why limit this power to a Member who probably was in love with his own hobby? He (Mr. Newdegate) objected to both Amendments, but most to the first. Why should the House now, for the first time, increase the functions of the Minister of the Crown in that House? He saw that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister assented to that. It was a violation of the first principle of the constitution of the House, which was equality in the conditions upon which hon. Gentleman sat in the House. The Amendment proposed almost as great a violation of this fundamental principle as would be made by intrusting to the Speaker the imposition of the *clôture* upon the House. If any such power was intrusted to any Speaker, upon the solicitation of a Minister of the Crown, that would be fatal to the equality that had always prevailed among the Members of the House when once at the commencement of a Parliament the Speaker had been chosen, and on his demand the Crown had granted its time-honoured privileges to the House. The House then became Republic within itself. The proposal now before the House was in violation of the Republican principle of the constitution of the House; and it was for this reason that he, as an old Constitutionalist, assumed the position which was filled in former days by Mr. Duncombe or Mr. Wakley, and rejoiced to say was now ably taken by the hon. Member for Finsbury. These truths must be spoken, and it had fallen to his lot to utter them. All Members had equal privileges in that House, except that the Ministers of the Crown were intrusted solely with the right of proposing taxation. That was their sole rightful privilege. But now the hon. Member for Dungarvan had shown that Her Majesty's Ministers would arrogate to themselves another enormous privilege in addition to that which they had of right, as directly responsible; while the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex would make them share the enormous power only with the proposer of a Motion before the House—not always the most competent judge of the sense of the House with regard to concluding a discussion of his own favourite topic. He trusted, then, that the House would not invest the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair and his Successors with a power which must destroy confidence in their impartiality; for the wide discretion which it was proposed that they should continually exercise must generate at least suspicion. It was the clear duty of the Leader of the House to make the proposal regularly by Motion if the *clôture* was to be enforced in this House. They had known that right hon. Gentleman to abandon his functions on two or three occasions in the Bradlaugh case. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that he should leave the House in a helpless condition. But, fortunately, there was a Leader of the Opposition, who efficiently took his place. If the *clôture*, which he abominated, was to be enforced, by courtesy of the House, no doubt, either the Leader of the House or the Leader of the Opposition would undertake the ungrateful task of setting it in operation. It must be supposed that it was because this must be an ungrateful task that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister proposed to saddle it upon the Speaker. It was of vital interest to the House that the Speaker should not be compelled to perform invidious duties—duties that would render him or his Successors open to suspicion. It was of vital interest to the House that the Leader of the House should behave himself in a manner worthy of his position, and if he failed, that the Leader of the Opposition should take his place on every occasion when that might be necessary. He regretted to have to say it; but he ventured to do so, in the presence of both of the right hon. Gentlemen, that he had never known men in their position fail so entirely in guiding the House, in proposing such regulation of the debates as might obviate the necessity, the painful necessity, which was pretended for the *clôture*. He (Mr. Newdegate) had ventured to give Notice of his intention to propose a method, which he, as an old Party organizer in the House, believed would preserve Order, and would preserve, by regulating, the freedom of debate. He had no right, however, at present to allude to that. But the House was in this position. Instead of following the order which Mr. Speaker pointed out in February, 1881, and endeavouring, first, to regulate the debates and the proceedings of the House, the Government had precipitated the proposal of the *clôture*. In fact, they had done and were doing nothing effectual whatever towards regulating the proceedings of the House. He supposed that they had not read that which was to be found in

Mr. Hatsell's well-known and authoritative book on the precedents and proceedings in the House of Commons, or they had adopted a view exactly opposite to that of the author. As they all knew, Mr. Hatsell was a great authority on the subject of the proceedings of the House, and he wrote in his learned work to this effect, that the Ministers of the Crown always gained increased power when confusion prevailed in the House of Commons. He invited the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister to this statement of the learned authority to whom he referred, who had warned the House that the Ministers of the Crown always gained power by promoting confusion in the House. He (Mr. Newdegate), therefore, as an old Member of the House, did not take it kindly that the right hon. Gentleman the present Prime Minister and the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition had allowed the House to remain so long in disorder that it was losing the respect and confidence of the country. It rested with those right hon. Gentlemen, not with the Speaker, to renovate the means of preserving Order—it rested, in fact, with the House itself. The House had been brought to this lamentable strait by the attempt of these two right hon. Gentlemen to relieve themselves of responsibility. They were seeking, for the same purpose, to invest the Speaker with a power that was at once unprecedented and inconsistent with his Office. He (Mr. Newdegate) held that those who were the most responsible for the confusion that had reigned in the House were the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition, through not fulfilling the duties which, by the courtesy of the House, devolved upon them.

Mr. JOHN BRIGHT: It is not my intention to occupy the time of the House more than for a very few minutes, for, after all, the question before us may be discussed, I think, and disposed of in a few words, notwithstanding the somewhat lengthy debate that has taken place. Such Members of the House as were present when I last addressed it on this subject will recollect that I began my speech by referring to the exaggerated fears which Members opposite had somehow or other—I do not know how—become possessed of during their consideration of the question. I proceeded to show that those Members of the House—some on that side, and a few, it was said, on this—who preferred a certain other proposition — a two - thirds vote—to the proposal of the Government seemed to me entirely mistaken; that whilst they were objecting to the severity and strength of what the majority does, they themselves were in favour of what was much more severe. I think I proved that to demonstration by giving figures showing how the one course would affect a small minority, and how much more severely treated a small minority would be by the other course. Well, now we come to another point, and I have to express my astonishment at the view which hon. Members opposite have taken of the particular question submitted by the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell). The opponents of the Resolution are—I do not know why—actuated with a strange fear of what may happen to the House and to minorities, and more especially, Sir, to you, the Speaker of the House, if the Resolution as proposed by the Government should be accepted. The hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. W. M. Torrens), in a very interesting speech, directed, I think, hardly at all to the Amendment, has pointed out, towards the conclusion of his speech, the tremendous pressure and injustice that may be practised upon small minorities at the end of the Session. Well, our plan, at any rate with regard to the *clôture*, as against the two-thirds proposition, is clearly more in favour of small minorities. But I should like to ask the House whether they think the proposition that is made in the Amendment is more favourable to small minorities than the one in the Resolution, as it is proposed by the Government? I think nothing could be more conclusive than that the Resolution, as it stands will be infinitely more favourable to small minorities than the Resolution would be if amended by the hon. Member for Dungarvan. The speech of the hon. Member for Finsbury, so far as I heard it—and I am sorry I did not hear the whole of it—was largely a warning against trusting the Speakers with the power of injuring the House, and damaging the authority and the honourable independence of the Gentleman who may occupy that Chair. That seemed to be the great object of his speech. Now, what is proposed by the Amendment—I do not know that the hon. Member for Finsbury supported the Amendment? [Mr. W. M. TORRENS: Yes, Sir; I did.] Well, I did not gather it from what I heard of the speech; and I do not think anybody else gathered it. I know it was somewhat cheered by hon. Gentlemen opposite, perhaps in that sense; but then they are always very ready to cheer anything from this side of the House that attacks Her Majesty's Government. Now, what is it that the Amendment proposes?—because that is the real point we are to discuss. It proposes this—that, in calling into action the Resolution that is to be passed, an opinion should be expressed by some Minister of the Crown—I suppose the First Minister of the Crown necessarily, if he be present in the House—and the Ministerial majority, for he is the Representative of the Ministerial majority, and will not act contrary to the opinion of the majority by whom he is supported; and, therefore, the majority of the House, speaking through the Minister, is to call into action the opinion and the declaration of the Speaker as to when the *clôture* is to be brought into play. The idea that we are to keep this question free from Party seems to be entirely given up by the Amendment of the hon. Member for Dungarvan, because, first of all, the most distinguished Member of the Party in the House is the Prime Minister. The most important portion of the House, as a Party in numbers, is the majority by which the Prime Minister is supported; and that majority, and that Minister, before anything can be done, has to intimate by standing up at this Table, I suppose, and calling upon the Speaker, and making an observation that he thinks the debate ought to close, declaring that the sense of the House is in favour of its being closed, and thereupon the Speaker proceeds to take his part in the transaction. Now, the hon. Member for Finsbury spoke about former Speakers being connected with great political Leaders, being on terms of friendship with them—some of them, indeed, I think he said, even taking part in debate, as is done by the President of the House of Lords. Well, we must be sensible, all of us, that if this matter is to be transacted by alliance between the Minister and the Speaker, then it is very likely, during the course of debate, that the Minister, by means known to all of us, can intimate to the Speaker that the time is approaching when he shall make a proposition that the debate shall close, and the Speaker, in all probability, if the Minister is judicious, if he has not pressed his authority too far, will take the hint; and if the Minister makes a proposition, the Speaker, in all probability, will support it, and do what the Resolution requires him to do. But by this you are introducing into a very critical matter—because we all admit, I as freely as anyone, that it is critical, and not at all, if it could be avoided, a pleasant matter—that there should be any limitation of the power of debate, or the prolongation of discussion in the House. But if it is to be done in any way, it seems to me of all ways the worst that the Minister of the Crown, the trusted guide of the majority, should take action, and call upon the Speaker to act. The Minister is not—I will not say an independent, but he is not an impartial person. The Minister has his majority, and he has his policy; he has his Bills and his Supplies; and all the great work of the Session, and some of it, as we know, difficult and crowded towards the end of the Session; he has every reason, for the purpose of furthering his own policy and that of his Party, to call into action this Resolution, probably far sooner, and probably far more often, than would be done if it was left entirely in the impartial hands of the Speaker. I agree entirely with the charming account which the hon. Member for Finsbury drew of the confidence which all Members of the House have in the Speaker. It has been so for the very long time I have been in the House. I have always felt there was no question in which I could not go up to the Speaker and take his advice, and I believe he would give me his advice in as friendly and free a manner as he would to any Minister of the Crown sitting on this Bench. But if a Minister whom we do not always like very well—[Mr. WARTON: Hear, hear!]—the hon. and learned Member cheers that sentiment—where, I say, we do not like him very well, sitting in Opposition, we are not very much in favour of some portion of his policy—we object to it—I should not like, certainly, if I were on that side of the House, and the late Government sitting here, that the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Stafford Northcote) should be able to get up, any time during the debates, especially towards the end of the Session, and that he should then call upon the Speaker to put in action the Resolution and to stop the debate. I believe the motives which would press upon the Minister would be ten times stronger, and come to him ten times more often, to stir him to action than would be the case if the whole power were left in the hands of the Speaker. Tho hon. Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate) surprises me very much. He says that the *clôture* is an abominable thing, or used some other disagreeable word. He has been the advocate for many years past of some measure of this kind, or for this object. I do not know why he objects to the proposition of the Government. At any rate, I can understand why he objects to the proposition of the Amendment. He sees, as I see, that the Amendment is the very thing that an unscrupulous Minister sitting on this Bench would ask the House to agree to, because it gives greater power to the Minister, it lessens immensely the power of the minority, it takes out of the hands of the most impartial man within these walls the decision of a very important question in which we are all, and in which minorities especially, are particularly concerned, and therefore I must say I am astonished that Members opposite should take the course they do. They took a wrong course, I think, upon the other question to which I have already referred, and I think now they are proposing what is much less moderate than that which the Government has proposed. I am not allowed to speak, of course, of the opinion of the Speaker in the Chair; but I judge and believe that any Speaker—the present one in the Chair or his successors—would prefer that he should be left to his own impartial judgment on all matters of this kind rather than he should be subjected to the hints, the proffered alliance, the urging and stimulating of a Minister of the Crown, who might ask him, under certain circumstances, to help him out of a difficulty that might have arisen. If I were a Member of a small minority, or of any minority, I should like to take the course of the hon. Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate). I would shut out the Minister from any extra power on this matter over that of any other Member of the House.

Mr. NEWDEGATE: What I said was, that I thought by courtesy the duty ought to devolve on the Leader of the House or the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. JOHN BRIGHT: That is exactly what I understood the hon. Gentleman to say. The hon. Gentleman complains, and condemns the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and my right hon. Friend, because they have not done all he thinks they ought in a particular case; but surely if he leaves it entirely to the Minister of the day, and shuts out the Speaker altogether, then the question becomes a pure question of Party. Nothing, in my opinion, could be more unfair, and more unreasonable to a minority, and especially to small minorities, which, towards the end of the Session, are often the most troublesome in preventing the transaction of Business. Now, I put it to hon. Members, if this matter is to be done at all, if there is to be any mode of bringing a debate to a close by the general sense of the House, when that debate has been protracted to an unconscionable length, is it not better to adopt the proposition which the Government has offered to the House, a proposition, I say, conspicuous in its moderation, rather than, so far as we have gone, the Amendments offered—the Amendment of two-thirds, or that of handing over to the initiative of a Minister, or of shutting out the only absolute impartial authority in the House? I do not claim to be impartial at all. I am a Member of a Party anxious to do certain things, and am always very glad when we have a majority on a division. I do not complain of any man acting honestly and honourably with and for his Party; but with the feelings that we have against our opponents, and in favour of our own policy, I think the less this matter is intrusted to any Member on either side of the House, or to any handful or number of Members, the better, and that all that has been said by the hon. Member for Finsbury and others as to the character of the Speaker, and the manner in which all men in the House wish that that character should be permanently and for ever sustained, I think, wishing that done, it is our secure interest that to the Speaker should be committed this delicate power, and that all men in the House and every minority would feel that when the House has been called to decide the question whether a debate should be prolonged or not by the Speaker, and the decision was against the prolongation of the debate, I think he would feel he had been better treated, and more consistently with the character and practice of the House, than if the Leader of the majority of the House should get up and by his fiat should put a stop to the debate. Therefore, on the ground that those fears with regard to the minority, and those fears with regard to the effect of this proposition on the character of the Speaker are exaggerated, and without any sensible foundation, I think that the proposition made by Her Majesty's Government is one of as great moderation as it is possible to offer on a case of this kind; and, therefore, I hope that the Resolution as it is offered to the House will be sustained by the House.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he found himself in a somewhat difficult position, for while he disliked the hon. Member for Dungarvan's Amendment, he did not care very much for the Amendment to it moved by his noble Friend the Member for Middlesex. Yet, on the whole, he liked the original Resolution less than either of the Amendments. He had always held that it was unfair to place on the Speaker the very unenviable responsibility of taking the initiative in this matter. He thought the initiative ought to rest in the hands of the House, and that they alone ought to be responsible for whatever decision was taken. Inasmuch as the Amendment, to a certain degree, mitigated the evils of which he complained, he preferred it to the original Resolution. His objection to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Dungarvan was that it raised an inequality that did not exist at present between Ministers of the Crown and other Members of the House. That, to his mind, was fatal to it. It was modified by the Amendment of the noble Lord; but he should not be satisfied with any Amendment, except one which would place the initiative in any Member of the House.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he should vote for the Amendment, because he was in favour of the *clôture*, and was anxious that it should be strengthened; but he could not understand how hon. Gentlemen opposite could support it. He was of opinion that you could not obtain the *clôture* by a majority unless some Amendment of this kind was added to the Resolution. The Speaker, when he informed the House that a debate had lasted long enough, would have to consider whether it was reasonably certain that the *clôture* would pass or not, because, if it did not pass, the Speaker would be in an entirely false position. He apprehended that the Speaker never would say that it was the general sense of the House that a debate should close unless he was pretty certain that there was a large majority in favour of it; and that was why he said this Amendment would render it far more probable that it would be *clôture* by a simple majority than was ever likely to be the case so long as the matter was left entirely in the hands of the Speaker. The effect of such an Amendment as the present would be to shift the responsibility from the Speaker to its proper place—namely, to the Ministers of the Crown. It had been said that the Speaker was the natural protector of minorities; but why, if so, did they not vote with him for the Amendment? What was the alternative proposed? The hon. Member for North Warwickshire had enunciated the very Republican doctrine that they were all equal.

Mr. NEWDEGATE: I referred to Members in the House, not all mankind.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he held that even in that House Ministers of the Crown were superior to ordinary Members, and they had special reasons and rights to interfere to bring a debate to a close, on account of the responsibility that lay on them alone in regard to the conduct of the Business of the House. Although he was anxious that the *clôture* should pass in a strong form, he would not vote for the Amendment as he proposed to do if the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House had stated that by that issue the Government would stand or fall, because, knowing, as he did, that the right hon. Gentleman had more experience in Parliamentary matters than anyone then present, he should be bound, under such circumstances, to support him. They had had two speeches from the Treasury Bench, one from the Prime Minister, and the other from the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; and he must say he never heard two worse speeches from those right hon. Gentlemen in his life. The reason of that, no doubt, was because in their hearts they were not opposed to the Amendment. He felt, therefore, that he should only be supporting the policy they were in favour of by voting against them on this particular occasion.

MR. GRANTHAM said, that the Resolution proposed that the responsibility should mainly devolve on the Speaker; but when they came to the latter part, and interpreted that by the speech of the Prime Minister, it was quite evident that the responsibility was to be taken away, and it was to devolve on the majority. The basis of the Prime Minister's speech was that the House had always been governed by a majority. The obvious conclusion was that this question was to be determined by the House independently of the Speaker. That being so, he agreed with the principle of the Amendment, that if the majority of the House was to determine the matter, it ought to be done on the responsibility of a Minister of the Crown. He objected to the Amendment as it stood, because if the initiative were left to a Minister that would make it a Party question. He wished to avoid that, and for that reason he would prefer that it should be left in the hands of the Speaker with some limitation. It was not desirable that it should always be a Party question. He believed in the independence of Speakers in the future, and he preferred to trust the Speaker rather than a majority or a Minister. The Resolution was inconsistent with itself; it was drawn on the principle that the Speaker was to be responsible; but towards the close it was provided that the question was not to be decided in the affirmative without the support of so many Members; and for that reason he said the power of the Speaker was taken away. If a majority was to have the power, it was far better that a Minister of the Crown should be responsible. For these reasons, he should vote for the Amendment, although he disliked it.

MR. HICKS said, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster had asked what the Amendment proposed. He ventured to ask the Government another question, what did the Resolution propose? Up to this time there seemed no agreement as to what it did mean. Did it mean that the initiative was to rest with the Speaker, or did it mean that it was to rest with the power behind the Prime Minister? The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster had spoken of the Speaker receiving a hint from someone; if he had been earlier in the House he would have heard his hon. Friend the Member for Cambridgeshire say that the Speaker should receive hints from both sides. If that were so, how was he to be independent? The great thing was to have the Resolution made clear and simple, for, tyrannical as the Motion was, it was better that it should be passed than that they should pass something which no one could understand.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, I do not propose to detain the House for any length of time; but I am anxious to say one word, especially in consequence of the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). It is perfectly true, I must say, that there is some difficulty in deciding upon the vote that we ought to give upon such a question as this, and for this reason—that we are entering into the discussion and settlement of a Resolution with the whole scope and object of which a great many of us entirely disagree. It is extremely difficult, therefore, when you come to judge the different points in the Resolution, to consider how far we ought to take one course or another with reference to the particular question raised. I confess I agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) in the general view he expressed on the subject. I am not very much charmed with the Amendment proposed; but I think it a less evil than the Resolution as it stands, and I will explain in a moment why I think so. The difficulty that I feel in regard to the whole proposal is, that it is a proposal, assuming that it is to be a Resolution which is to give the power of closing a debate to a bare majority, which is essentially of a Party character. We cannot disguise that fact from ourselves. If you are prepared to say you would only give that power to a large majority, such as two-thirds, you would be obviously placing the matter on a wholly different footing, and giving the great bulk of the House, irrespective of Party, the option of saying that, at a certain time, they had enough of the discussion. But when that had been suggested, the objection was taken that you could not agree to that, because, if you did, you would be making the minority parties to a question which ought to be decided by the majority. The majority ought to rule, and that is why we insist on a simple majority deciding in this matter. But the majority means the Party of the Government of the day, unless you mean a snap majority — an accidental majority that happened to be in the House at a particular time. You can hardly mean that you are thinking of an accidental majority, but of the permanent majority of the House. If that is to be the case, and if the object in passing this Resolution is not to save time in irrelevant debates, but that you may enable the Ministry to go on and carry measures to which they attach importance, we have to consider what is the object of calling on the Speaker to originate a Motion for the closing of the debate. If the question were one which was to be decided according to the feeling of the great majority of the House —of the majority and the minority— then I could understand the Speaker, without imparting the least Party character to his action, might say—"I think the House is now desirous of closing this debate." But if that is not to be so, and the Speaker is to be called upon to ask the House whether they wish to close a debate when he perceives the evident sense of the House to be so and so, what is meant by the evident sense of the House? You have defined that by saying it is a bare majority. If it is, therefore, in the mind of the Speaker that there is a bare majority in favour of closing the debate, it may be fairly argued and defended that the Speaker is bound to put the Question. Let us take a case which may frequently occur. There is a debate of great importance, which lasts, perhaps, two days, and the question arises whether the debate should be adjourned again. The Government, or the majority, oppose it, and a large minority vote for it. The practice now would be that the majority, if they insist on continuing the debate, divided two or three times, would be sure to carry the Motion; but if the Speaker perceives that the minority were not in favour of adjourning the debate, he would feel himself bound to put the Question. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) shakes his head. I do not say that a strong Speaker, like the Gentleman who at present occupies the Chair, might not stand against such action; but it would be very difficult for an ordinary Speaker, subject to the pressure which would be put on him both in the House and out of the House, to refuse, in the circumstances, to put the Question. You, therefore, put the Speaker into an unfair position by throwing upon him the initiative; and I do not scruple to say that of the two proposals before the House, the less objectionable is that the *clôture* Motion should come from those who occupy a responsible position. I am, therefore, inclined to vote for the Amendment of the hon. Member for Dungarvan. Not that I do not feel the disadvantage of putting the initiative in the hands of the Minister of the day. I can perceive cases in which the Minister would abuse the power of bringing about the close of a debate; but, of the two evils, I believe the lesser is that we should be entirely above board in what we are doing, and put the responsibility on the proper shoulders—these being the shoulders of the Minister of the Crown.

COLONEL MAKINS said, that when he first saw the Amendment on the Paper he felt inclined to oppose it; but, considering it in connection with the original Resolution, he had reluctantly arrived at the conclusion that it was better, in the interests of the House, to vote for it—and this for two reasons. In the first place, he thought it would be a more honest way of dealing with the question. The object of the Rule, as he understood it from the description given by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington), was to enable the Government to carry out the programme which they laid before the country at the General Election in 1880. If that were so, then it was more honest that the closing of a debate should be at the instance of the Government, and it was not desirable that they should be able to shield themselves behind the Speaker. If they were allowed to do so, and the Speaker's decisions were in their favour, of course those decisions would be perfectly satisfactory to them; but if the Government made mistakes, and the decisions were against them, they could disown all participation in the matter, and say it was the Speaker's fault, and not theirs, that the sense of the House had been taken. The other reason why he objected to the original proposition, and preferred the Amendment, was because, if it were carried as it stood, it would revolutionize the Office of Speaker. Hitherto, the Speaker had only acted when called on—he had only submitted a Resolution to the House when it had been duly put and seconded. Let them take an extreme case. When there was almost an empty House—when there were only two or three Members in it—the Speaker did not, of his own motion, declare there was not a quorum; but he waited until someone had called attention to the fact. Therefore, in the future, if the sense of the House was to be taken as proposed by the Resolution, it should not be taken on the responsibility of a private individual, but on the Motion of the Leader of the House. For these reasons, he should vote—though most reluctantly—for the Amendment of the hon. Member for Dungarvan.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, that, after the discussion which had taken place, certain practical objections having been made to his Amendment to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Dungarvan, he would not put the House to the trouble of a division.

Amendment to the proposed Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Question put, "That those words be there inserted."

The House *divided:*—Ayes 164; Noes 220: Majority 56.—(Div. List, No. 74.)

Main Question again proposed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff.*)

Mr. GLADSTONE: It is certainly early to adjourn (12.5 A.M.); but, under the circumstances, I will accede to the proposal, and I will take this opportunity of stating in regard to the Notice given to-night by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes), which proposes to recognize the Chairman of Ways and Means—being an Officer of the House—but to wholly exclude from the operation of the Resolution casual Chairmen—Chairmen *pro hac vice*—that it is an Amendment that I think perfectly reasonable, and that we are prepared to accede to.

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

MILITARY MANŒUVRES BILL.

(*Mr. Secretary Childers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

[BILL 134.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Childers.*)

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he did not for a moment wish to oppose the second reading of this Bill, which, he believed, was uniform with other measures which had been introduced on the same subject; but they had a right to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War to make a statement to the House with regard to it, so that the country might know what troops were likely to be employed in the manœuvres. They had a right to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Army Corps that was to be kept in a state of preparedness for embarkation at a moment's notice was to be employed; and they had a right to know whether proper Generals—Generals who would command this Army Corps in case of any emergency—would be appointed to command. They had a right, also, to ask whether the Commissariat, Transport, and an organized Medical Department would be included in the manœuvres, in fact, whether they would have an Army Corps complete in every arm, and with all the appliances of war, so that, in case of necessity, they might know they were able to embark an Army Corps, thoroughly equipped, at a moment's notice? He laid special emphasis on "proper Generals," because he imagined that the men who ought to be employed were officers who had had every opportunity of manœuvring troops as they would have on an emergency. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman what were the troops who were to be employed in the Autumn Manœuvres, and whether the First Army Corps was to be included in the number?

MR. CHILDERS: I am glad the hon. and gallant Baronet has asked me the question, because, to a great extent, I am able to answer him at this moment. I say "to a great extent," because, of course, at the beginning of May it is impossible for me to say who will be the officers employed in the month of August to carry out the details of the operations. But I am able to say that it will be our endeavour to collect for the purposes of these manœuvres, not the whole of the First Army Corps, because a part of it is at the Curragh and elsewhere, but a sufficient force of the Regular troops, and also of the Militia and Volunteers, to show the country the progress that had been made, and the readiness with which a large body of men could take the field. The men will be under the command of officers such as would be called upon to lead in the event of actual war. The object of the War Office in restoring, after a lapse of some years, I will not say the annual practice, but what is known as the Autumn Manœuvres, is not merely for the purpose of show, but for utility, and to prepare both the Army and Auxiliary Forces for what they might be called upon to undergo in warfare. I thoroughly appreciate the object of the hon. and gallant Baronet, and cordially thank him for putting the question.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

TURNPIKE ROADS (SOUTH WALES) BILL.—[BILL 101.]

(*Mr. Dodson, Mr. Hibbert.*)

THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*Mr. Dodson.*)

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "now read the third time," and add the word "re-committed," instead thereof.—(*Mr. Hussey Vivian.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. PUGH said, he had a Notice on the Paper of a Resolution on the third reading of the Bill. He trusted the House would take into consideration the manner in which the measure passed its last stage. It was slipped through Committee at 5 minutes to 7 on the occasion of a Morning Sitting, although there were, at least, two Notices of hostile Motions placed opposite to it on the Paper by Members representing South Wales county constituencies. He should not have thought that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would have proceeded with the measure, at such a time, under such circumstances. He did not know whether he would be now in order in moving his Resolution; but if he was not he should seek a more favourable opportunity. The terms of his Motion were—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, considering the constitution of the County Roads Boards of South Wales, the purposes for which they were originally formed, and the comparatively small number of roads under their control, it is not expedient, in view of the contemplated change in the whole system of County Government, to pass any measure which, whilst neglecting to provide for the better and more economical management of highways as well as turnpike roads, unnecessarily provides for the making of any additional appointments by the boards, and throws the additional expense upon persons who are not represented thereon."

He wished to point out that at the time of the Rebecca Riots in South Wales it became necessary to pass a measure dealing with the turnpike roads, and providing for the money due by the trusts being paid off. Part of the scheme consisted in the appointment of a General Superintendent of the turnpike roads in South Wales. The Act had been put into operation by the Government, and had answered its purpose well. The roads had been well kept, and the debt had now been paid off. He (Mr. Pugh) had put down a Motion, a little more than 12 months ago, asking the Government to assent to an inquiry into the operation of this Act, and also of the South Wales Highways Act; but the Motion had been opposed by the President of the Local Government Board, and consequently came to nothing. It was understood at that time that the Local Government Board knew what was necessary, and that they would do what was requisite; but he found at the expiration of the 12 months that they had no proposition to make, except to throw the cost of the Superintendent upon the counties. If such an officer were still necessary to see that the roads were kept in order, his services were required as much for the highways, which received very inadequate supervision, as for the turnpike roads, and the unnecessary expense of two separate systems ought to be saved. Finally, he wished to point out that, since the turnpike roads were taken over, many other roads which were now of great importance in the various districts—main roads, to all intents and purposes—were in a very bad state; and those, he said, ought certainly to be looked after just as much as the turnpike roads. On the whole, his contention was that, as the Government were now laying an additional burden upon the taxpayers in South Wales, who were already highly taxed, those taxpayers had a right to ask that the general question of the roads in that part of the country should be considered, and that the Government should bring forward a scheme that would provide not only better roads, but more economical management in the future. He did not think that the Local Government Board were doing their duty in this matter in a way that the country had a right to expect. If, therefore, it would be in Order, he desired to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice; and, in any case, he should resist further progress with this Bill, which would only throw greater expense upon South Wales, and was opposed by nearly all the Members for that portion of the country.

MR. SPEAKER: I must point out, in answer to the hon. Member, that an Amendment has been moved for the recommittal of the Bill; and, therefore, the Amendment of the hon. Member cannot be taken until that question is disposed of.

VISCOUNT EMLYN said, that one of the grounds on which this Bill was brought forward was to exonerate the Government from appointing a Superintendent of Roads, and the other was to exonerate the English taxpayers from paying for the maintenance of main roads in South Wales. Was it the intention of the Government to give the same assistance towards the maintenance of main roads in South Wales as was to be given in the case of the English main roads? The House was informed by the President of the Local Government Board that he was not sure there would be any legislation at all upon this subject. But he maintained that, if it were unjust to the English taxpayer to contribute towards the maintenance of roads in South Wales, it was equally unjust for the people of South Wales to pay the additional tax upon carriages, or any other tax which might be levied on them for the maintenance of roads in England. It was important to ascertain what were the intentions of the Government in this matter; and, therefore, before the Bill went any further, he should like an answer to be given by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board to the question he had asked.

MR. DODSON said, although he was prepared to assent to the Motion of his hon. Friend for the re-committal of the Bill, and to the clause of which Notice had been given by the noble Lord, and to the Amendments of two other hon. Members, he was unable to agree to the proposal of the hon. Member for Cardiganshire (Mr. Pugh). He considered himself pledged to bring in a Bill, on behalf of the Local Government Board, to deal with the question in a manner that would meet the wishes of those interested as far as possible. The Superintendent of Roads in South Wales had been for many years paid out of the Exchequer. He was appointed for the purpose of seeing that the roads were maintained in an efficient state and watching over their finance in order to secure the repayment of the money advanced by the Government. But, the debt having been extinguished, it had been for several years a matter of complaint in that House that the Superintendent continued to be paid out of the general taxes of the country, seeing that the reason for his appointment no longer existed; and the Government, in consequence, determined this year that the appointment should cease. The Department had put themselves in communication with the several County Roads Boards in South Wales in order to ascertain their views; and the result of those communications was to find that the Roads Boards in question desired that the appointment of a Superintendent or Superintendents should be left at their option. Accordingly, a Bill had been brought in, which gave power to the County Roads Boards to appoint, if they thought fit, a Superintendent or Superintendents, jointly or separately, in addition to the officers they already had power to appoint, for the performance of the duties connected with the roads. Power was also given to provide for the remuneration of the Superintendents, as was already the case in regard to other expenses, out of the county rates, if the tolls proved insufficient; but, as he had pointed out, it was entirely optional with the County Roads Boards to appoint or not additional officers, or to provide them or not with any additional pay. Now, the noble Lord opposite had asked what were the intentions of the Government with regard to a grant in aid of main roads.

Viscount EMLYN said, he had asked whether the Government was going to extend to the main roads in South Wales the assistance which was to be given to the main roads in England?

Mr. DODSON said, in answer to the noble Lord, he must decline to enter into fragmentary explanations of a general scheme. If he were to explain part of the proposal in answer to the noble Lord, he might be called upon, and with justice, by hon. Members to explain other parts of it in which they were more particularly interested. He should, of course, enter into the desired explanations at the proper time; but, on the present occasion, he must abstain from making any further observations.

Sir JOSEPH BAILEY said, that the roads in South Wales were under a different Act of Parliament from the English roads. They had enjoyed, up to the present time, a special advantage, inasmuch as the Government had appointed a Superintendent for the purpose of overlooking them. They were now to lose that advantage, and, moreover, at a time when further taxation was about to be placed on that part of the country in respect of the additional tax upon carriages. Therefore, the question of the noble Lord as to whether South Wales was to share in the advantage which was to be given to the ratepayers on account of the English roads was a very reasonable one, and one which he thought the Government, in common courtesy, should answer.

Mr. C. JAMES said, he hoped the House would agree with him that the Bill was unnecessary, and that it would be dropped. The history of this matter was not very long. Some time ago the people of Wales had a difficulty not altogether unlike that which troubled the Irish people at the present day. The Welsh difficulty, however, related to turnpike roads, and a Society was formed for the purpose of protecting the farmers in the matter of tolls, which were raised in such a manner as to constitute a great tyranny upon that class. It was eventually arranged that the Government should pay off the Bonds originally issued on the making of the roads, which Bonds, at that time, had no great value. A gentleman was sent down, a value was placed upon them, and the Government paid the money. Under those circumstances, it was reasonable enough that the Government should appoint some person to receive the money from the counties in South Wales, who were pledged to make up the deficiency which arose by reason of the tolls not being paid. There could be no doubt that the Government had a perfect right in justice to see that this was paid. Accordingly, they exercised their power of appointing an Inspector with a salary of some hundreds a-year—a fair salary, no doubt; but he had forgotten the exact amount—for the simple purpose of seeing that the roads were kept in order, and that the money was received. But the money had all been paid, the business of the receiver was over; and he was therefore bound to ask what further necessity there was for any intervention on the part of the Government? He contended that the salary of the Inspector ought to have been stopped as soon as the Government had received their money. Governments were always very slow to discontinue the salaries of officers when they were once appointed. Still, it appeared that the salary of the officer in question had been stopped since the month of March last; and he could, therefore, only regard this Bill as an invitation to the people of South Wales to put forward somebody else to receive the salary. It had been suggested that there was something to be done, in connection with the roads in South Wales, which the people of that part of the country could not carry out unless this appointment was continued. But there was not the slightest foundation for that suggestion. The County Roads Boards in South Wales were possessed of ample powers to do everything necessary for the purpose of keeping their roads in perfect order, and he held that nothing more was required to be done in that respect.

On the contrary, he repeated his belief that the Bill amounted to a mere invitation to the County Boards to put forward another person to receive the salary; and he had no doubt that some good gentleman—the best man in the world for the purpose—would turn up and receive the appointment. But the people of South Wales stood in no need of such assistance. They did not want it at all; and, therefore, he hoped that the House, looking at the question as he had placed it before them, would not allow the Bill to pass, and would say that the matter should be left in the hands of the South Wales people, who knew perfectly well how to deal with it.

Mr. H. G. ALLEN said, he could not agree with the whole of the remarks of the hon. Member who had just spoken; nevertheless, he had a great objection to the Bill introduced by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. He was of opinion that a Superintendent of Roads was very much wanted at the present time. The roads in South Wales were in most excellent order, as his hon. Friend the Member for Cardiganshire (Mr. Pugh) had pointed out; and he believed that that was in a great measure to be ascribed to the Government superintendence and inspection which they had received up to the present time. But his objection to the Bill was that it constituted a passing off of the responsibility which the Government undertook many years ago, and under which they had acted from that time to the present. He held in his hand an extract from the Report of the Special Commission, made at the time when the office of this Superintendent was created, and on which Report the Act creating it was founded, which showed that it was never intended that the appointment of the Superintendent should only be coincident with the existence of the Government debt, because their representation was based upon the general advantage of having a Superintendent of Roads in the district. The Report of the Commissioners was to the effect that they thought it highly expedient that a Superintendent Engineer should be appointed for the six counties of South Wales, to be charged with the duties specified; and it went on to say that as an annual sum was saved to the Government in the cost of transport of letters, by the exemption of mail carts from tolls, it might not unreasonably be expected by the inhabitants of South Wales that the salary of that officer should be charged to the Ordnance Department. It was perfectly clear, from this, that it was never intended that the appointment should be temporary merely. The arrangement had so far succeeded that the roads in South Wales were in good order, and, by the exemption of the mails from toll, a considerable saving had been effected to the State. He was bound to say that the saving of the paltry sum of £350, the amount of the Inspector's salary, came at a singularly inappropriate time—namely, when, as they were told, £250,000 was about to be devoted to the relief of the general ratepayers of the country in this very particular—namely, to lighten the burden attaching to them from the cost of repairing main roads. For these reasons, he trusted that the Government would continue to pay the Superintendent, as before, the small salary of £350 a-year, and so secure to the inhabitants of South Wales the maintenance in good order of their 800 miles of turnpike roads.

Mr. R. H. PAGET said, that, as far as he could glean from the opinions which had been freely expressed on both sides of the House, the Welsh Members did not want the Bill at all. Under those circumstances, he thought the House was entitled to some further explanation from the Government with regard to it, because it might be said that if the Bill did nothing else it gave a new lease of life, so to speak, to the system of turnpike roads which existed in the Southern portion of Wales, and not in the Northern portion, and which was rapidly disappearing from England. He would like to know if this was to be an instance of the kind of local self-government which had been promised? He thought the noble Lord who had addressed a question to the President of the Local Government Board had a right to complain of not having received an answer, for he did not consider it a sufficient answer to say that it would be but a fragmentary exposition of the proposals of the Government to state how they intended to dispose of that £250,000 of which so much had been heard. If he might venture to do so, he would like, on this occasion, to ask the right hon. Gentleman to tell him in what way that money was to be disposed of with regard to English roads; but Mr. Speaker would rightly rule him out of Order, as that was a matter which could not rightly come within a discussion on the re-committal of a Bill dealing solely with turnpike roads in Wales. Still, he would like to have a full exposition from the right hon. Gentleman on that subject, and he did not think it would be long before he would have a right to ask for that. Now, however, he would advise the noble Lord (Viscount Emlyn) not to ask for that; but simply to ask whether, in alloting the sum derived from the new tax, the Government did or did not mean that Wales should have its full share? That was a matter of importance, and one which might be answered by a simple "Aye" or "No," without entering into any of the details which the President of the Local Government Board did not seem to wish to disclose. He hoped, however, that if the right hon. Gentleman was precluded from giving an answer to that question, some other Member of the Government would answer a question which was a very fair one and easily answered.

MR. DUCKHAM said, the cost had been, for the last eight years, £844 a-year; but for 30 years previously it was upwards of £1,200 a-year. As a taxpayer, he had felt justified in bringing this matter before the House in the first week of his occupying a seat in the House, and he was only too glad that the Government were dealing with the subject. It was a great grievance that the people of England should have to contribute to the maintenance of the roads in South Wales, while they had also to maintain their own roads, and, when they went into Wales, to pay tolls on the South Wales roads. The noble Lord opposite, and the hon. Member for Herefordshire (Sir Joseph Bailey), had put a pointed question to the Government with respect to the proposed subvention or tax which was to be imposed on carriages as some relief to the ratepayers of England, in consequence of the roads having to be maintained by them. But, surely, those gentlemen who enjoyed the privilege of turnpike gates could not rightly ask for a contribution for the repair of roads towards the maintenance of which English ratepayers contributed. The cases were not parallel; and he hoped the Government would not accede to the suggestion which had been so pressed upon them, and that the benefit shadowed forth by the Prime Minister when he produced his Budget would be given to those who had to maintain those roads from the rates, and not to those who had the advantage of the turnpike gates.

MR. H. G. ALLEN said, that in the House of Lords Committee in 1880 Lord Aberdare asked—"Why has the Superintendent been continued since the debt was paid off?" And Sir John Lambert replied—

> "There was a general desire expressed that he should be continued in order to have the advantage of his superintendence. I may say that the late Superintendent received a salary of £600 a-year; but the salary, upon the appointment of Mr. Codrington, the present Superintendent, was reduced to £350."

There were, no doubt, incidental expenses—for clerk and travelling—which would explain the difference between his figures and those of the hon. Member for Herefordshire (Mr. Duckham); but he was speaking of the Superintendent's salary only.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he did not wish to intervene between the Welsh Members and the Government; but he could not understand why the right hon. Gentleman who had charge of the Bill could not give the noble Lord an answer. The right hon. Gentleman had argued that he could not say whether any part of the new tax would be devoted to Wales, because he could not disclose one part of the scheme alone; but the Prime Minister, when he was asked a Question about Scotland the other day, was not restrained by the scruples of the right hon. Gentleman, but at once assured the Scotch Members that they would share in the benefits. If the right hon. Gentleman could not give an answer, perhaps the noble Lord the Secretary to the Treasury could.

MR. W. DAVIES pointed out that the Bill was to apply to six counties in South Wales, and its main object was to enable them to appoint a General Superintendent. It was true that the County Roads Board had a power of appointment; but the Government had agreed to his Amendment that no such appointment should be valid unless confirmed by the Quarter Sessions. What he submitted was that, as a measure for County Government was in contemplation, there was no necessity at all for this Bill; and he believed he could state that the county of Pembroke was very much opposed to the Bill in any shape. They did not want a General Superintendent in that county. They had two or three Surveyors and 12 or 15 other officials for the administration of the fund; and the farmers regarded with terror anything that was likely to increase the heavy burdens they had to bear. He should, therefore, oppose the Bill entirely; and he would strongly urge the Government to abandon it, and wait till they introduced their County Government Bill, which could provide properly for the superintendence of county roads.

Mr. HIBBERT said, that no two Welsh Members seemed to have the same opinion upon this matter; but the noble Lord opposite had strongly pressed the President of the Local Government Board to deal with the question, and had reproached him for not having legislated on the matter, so that appointments might be made by the county authorities.

Viscount EMLYN said, that what he had found fault with was the removal of the General Superintendent without some legislation being first adopted by which someone could be appointed in his place.

Mr. HIBBERT said, his right hon. Friend had taken action with a view to appointing someone in the place of the General Superintendent. This Bill did not propose in any way to compel the Local Boards to appoint any officer, but only gave them power to do what they had asked to be able to do. Several hon. Members from Wales objected to the Bill as unnecessary, while the hon. Member for Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey Vivian) was anxious to pass it; but his right hon. Friend was not so enamoured of the Bill that he cared to press it to-night, and was willing to adjourn the debate in order to give Welsh Members further time to consider the Bill. With respect to the point raised by the hon. Member for Herefordshire, as to what would be done in regard to any subvention for roads in South Wales, his right hon. Friend was not able to give any information upon that matter to-night, though, no doubt, hon. Members, not only from South Wales, but from other parts of Wales, would be glad to have some information. He therefore begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, it was hardly for him to oppose the adjournment, for he thought that was a wise course. The Government had withdrawn this payment, but he believed they had no power to dismiss the Superintendent; but they now hoped that the counties would re-appoint the Superintendent and pay him from their own resources. He had always held the opinion that the counties would not agree to anything of the kind, though, he believed, the counties had largely benefited by the uniform manner in which their roads had been dealt with. He appointed Mr. Codrington, and reduced the salary, although he believed that the salary of his predecessor was nearly double the amount mentioned by the hon. Member opposite. He thought it would be unwise to disturb South Wales until a proper system had been adopted in England. The House had learnt something from the Government to-night as to the mode in which they intended to assist the highway rates in England. It was not to be done by Act of Parliament; but he was afraid there would be a subvention. The late Government would not have dreamt of any subvention except from the surplus of the year; but the present Government proposed a new tax.

Mr. DODSON said, it was true the right hon. Gentleman had appointed Mr. Codrington; but he gave him notice that the appointment was terminable, and was likely to be terminated.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH: By fresh legislation.

Mr. HUSSEY VIVIAN said, the County Boards of South Wales were unanimously of opinion that it was absolutely necessary that this Bill should pass. The existing Turnpike Act turned on the existence of a General Superintendent; no payments could be legally made without such an officer. It was absolutely necessary they should have some Act analogous to this. He thought the Government had done wisely and justly in ceasing to appoint and pay this officer, for he knew of no ground why the taxpayers of England should be called upon to pay for the superintendence of the South Wales turnpike roads. He did not believe the Bill would entail any serious burden upon the county rates of South Wales. His hon. Friend the Member for Merthyr (Mr. C. James) had hinted that the County Roads Board was likely to make a job of the appointment; but he (Mr. Hussey Vivian) altogether scouted such an idea. The County Roads Board was conducted with the greatest possible economy. He had served on the Board for the last 30 years, and he could safely say that every effort was made to reduce, as far as possible, the working expenses. He did trust his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board would press the present measure, and that they might receive the benefits of its provisions as soon as possible. He believed that every payment they were now making was illegal. He knew that very considerable doubt existed in the mind of his noble Friend (Viscount Emlyn) as to what happened from the day the Superintendent ceased to have any power; and, therefore, the House had a right to ask the Government to press forward this measure, in order to place the County Roads Board in a legal position. He was convinced that no serious charge would be entailed upon the counties of South Wales in respect to the measure.

MR. GORST said, he did not wish to follow the hon. Member (Mr. Hussey Vivian) in the discussion of the Bill; but desired to offer to the hon. Member, and the other hon. Members from Wales who were in favour of the passing of the Bill, his sincere sympathy with them at the disappointment of seeing the hope, which they must have entertained, frustrated by the obstructive Motion of an hon. Gentleman sitting below the Government Gangway. It was not often that the Government had succeeded in this Session of Parliament in getting a Bill in before half-past 12 o'clock, and it did seem hard that the fate of this measure now seemed imperilled. The Government themselves had pressed the third reading, and everything went on smoothly until the noble Lord the Member for Carmarthenshire (Viscount Emlyn) asked a question. First of all, the Government by that system of dogged silence which they had used on certain occasions tried to evade answering questions; and when they were obliged, by the observation of another hon. Gentleman (Mr. R. H. Paget) to answer the question, they immediately obstructed the Bill.

SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD said, that, although not a Member for Wales, he was the Chairman of the Quarter Sessions of Carmarthenshire; and he was therefore in a position to say that this was a matter of serious interest to the ratepayers of that county. He believed the action which had been taken by Her Majesty's Government through the President of the Local Government Board was entirely illegal; and why he was desirous of saying one word on the adjournment was this—that he hoped that before the Bill again came on for discussion, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Dodson) would take the opportunity of consulting the Law Officers of the Crown on the subject. The appointment of this officer was made under circumstances with which, as a matter of history, they were most of them familiar. It arose out of the Rebecca Riots; and Sir James Graham, in introducing the Bill, pointed out that an officer should be appointed and paid by the Government, and that it should be his duty to take care that the state of confusion in which South Wales had got, by reason of non-attendance to the repair of the roads, should in future be rendered impossible. In Sir James Graham's speech there was not a hint that the functions of that officer should cease with the cessation of the Government subvention. The Statute said that the officer might be dismissed, and another, or two, if necessary, be appointed in his room by the proper authority—it was then the Secretary of State, it was now the President of the Local Government Board. But in the Statute there was not the smallest hint of the right of the President of the Local Government Board to discontinue the office. The sting of the Bill was in its tail, and he confessed that it seemed to him that the sole object of the measure was to shift upon the ratepayers that responsibility which, in 1845, Sir James Graham said was to rest on the Government—namely, the payment of the officer in question. He hoped that when the Bill was again brought on for consideration, the President of the Local Government Board would be fortified with the opinions of the Law Officers of the Crown as to the Government action, which he (Sir Hardinge Giffard) considered illegal.

Mr. DUCKHAM said, that £844 was the amount of money paid from the National Exchequer. On reference to the Estimates for the past and the present year, hon. Gentlemen would find that £350 was set down as the salary of the Superintendent; that another amount was allowed for the Superintendent's Clerk; another amount for Offices; and a further amount for travelling expenses, the total sum being what he had stated.

Viscount EMLYN said, that, as the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board was unable to give them any information as to whether they would get any assistance towards the maintenance of main roads in general, he should, on Thursday, ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it was his intention to extend to South Wales the same assistance towards the maintenance of main roads as he had announced he intended to extend to the Scotch main roads?

Mr. WARTON said, if the noble Lord did put such a question to the Premier, the right hon. Gentleman would, no doubt, refer it to the President of the Local Government Board.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* 15th May.

MILITIA STOREHOUSES BILL.

(*Mr. Hastings, Sir Matthew Ridley.*)

[BILL 116.] COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 to 3, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked if the Government intended to take and pay for the remainder of the Militia Storehouses? There were many not yet taken over, and great inconvenience was resulting to the different counties.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, the Secretary of State for War would be the best person to answer such a question.

Bill *reported,* without Amendment; to be read the third time *To-morrow.*

Sir Hardinge Giffard

MOTIONS.

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

LEAVE. FIRST READING.

Mr. MUNDELLA: I beg to ask leave to introduce a Bill, which has been twice before the House, dealing with the re-organization of the Educational Endowments of Scotland. I shall not, at this late hour, detain the House more than two or three minutes in explaining the change which has taken place in the Bill. The necessity for the measure has been admitted on all hands, and it has not made progress solely on account of the pressure of Business during the last two Sessions; but within that period we have had the advantage of ascertaining the views of Members of this House, especially of Members from Scotland, and of the Public Bodies in Scotland, and we have so altered the measure, both in form and substance, that we hope to meet the circumstances of Scotland and the general wishes of the people of Scotland. The present state of the endowments in Scotland, in many respects, strikingly resembles that which existed in England in 1869. When the Commission reported in 1875, it was shown that there were endowments to the extent of £175,000 a-year which required dealing with. It is believed that they have since increased to £250,000 a-year, and in the City of Glasgow alone the dormant endowments amount to something like £500,000 sterling. Well, Sir, in their present state, many of these endowments are inoperative, many of them are useless, on account of being applied to obsolete purposes; some are too close and too restricted both as to aims and objects; and in the case of others the Governing Bodies are inconvenient. What we propose is not to change the class of beneficiaries, but to make the benefits more suitable and more adapted to the present day, to provide for a rise from elementary schools to technical schools and to Universities, to help the School Board to secure attendance by assisting the class above the pauper class in obtaining education, and, lastly, to help to complete the educational system of Scotland by maintaining that high standard of education which is required under Section 67 of the Scotch Act of 1872. The Bill is altered, as I have said, both in form and substance; and it is hoped that it will be more clear and better adapted for its purpose, and make the procedure more direct; and we have somewhat enlarged the scope of the Bill. We have attempted—and I hope we have succeeded in obtaining—a fair solution of the most disputed question—namely, that of the Governing Body. The Bill provides for maintaining popular representation, and gives that representation a preponderance where it already exists, admitting, at the same time, the elective element as in school boards. The Bill contains 45 clauses, and we can hardly hope to pass, during the present Session, a Bill of such dimensions unless we have the general help of Scotch Members. I trust that, in the shape in which we have placed the Bill before the House, it will commend itself to Scotch Members; that any Amendments which may be necessary will not be Amendments as to principle, but as to form and practice, and to which I hope we shall be in a position to give effect. I beg to ask leave to introduce the Bill.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill to re-organise the Educational Endowments of Scotland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. MUNDELLA, The LORD ADVOCATE, and Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL for SCOTLAND.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 147.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HIBBERT, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the City and Borough of Bath, the Local Government District of Brierley Hill, the Borough of Burton-upon-Trent, the Rural Sanitary District of the Keighley Union, the Boroughs of Margate, Newbury, and Preston, the Town of Ramsgate, the Borough of Saint Helens, and the Rural Sanitary District of the Settle Union, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HIBBERT and Mr. DODSON.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 145.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (GAS) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HIBBERT, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board under the provisions of "The Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870," and "The Public Health Act, 1875," relating to the Local Government District of Upper Sedgley, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HIBBERT and Mr. DODSON.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 144.]

COUNTY COURTS ACT (1867) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER, Bill to amend "The County Courts Act, 1867," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER, Mr. MONK, and Mr. REID.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 146.]

CIVIL IMPRISONMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Ordered, That the Report of the Select Committee on "The Fraudulent Debtors (Scotland) Bill, 1880," with the Evidence, be referred to the Select Committee on the Civil Imprisonment (Scotland) Bill.

House adjourned at half after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 2nd May, 1882.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Commonable Rights * (73).

Second Reading—Elementary Education Provisional Orders Confirmation (Finchley, &c.) * (63); Payment of Wages in Public Houses Prohibition (41).

Committee — Report — Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Ballymena, &c.) * (57).

OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION—LINCOLN COLLEGE (OXFORD) STATUTES.

OBSERVATIONS. QUESTION.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, he wished to ask the noble and learned Lord (the Lord Chancellor) a Question of which he had given him private Notice. The right rev. Prelate the Bishop of Lincoln had given Notice of his intention to move, on the 12th instant—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to withhold Her assent from a portion of the Statutes which have been laid upon the Table relating to Lincoln College, Oxford."

The Question he desired to ask was, Whether the 50th clause of the University Act of 1817 permitted a Member of Parliament to move the rejection of a part only of a Statute which had been laid upon the Table?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR, in reply, said, he was not sorry his noble Friend had asked this Question. The right rev. Prelate had asked his (the Lord Chancellor's) opinion on the subject; and he gave it as his opinion that it was competent for any Member of either House to move the rejection of a part of a Statute which had been laid before Parliament. But since his noble Friend gave him Notice of his intention to ask this Question, he had looked at the words of the Statute, and he was now disposed to think that his first opinion was erroneous, and that it was not permissible to move the rejection of a part of a Statute.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, who had given Notice of the Motion for the 12th instant, on behalf of the right rev. Prelate (the Bishop of Lincoln), said, he would take care that his right rev. Brother was informed of the opinion now expressed by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, that, although the course proposed to be taken by the right rev. Prelate was not permissible, he thought it would be open to him to bring in a Motion to reject the whole of the Statutes for the particular College referred to.

STATE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS — THE IRISH POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY, who had the following Notice upon the Paper:—

> "To inquire of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Earl Cowper has resigned the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland; and, if so, whether the Earl Spencer has been appointed to that office, and whether his Lordship holds it with his present office of President of the Council; and what steps are to be taken by Her Majesty's Government for the pacification of Ireland?"

said: My Lords, I put these Questions to the noble Earl yesterday; but his information was not sufficient to enable him to answer them. I now ask whether the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (Earl Cowper) has resigned; whether the noble Earl, whom I see opposite, (Earl Spencer) has taken his place; and, if so, whether any inference is to be drawn from this unusual combination of two Offices which are generally thought to be incompatible. I should be glad also to know whether the noble Earl is in a condition to inform the House whether there is any change in the policy of the Government indicated by this change of Office of the Lord Lieutenant?

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I feel that I, perhaps, ought, at the outset, to make some sort of apology to the noble Marquess for having requested him yesterday to give me Notice of Questions of a most important character, and of the highest interest both to this country and your Lordships' House. But, at the same time, I cannot admit his inference that I was absolutely ignorant of the subjects of his Questions. My reason for asking that the Questions might be postponed was a desire to adhere to the Rule of this House, which my long experience of it shows to me is of advantage not only to the Government, but of the greatest possible advantage to the House itself—that important Questions should not be hurriedly and suddenly asked without Notice, either public or private. I cannot help thinking, too, that a little time for consideration is of advantage to the Questioner. Yesterday I was so overwhelmed by the suddenness and the number of the Questions put by the noble Marquess, that I was at fault as to my arithmetic. I thought at first that the noble Marquess put nine Questions to me. On quiet consideration, I found he had only put eight, and immediately afterwards he reduced them to four. But even that reduction was not sufficient, because I see, on looking at the Notice Paper, that he has reduced these four to two or three.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: That is not mine. That is the compression of the gentlemen at the Table.

EARL GRANVILLE: Well, I think there is some inconvenience in the practice of putting these Questions without Notice. I see, too, that the Question which the noble Marquess told us was the most important of all is omitted from the Paper. My Lords, with regard to the first Question, it is certainly true that Earl Cowper has resigned. He did so some weeks ago; but with that consideration and public spirit he has always shown in difficult times, he left at the option of Mr. Gladstone the particular moment at which that resignation should take place. My Lords, the noble Marquess stated yesterday—and, notwithstanding the omission in the Notice, he still thinks it important to know—what are the reasons for that resignation? I have some doubts whether it is a usual course, or whether there is any right on the part of a Member of this House to ask Her Majesty's Government what are the reasons why any one of their Members has left them. I cannot help remembering circumstances about four years ago, when Her Majesty's then Ministry found the attempt to give reasons why one of their Colleagues left their body was not a success. I certainly do not think it is my duty to give the reasons that have operated in this case; but, as I think my noble Friend (Earl Cowper) will not object, I will go so far as to say—and I think it will be satisfactory for the noble Marquess to know—that the resignation of my noble Friend was not founded on any difference as to the policy of Her Majesty's Government. My Lords, I have another announcement to make, which is one that is very painful indeed to me and to Her Majesty's Government; and as it is a fact of importance, I ought to bring it before your Lordships immediately. It is that Mr. Forster, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, has also resigned. With regard to the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council (Earl Spencer), I have to say that Her Majesty has been advised to appoint him as the Successor to my noble Friend (Earl Cowper). The noble Marquess to-day, as he did yesterday, found fault with the combination that has been made; and, yesterday, he asked whether it was the fact that the Lord Lieutenancy had been placed *in commendam?* I beg to say that that phrase, if it can be correctly applied at all in this case, does most certainly not apply to the Lord Lieutenancy, but rather to the Presidency of the Council. I trust that the Council will not suffer during the time that this arrangement will last, and that my noble Friend the Lord Privy Seal, whose Office the House, in common with myself, often thought is a great advantage to the Cabinet, will be enabled to assume the work of an Office which, although it has greatly increased of late years, is not the hardest work of the Departments of the Government. The noble Marquess asks what inference is to be drawn from this? The inference is a very simple one. I suppose that nobody will deny the very critical state of Ireland at this moment; and we thought it desirable that the person who should succeed to the post of the Lord Lieutenant should not only have personal qualities, but should be clothed with the greatest possible authority; and I know of no way in which that authority can be better sustained than by the appointment of a Cabinet Minister who has been intimately acquainted with the views of the Cabinet during the past two years, and is, therefore, best qualified to fill this most important Office. But the noble Marquess says that is an unprecedented combination——

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: The word I used was "incompatible." There was a precedent in 1708.

EARL GRANVILLE: Well, the other day I quoted a remark of Lord John Russell's, to the effect that if you could quote a precedent from the days of Queen Elizabeth it was a most invaluable resource. But I think, if it were necessary, I could quote a later precedent, when the Lord President of the Council occupied both positions, not provisionally, but for a considerable time. The noble Marquess asks me whether there is any fresh policy—I think he expressly used the word—intended on the part of Her Majesty's Government? My Lords, we have no fresh policy. We are acting entirely in harmony, as we believe, with the principles that have guided us up to this present time. We have certain administrative measures and certain legislative measures in our view. My Lords, it has been said that the Protection of Person and Property Bill has been a failure. That is not the opinion of Her Majesty's Government. We believe that in a very important crisis that Act has been of great use, especially in one particular—namely, in enabling the Government to counteract a most formidable agitation against rent. That Act will be in existence some months longer. But at the present time, and as now advised, it is not our intention to ask Parliament to renew the Act as it stands. At this moment the Government are carefully considering a measure designed for the purpose of strengthening the means of the administration of justice, and to protect the lives and property of private persons. As soon as the necessary Business in the House of Commons will permit, that measure will be introduced, and no other legislation except, perhaps, some of a financial character, will be allowed to come on before it is advanced or completed. My Lords, if the existence of secret societies, taken in connection with the number of those societies, shall create a necessity, we shall apply the provisions of the Protection of Person and Property Act to those societies, and we shall propose to renew the Act as far as those provisions are concerned; and also ask for such other powers as may be thought necessary for the occasion. One administrative measure which has been decided upon, but which has not been acted on, is of great importance. It was the very painful duty of Her Majesty's Government to imprison not only many persons of different classes, but also three Members of Parliament during a long time. They did it under a sense of grave responsibility. They believed it was necessary to do so, not as penal measure, but as a measure of protection, in order to secure the safety of the public at large, and the maintenance of order in Ireland. Acting under the same grave sense of responsibility, in the same way, and with exactly the same object in view, they have now come to the conclusion that the time has arrived when it is no longer desirable to keep these three Members in prison; and an examination of other cases will immediately take place, though not as regards those who have committed crimes. I may now, my Lords, advert to another point—with regard to legislation. Your Lordships are aware that the Land Act does not deal with the question of arrears, which is an important, although a provisional, question. Then there are also what are popularly known as the "Bright Clauses" of that Act. On both those subjects the Act will require revision, and with regard to them a detailed statement will be made in Parliament at an early date.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Against one, at least, of those three Gentlemen who are to be released—Mr. Parnell—there is a warrant that he is suspected of treasonable practices. I suppose that that statement Her Majesty's Government are prepared to withdraw, if they are going to release them? I also wish to ask whether the prisoner at Portland is to be released as well as the prisoners at Kilmainham?

EARL GRANVILLE: I must trouble the noble Marquess to give me Notice of the Question.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: The noble Earl proffered the information as to the "suspects," and my Question is entirely germane to the information that he has given us.

EARL GRANVILLE: I beg the noble Marquess's pardon; he is under a mistake. It is quite distinct. The prisoner at Portland is not imprisoned under the same Act. In the one case persons are imprisoned under Act of Parliament, and in the other the prisoner is confined under ticket-of-leave.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: There is one Question which I wish to ask—namely, Whether or not the noble Earl is prepared to tell the House the reasons that have induced the resignation of Mr. Forster? If he is not prepared to go so far as that, whether he is prepared to reiterate the statement which he just now made in the case of my noble Friend opposite (Earl Cowper), that the resignation did not proceed from difference of opinion with his Colleagues?

EARL GRANVILLE: I certainly am not prepared to answer the noble Earl's Question, which seems to me to be a singularly unusual one. The right hon. Gentleman is in the House of Commons, and I have no doubt that the proper method will be taken to obtain Her Majesty's permission to give the reasons which prompted him to take the course he has done—painful to himself as well as to his associates.

VISCOUNT POWERSCOURT said, he should not wish to let this occasion pass without bearing tribute to the great tact and temper shown by his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in a time of unparalleled anxiety and difficulty. He trusted that Her Majesty's Government would continue to pursue the course upon which they had entered, and that nothing would turn them from the path of the redressing of grievances and the conciliation of the Irish people.

[Subject dropped.]

PAYMENT OF WAGES IN PUBLIC HOUSES PROHIBITION BILL.

(*The Earl Stanhope.*)

(NO. 41.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

EARL STANHOPE, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that a custom existed with many managers to pay their workmen their wages at a public-house, and the object of the Bill was to prohibit such a practice. He believed that such a proceeding was attended with very bad results, and that workmen were thereby induced to spend a considerable part of their wages as soon as they had earned them in treating their companions, or were morally bound to spend some portion of them for the "good of the house," as it was called. He had heard of instances of people being paid their wages and remaining in a drunken state all through Saturday night and all day Sunday in the licensed house; and of cases where the landlords had admitted that, after closing, they had found large sums of money, sometimes as much as £5, lying under the counter, which had been literally thrown away by people who had lost their reason through drink. The Select Committee on Intemperance, which considered the whole subject in 1878, had taken much evidence and made an elaborate Report. Though their Lordships' Committee had not made a special Report on this particular branch of the subject, he found the following paragraph in page 32 of their Report:—

> "Almost all the witnesses concurred in expressing their belief that by far the greatest amount of drunkenness occurs on the evening of Saturday, that being the day on which wages are usually paid, and when the men, by leaving off work at an earlier hour, have more leisure and opportunity for indulging in drink."

When wages are paid in public-houses —as was so frequently the case—this fact was doubly true. The Mersey Dock Managers had in February last issued a circular against paying their stevedores in public-houses. Brickmakers were accustomed to pay their gangs in public-houses; and it had come to his knowledge that certain brickmakers in the neighbourhood of Portsmouth had obtained licences and opened houses for the purpose of paying their men in these public-houses, knowing that they would thus obtain back a considerable portion of their hard-earned wages. He proposed by the Bill that the payment of wages in a public-house should be prohibited by inflicting a penalty of £10 for each offence, and that all offences and penalties might be recovered by any person under the Summary Jurisdiction Acts. He trusted that the House would allow the Bill, which was a step in the right direction; to be read a second time, and that the Government would assist the passing of the measure in the House of Commons.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl Stanhope.*)

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY said, the noble Earl (Earl Stanhope) seemed to be under the impression that Her Majesty's Government would be able to take charge of this Bill in the House of Commons; but he could not be aware of the state of things in that House, if he believed the Government were in a position to give disinterested and philanthropic assistance to Bills other than their own. Therefore, while he would not oppose the measure, he could not, on their behalf, undertake that they should assist in its progress through the other House. It must be obvious to him that the state of Public Business in that House was such that the Government had more than enough to do with their own measures, without taking upon themselves to assist Private Bills of that kind. His noble Relative had described the Bill as a step in the right direction. He (the Earl of Rosebery) was not quite sure that this was the case. He would have been glad if the time for Bills of that kind had passed away. It did seem strange that at a time when the power of combination was so well understood by the working classes, and had been in one or two directions exerted so successfully, a Bill of this nature should be needed. The considerations, however, which his noble Relative had brought forward could not fail to have weight, especially as the noble Earl had alluded, he believed, to the case of brickfields, which was a glaring instance of this practice. He confessed he would have been glad if the Bill had been preceded by some such full and careful inquiry as had preceded the Mines Regulation Act; but he considered the measure to be an undoubted improvement on the existing state of things, and for that reason, as representing the Home Office, he should not oppose the second reading.

THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY said, he warmly supported the Bill. He had himself carried the same provision in the Mines and Collieries Act, passed many years ago, and he could bear testimony to the good working of the Acts in force with regard to the payment of wages by the large mining and manufacturing bodies throughout the country. They paid wages in their own offices; but the smaller employers of labour did not, they paid the wages due at certain public-houses, and the men were unfortunately compelled to receive their wages there. Sometimes they were kept waiting so long for their money that the temptation to imbibe strong drinks became greater, and by the time the wages arrived they were all spent, and the poor men were left without any to take home for their wives and families. He knew himself that in the case of lightermen the men were told to go to a public-house to receive their wages at 6 o'clock on Saturday evening, and were kept waiting until, perhaps, midnight, spending in the meantime a large portion of their earnings. He did not think that their Lordships could confer a greater boon upon the working classes of the country than that which the Bill proposed to give them.

THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE, as a member of the Committee on Intemperance, thought that an apology was due for the omission of this subject from their Report; it had not been brought strongly under their notice. He believed, however, that the measure would be received with great satisfaction throughout the country.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY also supported the Bill, and said, that even if, as the noble Earl who represented the Home Office had said, that working men were indifferent to this Bill, that would not be the case with their wives, who would be grateful for it. He hoped that the noble Earl would re-consider what he had said about Government not being able to undertake to assist its progress. The noble Earl, in saying that Government could hardly get its own Bills passed, seemed to think that he was in "another place," and was making a speech in behalf of the *clôture*, which was of no use here.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2^a accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Tuesday* the 16*th instant.*

House adjourned at Five o'clock,
to Thursday next, a quarter
past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 2nd *May*, 1882.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.] — PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Sunday Closing (Ireland) * [148].

Second Reading—Gas Provisional Orders * [136]; Inclosure (Arkleside) Provisional Order * [128]; Inclosure (Bettws Disserth) Provisional Order * [127]; Inclosure (Cefn Drawen) Provisional Order * [126]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order * [138]; Water Provisional Orders * [135].

Committee—Municipal Corporations (*re-comm*) * [113] — R.P.; Distress Amendment [73] — R.P.; Metropolis Management and Building Acts Amendment [107]—R.P.

Third Reading — Militia Storehouses * [116]; Places of Worship Sites * [97], and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

STATE OF IRELAND—DISTURBANCES IN BALLINTUBBER.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state what outrages or disturbance have taken place in the parish of Ballintubber, county Mayo, recently; whether it is true that the attempt on the life of Mr. C. Crotty was made some ten or twelve years ago; whether there has been any such subsequent attempt; whether Mr. Crotty was under police protection so far back as ten or twelve years ago, and had a police barrack built within a few yards of his house; and, whether such protection has ever been withdrawn; and, if so, what was the date of its renewal?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, I have telegraphed for information on this subject, and have not yet received a reply.

MR. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman is aware that this Question arises out of a prievous statement made by him.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—RELEASE OF PRISONERS UNDER THE ACT.

Mr. O'CONNOR POWER asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If there is any reason for the further detention of Mr. Edward Slevin, of Ballinrobe, county Mayo, who has been imprisoned for thirteen months under the Coercion Act; whether there is any reason for the further detention of Mr. Thomas Dunleavy, of Kilmovee, county Mayo, who has been imprisoned as a suspect since the 23rd of November 1881; whether he will consider the advisability of releasing Mr. Martin King, a suspect imprisoned in Enniskillen, or give him an opportunity, according to the ordinary process of Law, of meeting the charge alleged against him; whether the time has not come when Mr. John McCarthy, of Loughrea, who has been detained for more than eight months as a suspect, may be released; whether Mr. Edward Connor, of Ballymore, county Roscommon, who has been detained for the past five months as a suspect in Galway Prison, may now be released; whether he will give the House a statement of the dimensions of the cell which Mr. Connor has been forced to occupy during that time; and, whether the cell is so small and dark as to have injuriously affected Mr. Connor's sight?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: The hon. Member asks me Questions as to several prisoners, and I have to say that their cases have all been considered, but up to the present time I have not been able to recommend to his Excellency the release of any of them. With respect to Mr. Connor, of Ballymore, Roscommon, I have made inquiries, and find that he occupies a cell in Galway Prison measuring 17 feet long by 8 feet wide. The medical officer certifies that he can find nothing wrong with Mr. Connor's eyes, and that, if his sight is defective, it must have been so before his admission to the prison.

MINES (COAL) REGULATION ACT, 1872—ABRAM COLLIERY EXPLOSION.

Mr. BURT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to the verdict of the coroner's jury in the Abram Colliery explosion, and to the report of Mr. Young, who represented the Home Office at the inquiry; whether he has noticed that Mr. Young complains of the unsatisfactory nature of some of the special rules at the Colliery, and makes the following statement:—

> "Having heard the whole evidence, I feel bound to state that, in my opinion, a similar explosion may occur at any time, and will occur almost certainly if another outburst of gas takes place when the men are at work. I quite concur with the jury as to the unsatisfactory character of the regulations at the Colliery in question with regard to the lamps generally, and especially to the re-lighting of lamps which have been accidentally extinguished;"

and, whether, considering the fiery nature of the seams in the locality, he has instructed, or, if not, he will instruct the inspector of mines for the district to urge that the Mines Regulation Act be strictly enforced, and that every possible precaution be taken to insure the safe working of the Colliery?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that he had seen Mr. Young's Report, and that instructions such as those suggested in the hon. Member's Question would be sent to the District Inspector of Mines.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—THE GOVERNOR OF LIMERICK PRISON.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether there have been numerous complaints made from time to time against Mr. Egan, the governor of the County Limerick Prison, regarding the treatment of untried prisoners under his charge; whether he has been reprimanded on more than one occasion by the prison authorities; and, whether His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant will continue this officer in so responsible a position?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER asked to have the Question postponed till Thursday, as he had not yet received an answer to his inquiries on the subject.

Mr. HEALY: Would the right hon. Gentleman have any objection to publish as a Parliamentary Paper the result of the inquiry in the same way as the letter of Captain Barlow has been published?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to give Notice of the Question.

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND)—THE MARQUESS OF ELY'S ESTATE—INTERFERENCE OF THE POLICE.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true, as stated in the "Freeman's Journal" of 28th April, that, on the previous day, the tenants of the Marquis of Ely to the number of 200 assembled at Fethard, county Wexford, for the purpose of discussing a circular received from their landlord; whether the meeting was attended by two members of the Constabulary force who refused to leave when requested to do so; whether the meeting in consequence broke up without considering the propositions for a settlement which were to have been submitted; and, whether the action of the police had his approval?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Yes, Sir, I find it is a fact that a number of tenants—about 200—on the estate of the Marquess of Ely assembled at Fethard, County Wexford, on the 27th ultimo. The police were not sent thither with the object of interfering with the meeting; but it was necessary that a few should be present, as it was believed a difference of opinion existed among the tenants, which might lead to a breach of the peace.

Mr. REDMOND: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered that part of my Question asking whether the meeting broke up in consequence of the presence of the police?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Most certainly the police did not break up the meeting.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—CAMPS OF INSTRUCTION.

Mr. GRANT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, considering the advantages enjoyed by the Volunteers in the Metropolis and the South of England in the way of facilities for training along with the troops of the regular army in camps of instruction, by experienced officers, he will consider the desirability of extending those advantages to the Volunteers of the North, by the establishment of a camp of instruction of a permanent character in some locality in the South of Scotland, to which the Volunteers of Scotland and the North of England may resort for the purpose of being trained with the Regulars and Militia, in the same manner as is done at Aldershot?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to my hon. Friend, I regret that I cannot at present hold out any hope to him of establishing a camp in Scotland at which Scotch Volunteers and Militia could be trained with the Regulars as at Aldershot. But we are now considering how to utilize the ground purchased for a tactical station at Strensall, in the North of England, and next year I may be able to make some communication to the House on this subject.

IRELAND—MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD, R.M.—CIRCULAR BY THE INSPECTOR OF POLICE, CO. CLARE.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can yet lay upon the Table a Copy of the communication which has been made to the Sub-Inspectors of the County Clare, withdrawing the circular issued on the 4th of March by County Inspector Smith; whether he will now say what course the Irish Executive proposes to take with regard to County Inspector Smith; and, whether a similar circular to that issued by County Inspector Smith was issued in any other county? The hon. Member also asked if County Inspector Smith was the same gentleman who, some time ago, in consequence of suspicious misconduct, had been removed from the County Down?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, I cannot answer this Question without appealing to the House as to the unfairness of the hon. Member imputing misconduct without giving Notice that the statement would be made, and thereby conveying an erroneous impression, without my being able to answer the Question at the time. I am only to-day able to read the Minute which I have signed, after full consultation with his Excellency, in order that it might be communicated to the Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary—

"The Lord Lieutenant desires me to inform you that, while he entirely approves of the object in view in the instructions issued on March 4 to the Inspector under your command—*videlicet*, to secure the personal safety of Mr. Clifford Lloyd in the discharge of duties exposing him to imminent danger, his Excellency must express his disapproval of the terms in which these instructions were conveyed. They might be supposed to suggest, though his Excellency is confident that they were not intended to do so, the use of firearms without reasonable apprehension of imminent danger to the person under protection; and, his Excellency adds, should such use of firearms result in killing any person, no assumption of responsibility on the part of the County Inspector can confer any immunity on the constable who so uses his weapon. You will, therefore, withdraw the instructions, and admonish County Inspector Smith to use greater care in future."

I may add that it is not correct to speak of these instructions as a Circular at all. These instructions were private and confidential instructions sent to the Sub-Inspector, and no similar instructions were issued in any other county. The County Inspector of Limerick had, indeed, issued instructions to the Sub-Inspectors to take care and give full protection to Mr. Clifford Lloyd; but, at the same time, they were not to make any unnecessary display in doing so.

Mr. SEXTON: I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman, Does the Government intend to retain County Inspector Smith in office in the county where these private and confidential instructions were issued?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: We do not consider that it is necessary to remove him in consequence of these instructions.

Mr. HEALY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that since County Inspector Smith received the reprimand he has gone about the district bragging that he does not care one pin about it or the House of Commons?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I do not believe that statement.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has not put a Question to the right hon. Gentleman, but has made a statement which is quite irregular.

Mr. REDMOND wished to know how it happened that Inspector Smith's instructions were issued without the knowledge of the Inspector General?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that, undoubtedly, County Inspector Smith made a mistake in that matter. He was not now justifying the terms of these instructions; but it was not an unnatural mistake that he made, because instructions were sent to him, and also to the County Inspector in Limerick, to issue to their Sub-Inspectors a particular caution with regard to Mr. Clifford Lloyd, and he (Mr. W. E. Forster) had no doubt that County Inspector Smith thought he was merely carrying them out, and that, therefore, it was not necessary for him to send the particular wording to the Inspector General. He was not aware of other cases with regard to the Constabulary in which a similar mistake had been made.

Mr. SEXTON said, he must, under all the circumstances, give Notice of his intention to submit a Motion calling for the removal of County Inspector Smith.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE MAGISTRACY—SUMMARY JURISDICTION.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that it is now becoming a common practice with some magistrates in Ireland to exercise summary jurisdiction, and sentence persons to imprisonment either immediately after arrest upon a warrant, or arrest without a warrant, although the Law in these cases as laid down in the Petty Sessions Act, 14 and 15 Vic. c. 93, s. 11, provides that—

> "In all cases of summary jurisdiction the justices shall issue a summons requiring the defendant to appear and answer the complaint;"

whether it is also becoming the practice of some magistrates to refuse applications by the defendant for adjournment to allow them to prepare defence, obtain legal assistance, and subpœna witnesses, although the Petty Sessions Act provides (c. 93, s. 9, Clause 1) that the defendant shall have the right to have witnesses examined or cross-examined by counsel or attorney, and (s. 3), that the summons should be served a reasonable time before the hearing of the complaint (ten days or a fortnight being the usual time); and, whether the Government will take any steps to point out to Irish magistrates the duty of complying with the Law?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson), in reply, said, that neither he nor his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant was aware of the existence of any such practices as the hon. Member referred to in his Question. He would, however, make inquiries if the hon. Member would specify any instances of this sort of practices, or would communicate with him privately.

CRIME (IRELAND)—ARSON.

MR. SIDNEY HERBERT asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the following statement in the "Times" of the 1st instant:—

> "The sub-offices and haggard of Jeremiah Doherty, a tenant on the estate of Mr. N. Buckley, near Mitchelstown, were destroyed by fire a few nights ago. Seven young pigs were lost in the flames, and a brood mare was rescued with difficulty. Doherty was suspected of having paid his rent. Three years' rent is reported to be due by some of the tenants on the property;"

and, whether any person or persons have been arrested for this crime?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that he had no information as to the statement referred to by the hon. Gentleman.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—CO. KERRY—SEARCH FOR ARMS.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has received any information corroborating the statement which appeared in the Irish Correspondence of the "Times" of the 1st instant, viz., that—

> "A daring raid for arms is reported from Kerry. The house of Samuel Morgan, steward of Mr. Mahony, of Dromore, was entered in broad daylight by a party of disguised men during the absence of the family at church, and two guns were carried away. Three men named Sullivan, Shea, and Laveny have been arrested;"

and, in the event of these men being returned for trial to the next assizes, if he will consider, whether, in the present state of the Country, there can be a satisfactory trial?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he must appeal to hon. Members not to put down Questions immediately after reading statements in newspapers and before it was possible for the authorities to make the necessary inquiries. It was true, however, that there had been a raid for arms in County Kerry. One man had been arrested and discharged, and another, who was suspected of being concerned in the crime, was believed to have escaped to America.

The Attorney General for Ireland

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE.

MR. BLENNERHASSETT (for Mr. JAMES HOWARD) asked the Vice President of the Council, What is the present condition of the Country in respect of cattle disease; and, whether the Department can suggest any means for stamping out foot and mouth disease as effectually as has been the case in Ireland?

MR. CHAPLIN asked whether it was not a fact that foot-and-mouth disease was stamped out by the late Administration, and that the country was free from the disease for nine months, until it was imported by the admission of cargoes of diseased animals from abroad?

MR. MUNDELLA: It would be much more convenient that Notice should be given by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire. I saw it stated that the hon. Member said that immediately the Liberal Government came into Office they spread food-and-mouth disease over the country.

MR. CHAPLIN: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. I should be obliged if the right hon. Gentleman would inform me where he saw that statement? What I did say was that, unfortunately, with the Liberal Government foot-and-mouth disease re-appeared in the country.

MR. MUNDELLA: Sir, I think I shall have no difficulty in supplying the hon. Gentleman with the extract in question. I read it in a Lincolnshire paper during the Elections. It is true that the country was free from foot-and-mouth disease for nine months; but I hope the hon. Gentleman does not imply that we imported the disease any more than our Predecessors, because we were able to take greater precautions, as we had the benefit of our Predecessors' experience. I think I am justified in stating that, in the opinion of the best authorities, the live stock of the country is freer from disease than it has been for many years past. Of course, every outbreak, even if a single animal is attacked, is reported, and appears in the *Gazette*, and although this information is most valuable, it gives the impression that disease is more prevalent than is really the case. We have no suggestions to offer, except that the local authorities should carry out the provisions of the Act with vigilance and promptitude, for, wherever this has been done, the result has been most encouraging. It is difficult to answer the Question of my hon. Friend, except at some length; but I will do so as briefly as possible. The condition of the country with regard to cattle disease is, on the whole, very satisfactory. During the past three years pleuro-pneumonia has steadily declined. There has been no outbreak of the more serious diseases of rinderpest or sheep-pox. During the last year swine fever has been prevalent in certain districts; and although the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease which commenced in October, 1880, continues to give some trouble, the regulations in force have checked it in a remarkable manner. In 1881, as compared with the last serious outbreak which took place in 1871—the last year for which we have any complete Returns previous to the passing of the Act of 1878—the outbreaks in 1871 were 52,164, and the number of animals attacked was 691,565. In 1881 the outbreaks were 4,833, and the number of animals attacked 183,046. The results, comparing the first three months of this year with last year, are still more satisfactory. The comparison between the Returns of the undermentioned diseases during the first 13 weeks of 1881 and those of 1882 is as follows:—Pleuro-pneumonia.—Outbreaks in 1881, 223; in 1882, 136. Animals attacked in 1881, 495; in 1882, 326. Foot-and-mouth disease.—Outbreaks in 1881, 1,812; in 1882, 339. Animals attacked in 1881, 105,389; in 1882, 8,136. Died in 1881, 1,781; in 1882, 91. The outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease in 1871 were 52,164; the animals attacked, 691,565. In 1881 the outbreaks were 4,833, and the animals attacked 183,046. As to pleuro-pneumonia, the outbreaks in 1877 were 2,007, and animals attacked 5,330; in 1878—outbreaks, 1,721; animals attacked, 4,593; in 1879—outbreaks, 1,549; animals attacked, 4,414; in 1880—outbreaks, 1,052; animals attacked, 2,765; in 1881—outbreaks, 729; animals attacked, 1,875. Pleuro-pneumonia has steadily declined since the passing of the Act. With respect to Ireland, the last outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease never reached that country. In Scotland only two outbreaks have taken place; and, owing to the vigorous way of dealing with them by the local authorities, in one case the animals being bought up and slaughtered, the disease has not spread.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARRESTS UNDER THE ACT.

MR. GIBSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he would inform the House how many persons were arrested since the 1st April last under "The Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881," for intimidation and inciting others wrongfully and without legal authority to intimidate certain persons; how many persons previously arrested for the aforesaid offences had their cases reconsidered on the expiration of the statutory period of three months during the month of April last; and, in how many of such cases did the Government, as the result of such reconsideration, decide that the said persons should still be detained in custody?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that 17 persons had been arrested since the 1st April under the Protection of Person and Property Act. The right hon. and learned Gentleman having asked him on private Notice to state how many were released each week since that time—for the week ending 10th April the number was 39; for the 17th April, 37; the 24th April, 23; and 30th April, 44. He could not answer the two latter paragraphs of the Question on the Paper.

MR. GIBSON: Could the right hon. Gentleman give the approximate number?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I really could not give an answer to-day.

MR. GIBSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the following Report, in the "Saint James' Gazette" of May 1st:—

> "A riot occurred on Saturday, at Frankfort, King's County. A number of persons, who were reported to have paid their rents, were attacked and beaten in a fearful manner. The police succeeded in arresting thirty men. The public houses were closed by order of the resident magistrate, and the streets were cleared at the point of the bayonet;"

whether the above occurrences took place; and, whether any of the persons reported to have been beaten were seriously injured?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I find there is no truth whatever in this report.

LORD ARTHUR HILL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any information has reached him to the effect that—

> "A large rick of hay, the property of a bailiff named Hayes, residing near Kilmorna, in the county of Limerick, has been totally destroyed by fire;"

and, whether any one has been made amenable for this outrage?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that no information had been received at the Constabulary Office as to any persons being made amenable for this offence. He believed a rick of hay was burned.

IRELAND—IRISH POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT—ALLEGED NEGOTIATIONS.

COLONEL WALROND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the following paragraph, which appeared in the "Times" of May 1st:—

> "There is a growing opinion that a treaty of peace has been arrived at, and the fact that a gentleman was allowed the unusual privilege of paying two visits to Kilmainham yesterday has strengthened the belief that some diplomatic negotiations have been going on between the heads of the rival Governments, the one within and the other without the prison walls;"

and, whether it is a fact that a gentleman was allowed such an exceptional privilege; and, if so, who was he?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he was not aware that any gentleman was allowed to pay two visits; but it was true that a gentleman was allowed to pay a visit exceptionally a day or two ago. That Gentleman was the hon. Member for the county of Clare (Mr. O'Shea), and he had an opportunity of seeing Mr. Parnell.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE—THE FINANCE ACCOUNTS.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If he will this year cause the Finance Accounts to be laid before Parliament on or before the 30th June, in accordance with the provisions of the Act of Parliament, 17 and 18 Vic. c. 94?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Sir, it has been found impracticable to complete the numerous accounts which make up the volume of the Finance Accounts by the 30th of June; and I can only undertake that they shall be presented as soon as we can complete them and satisfy ourselves that they are correctly rendered and accurately printed.

Lord Arthur Hill

CRIME (IRELAND)—ALLEGED OUTRAGES—COUNTY LIMERICK.

MR. TOTTENHAM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is correct, as stated in the "Times" of the 1st instant—

> "On Friday night the house of a bailiff named Thompson, living at Oula, county Limerick, was attacked by a party of men, who fired three shots, and posted threatening notices on the door;"

and, if any one is in custody on suspicion of having committed the offence?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, I am informed by the Inspector General that no information has been received of this alleged outrage. I must again say that it would be very convenient if hon. Members would wait a day or two before they ask Questions about what appears in the newspapers.

MR. TOTTENHAM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the report which appeared in the Dublin Press of Saturday last is correct, to the effect that—

> "Late on Thursday night a party of men disguised visited the farmstead of Michael Harney, at Belnamullia, near Athlone, county Roscommon, and set fire to his house, the occupants at the time being in bed. Some passers by aroused the inmates, and, having procured help, succeeded in extinguishing the fire before any material injury was done. Harney had paid his rent;"

and, whether the Government have reason to believe that the fact that Harney had paid his rent, as is stated in the report, was the cause of the outrage? Also, Whether it is true, as stated in the telegraphic news of the 1st instant, that another murder was perpetrated in the county of Cork, on the night of the 30th April, the victim being a man named John Keefe, and whether any arrests have been made in connection therewith; whether it is also true that the house of a farmer named Martin, near Limerick, was attacked on the same night by a party of Moonlighters, who were driven off by those in the house; whether any of the assailants were injured by the defenders; and, whether any arrests have been made?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I believe it is a fact that Michael Harney's house had been set on fire, but I am not yet in possession of the particulars. It is also a fact that a man named John Keefe has been murdered in County Cork. Two men have been arrested—his brother and nephew.

LAW AND POLICE—THE SALVATION ARMY.

MR. CAINE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he is aware that, on Sunday April 23rd, four members of the Salvation Army, men of admittedly good character, were sentenced to one month's imprisonment with hard labour for an assault on the police, who attempted to prevent their forming a procession in the streets of Whitchurch; if he is aware that the chairman of the Petty Sessions, who passed this severe sentence, admitted in Court that there was no attempt on the part of the inspector bringing the prosecution, to say that "the assault or the attempted rescue were deliberately carried out," and that "the assault was only a technical one, sufficient for the police to proceed upon," and "that all the Court had to dispose of was simply a point of Law;" if he is aware that the Bench refused to state a case, telling the prisoners' counsel to proceed by the cumbrous and antiquated method of writ of habeas corpus; if he is aware that Lord Coleridge and Mr. Justice Grove, in the Court of Queen's Bench on Monday, granted a rule to compel the magistrates to show cause why they should not state a case for the opinion of this Court. Lord Coleridge stating, in giving his decision—

> "That hard labour was ignominious, that the defendants might be religious enthusiasts, but such sentences were not to be tolerated for one moment;"

and, if, in view of so strong a condemnation of the sentence by a Superior Court, he will at once order the release of the prisoners on their own recognizances pending the settlement of the case by appeal?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he was happy to think that the sentence passed by the magistrates was now under review by the Lord Chief Justice. He agreed very much, if he might be allowed to say so, with both of the opinions expressed by the Lord Chief Justice—that, first of all, a person was not to be excused by religious enthusiasm for breaking the peace, and also that the sentence of imprisonment, with a month's hard labour, was singularly inappropriate for an offence of this description. His hon. Friend would see that the case being now in possession of a Court of Law, it was not for him to inferfere in any way until the decision, which would be given on Friday, should be pronounced. Meanwhile, acting in accordance with the view of the Lord Chief Justice, he had given directions that, until the case was decided, the prisoners should be treated with the greatest possible leniency during their confinement.

PRISONS (ENGLAND)—TOTHILL FIELDS PRISON.

MR. BROADHURST asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to an article in the May number of the "Herald of Health," giving a description of the condition of prison life in the Tothill Fields Prison for women, in which very grave charges are made as to the insufficiency of clean linen, both in respect to wearing apparel and bedding, also the bad light and bad ventilation of the cells and to the want of more sanitary conveniences and to the occasional bad condition of those at present provided; and, whether he will cause inquiries to be made into the truth or otherwise of the charges in question; and, if they are found to be true, whether he will order the prison authorities to make better arrangements for the cleanliness of the inmates of that prison?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, he had caused inquiries to be made into the case, and the reports of the Medical Officer and the Lady Superintendent satisfied him that the charges were not well founded.

SOUTH AFRICA—CETEWAYO, EX-KING OF ZULULAND—VISIT TO THIS COUNTRY.

MR. ONSLOW asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he can now state to the House what is the object of, and what are the arrangements made for, the visit of Cetewayo to this Country; what is the estimated cost of the visit; whether any provision has been made for the accompaniment of his wives; and, if so, for how many; whether any opportunity will be given to the House for the discussion of the propriety of this visit, which is to be paid for by the taxpayers of this Country, before Cetewayo leaves the Cape; what is proposed to be done with him when he arrives in England; and, what his social position will be?

Mr. COURTNEY rose to answer the Question——

Mr. ONSLOW: I rise to a point of Order. I intentionally asked the Question of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as it involves a matter of finance.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Gladstone): Sir, the Question involves a great amount of detail entirely connected with the Colonial Office, and though I am very loth indeed to take objection to any Question being put to myself, yet at times the pressure of the Offices I hold makes it impossible for me to enter into these details in such a manner as to give full satisfaction. I must therefore ask my hon. Friend the Under Secretary for the Colonies to reply.

Mr. COURTNEY, in reply, said, he thought the hon. Member would see that the financial part of the Question was a very small one. As to the object of Cetewayo's visit, the answer was that his health had beeen seriously undermined. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members migh tlaugh; but that was what they were informed by their responsible agents at the Cape—that his health had been seriously undermined by his detention; and it was thought reasonable to accede to his wish to visit this country—a wish that was recommended and endorsed by those who were responsible to the Government in the administration of the Cape. It was also believed that the visit would facilitate the solution of the question of Cetewayo's ultimate destination. As to the arrangements made, it was proposed that he should be accompanied by Mr. Shepstone and an interpreter. He also desired to bring with him three Zulu Chiefs and three attendants. The estimated cost of the visit was from £1,300 to £1,500. He did not desire to bring any wives with him. The hon. Gentleman was no doubt aware that the cost of the detention of Cetewayo at present fell upon this country, and therefore it was only a question of the difference of expense to be added; and that was not thought to be a matter of very great importance requiring a distinct discussion in that House. Then, as to what was to be done with him when he arrived in England, it was proposed to place him in quiet lodgings, probably with some gentleman acquainted with Zulu affairs; and great care would be taken to secure him from the intrusion of persons actuated by mere curiosity. He did not think it was necessary to answer the Question as to the social status of Cetewayo, which would not be affected.

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND) —THE EARL OF KENMARE'S ESTATE.

Mr. SEXTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the fact that the Earl of Kenmare, has caused to be served upon two of his tenants, Michael Leahy and William Herlihy, writs of summons from the Superior Courts in Dublin (involving heavy costs), in respect of a half-year's rent due in November 1881, and, according to custom, only payable last month; whether the tenants of Lord Kenmare, in the month of November last, served originating notices in the Land Court, and whether his Lordship, having retaliated in the course of the following week by serving writs upon a number of them, the two tenants above referred to, Michael Leahy and William Herlihy, in order to avoid costs, immediately went in and paid their half-year's rent, and whether a sum of £2 10*s*. was deducted from each of them for costs of writs which had never been served upon them, and this sum of £2 10*s*. is now charged in each case as an arrear of rent in the writs served a few days since; whether it is the fact that although these two tenants, and many other tenants of Lord Kenmare served originating notices so long ago as November, and although the Sub-Commission for the district have held two sittings in Killarney, not one of the many cases on the Kenmare Estate has been heard, or listed for hearing, and what is the explanation of this fact; and, whether he is prepared to say that he will take any steps to prevent poor tenants, unable to pay rents, from suffering the sale of their interest, and incur the loss of the rights conferred upon them by the Land Act before the Court can deal with their applications?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, the only part of the Question with respect to which he had any right to obtain information was that relating to the proceedings of the Sub-Commission. Two tenants on Lord Kenmare's estate served originating notices on the 13th and 29th October respectively, and the cases were sent for hearing to the first sitting of the Sub-Commission in Killarney in December last. No other application was received from any of Lord Kenmare's tenants till the 11th November. In the meantime 940 applications were received from Kerry, and they, of course, took precedence of the case of Lord Kenmare's tenants. In regard of the two cases held in December, one was dismissed, and in the other the rent was upheld.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked what Business would be proceeded with on Thursday?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, they should proceed with the Procedure Resolutions on Thursday. The financial measure would not be taken.

IRELAND — IRISH POLITICAL PRISONERS—SIR JOHN HAY'S MOTION.

Colonel NOLAN wished to know whether the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir John Hay), which was to the following effect:—

> "That the detention of large numbers of Her Majesty's subjects in solitary confinement, without cause assigned, and without trial, is repugnant to the spirit of the Constitution, and that, to enable them to be brought to trial, jury trials should, for a limited time (in Ireland), and in regard to crimes of a well-defined character, be replaced by some form of trial less liable to abuse,"

did not contain two distinct propositions; and, if so, whether they should not be put separately to the House?

Mr. SPEAKER: It appears to me that the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Baronet is consistent on the whole; and if he proposes that Resolution to the House, I shall think it my duty so to put it to the House.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. P. L. WHITE.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in consideration that Mr. P. L. White, now a suspect in Armagh Gaol, has ten of a family, his wife being an inmate of the County Infirmary of Mayo, he will grant his release?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, this case had been recently considered, but it was decided that Mr. White could not be released.

POST OFFICE—THE AMERICAN MAILS.

Mr. HEALY asked the Postmaster General, Whether arrangements can be made by which the American mails may be sent by the fastest steamers leaving Liverpool; and, whether it is the fact that the "Batavia," a Cunard steamer, which carried the mails from Liverpool, on a recent occasion, was distanced by three days by the "Alaska," of the Guion Line, which had no mails on board, but which left Liverpool on the same day as the "Batavia?"

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, presuming that the hon. Member refers to the voyage of the Cunard packet *Batavia* which left Liverpool on the 8th of April, and called at Queenstown on the following day for the mails, I find that she made a rather long voyage as compared with that of the *Alaska.* The Post Office has an agreement with the Cunard, Inman, and White Star Companies to carry the mails to New York on regular days of the week, and on the whole the service is satisfactorily performed. The average voyages on two of these lines are superior to those of the Guion, and on the third are about equal. Independently of these mail packets, the public have the option of sending any letters they wish by the Guion or any other vessels; and, in point of fact, a ship letter mail was forwarded by the *Alaska,* containing letters specially addressed to be forwarded by that ship.

MOTION.

PARLIAMENT—WIGAN NEW WRIT.

RESOLUTION.

Mr. LEWIS, in rising to move—

> "That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery to make out a new Writ for the election of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the Borough of Wigan, in the room of Francis Sharp Powell, esquire, whose election has been declared to be void,"

said, that, in the absence of any information from the Attorney General as to his being willing to assent to this Motion, he assumed that it would be opposed by the Government; and, therefore, he should give as shortly as he could the reasons upon which he moved it. Before he did so it would be advisable for him to refer to an Amendment on the Paper by the hon. Member for Cheltenham (Baron De Ferrieres)—

> "That no Writ be issued to fill up any vacancy occasioned by corrupt practices until this House has disposed of the Corrupt Practices (Disfranchisement) Bill."

He did not understand what connection there was between the Motion and the Amendment. If the hon. Member looked at the Disfranchisement Bill, he would find that it dealt with particular constituencies, of which Wigan was not one. There was no direct or collateral result of that Bill which could in any way affect Wigan, and, therefore, the Amendment was clearly beside the question. The Motion he presented to the House contained a question of Constitutional importance. What he suggested was founded upon precedent. It was considered a matter of great importance that no constituency entitled to return Members to that House should be prevented from exercising that Constitutional right except in due course of law. What was the case in reference to Wigan? A year ago, when the Election Petition was tried, it resulted in the Member being unseated, and the Judges reported that there was reason to believe that corrupt practices extensively prevailed. In the expiring days of last Session the Attorney General moved for the issue of a Commission to inquire into the corrupt practices at Wigan; but the House decided that the Commission should not issue. Nothing further was done until the present Session, and on being questioned on the subject the Attorney General intimated that the Government had no intention whatever to repeat the Motion to issue a Commission. He had no doubt a great many Members would agree that the Government exercised a wise discretion upon that subject. He had no intention to detain the House at any length with regard to the Report of the Election Judges; but he ventured to say that if anyone looked at the evidence they would see that very few pounds indeed were proved to have been corruptly spent. If they turned to the decision itself, they found that the decision had been made upon the payment of five sums of 10*s*. each, under circumstances which made the sitting Member responsible for the acts of his agents. He admitted that there was some evidence given of considerable treating, which had an effect upon the minds of the Judges; but, as a matter of arithmetical calculation, it would be found that a very small sum indeed was involved in the alleged corrupt practices upon which the Judges proceeded. But had the House ever exercised indirectly that punishment for the iniquities of constituencies which it had the power to punish directly after a Report had been made by Election Judges? He had precedents which were of considerable value. In 1874 the then sitting Member for Wakefield was unseated, and there was a specific case of bribery reported against the constituency; but in consequence of there being no statement of general corrupt practices prevailing the House did not think fit to stop the issue of the Writ. In the Stroud Election case it was reported that corrupt practices extensively prevailed. In those circumstances, the Motion for a new Writ came before the House in the month of May. On that occasion he (Mr. Lewis) drew attention to the Report of the Judges, and it was then objected by the present Attorney General himself that, there being no opportunity of issuing a Commission and no occasion for issuing a Commission legally, there was no reason to retain the Writ, and the constituency had a right to have the Writ issued. The hon. and learned Attorney General, on that occasion, resisted the Motion that he (Mr. Lewis) made, and he did so on the ground that as no step was taken by the House for a Commission, it was improper and useless to suspend the Writ, and that the constituency had a right to it. Was not the present a much stronger case? The case they now had was this—that the House had deliberately decided that it would not issue a Commission, and following upon that the Government had decided they would not ask the House to re-consider the election. Then how did they stand? Why, in the words of the Attorney General in the Stroud case, it was not possible to take any further steps. What steps did the hon. and learned Attorney General mean to take? After all the action of the House and the action of the Government, an Address to the Crown could not now be moved. He did not understand such a step to be intended.

The House remained face to face with this—it did not please Her Majesty's Government to issue a Writ. Why not? In the existing state of the House a matter of this kind was of no great importance; but they must consider the rights of the constituencies. There were great matters daily and almost hourly coming before the House, and the constituency of Wigan had as clear a right to representation, whether the Representative belonged to the majority or the minority, as any other constituency represented in the House. What would be the effect if this were to be carried on? It would be in the power of the Government to suspend the rights of many a constituency. Let them see how the matter stood. Last Session the subject came before the House, and the Resolution which was proposed by the Attorney General was rejected, not by a Party majority. He would read what was said by the hon. Member for Bolton (Mr. J. K. Cross). That hon. Member said—

> "I must say that in the sense of Southern corruption, the borough of Wigan is perfectly pure. I live within seven miles of the place, and I know it perfectly well. The people are rough and ready, and a great many of them are colliers, who are certainly a dog-running, pigeon-flying, cock-fighting, Church-and-King lot, who always vote Tory."—[3 *Hansard*, cclxv. 508]

Well, no doubt, in the mind of the hon. and learned Attorney General, that was the chief fault—that they were a dog-fighting, pigeon-flying, Church-and-King-loving lot. What he asked the House to consider was what grounds were presented for depriving the constituency of Wigan of the right to be represented by two Members in the House. He supposed they would draw from the Attorney General whether he had made up his mind on the subject of an Address to the Crown for a Commission. Most likely he had not changed his mind, and the House had not changed its mind. That being so, the House had no proper function to discharge in connection with the suspension of the Writ. He quite admitted that before the Corrupt Practices Act was passed, when it became competent to the Crown to issue a Commission, it was customary for the House to exercise a kind of peremptory action on the constituency by suspending the Writ; but he challenged the hon. and learned Attorney General to find a single case since the Corrupt Practices Act where a Commission was refused analogous to the case before the House. He would have to go back to a time before the Corrupt Practices Act, when there was no power to inquire into the condition or conduct of a constituency to find a case where the House had refused to issue a Writ. When the Corrupt Practices Act was passed, the right of a constituency was not placed at the caprice of a Party. It was taken out of the hands of the House, and remitted in the first instance to an authorized tribunal. He would ask the hon. and learned Attorney General where was his precedent since the Corrupt Practices Act was passed, after a Commission had been refused for a detention of a Writ for over 12 months, as in this case? He asked him, further, how was it possible for him to escape from the precedent he himself set in the Stroud case, where the House refused to suspend the Writ for three or four days even for the evidence to be placed on the Table? The Attorney General then said it was perfectly useless, and that no further step should be taken; and, therefore, they ought not to do any indirect injustice to the constituency, and he would be no party to it. The Attorney General by his own act, and the House by its own act, had renounced the intention of issuing a Commission, and they had now only the will of the Government and the will of the Attorney General, who thought, probably, that Wigan had not been punished enough. No doubt that was his opinion; probably many others might think it was so. This case was a miserable case. Learned Judges could make mistakes, and they did so in the case of Knaresborough. The Judges in that case made a grievous mistake, for there was not the smallest ground for the slur on the constituency contained in their Report; and, therefore, it was allowed to go scot-free. He would appeal to independent Members opposite, and ask them if they were going to vote against this Writ because it might produce an increase in the Party minority of one? He did not know how the result might be; but this he would say, that there existed the gravest reason why Members of the House should not vote in a Party sense in a matter like this. He thought Election Petitions were given up in order to extract altogether from the domain of opinion the action of the House in election matters; but now he supposed they were going to be appealed to by the Attorney General to punish this borough. If that was the appeal he made, that 12 months' privation was not sufficient, he (Mr. Lewis) would ask the House to consider what was the nature of the case provided. He challenged the Attorney General to show that there was anything more than a few pounds proved to have been received. When the House was asked to issue a Commission, there was a majority against it. If it was said that the House exceeded its right last year, he was unable to understand how it was the Act of Parliament did not call upon the Attorney General to do, as an Executive Officer, a particular thing outside the Office, but required that he should appeal to the deliberate action of the House as to whether it should or should not appoint a Commission. He contended that the action of the House was more Judicial than Ministerial. There must be something meant in the deliberate action of the House of Lords and House of Commons being called into operation under the Statute. If that was not so, the hon. and learned Attorney General was placed in this difficulty, that the House of Commons had refused to do that which by law it ought to have done. If that were so, surely the power of the Attorney General was sufficient to point out to the House what it should do now. Whatever the case might be in reference to that, the hon. and learned Attorney General was wholly unable to point out to the House any precedent or usage for refusing to issue a Writ for Wigan, and the House had no legitimate right whatever for interfering with the right of the constituency. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery to make out a new Writ for the election of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the Borough of Wigan, in the room of Francis Sharp Powell, esquire, whose election has been declared to be void."—(*Mr. Lewis.*)

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he was sure the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) would not have taken up the time of the House as he had done for any Party reasons, and he regretted that he should have suggested that the Government were opposed to the issuing of the Writ because it might give one vote against them in the House. He would, however, suggest to the House this consideration—that he believed that the House made a mistake last Session in refusing a Commission; and all they could do now was to remedy as far as possible the mistake that had been made. The House would allow him to remind them of the position in which they stood. When the Act of 1868 gave power to the Judges to determine Election Petitions, it also gave them power to say whether corrupt practices extensively prevailed; and it would be at once seen by the House that it would be impossible for the House to go beyond the decision of the Judges, and inquire into the correctness of their decision. In the year 1869 it was suggested by Mr. Gathorne Hardy that it would be for the general good that where the decision of the Judges showed that corrupt practices extensively prevailed, a Commission should issue in consequence of that Report. That rule was accepted by both sides of the House, and it had been followed ever since; and it was never deviated from until the unfortunate vote of last Session. He must say he felt some little blame attached to him in the matter; and the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) pointed it out at the time. He did not go very fully into the facts of the case. He referred to the general rule; and he thought that wrong arguments were brought to bear on the House, in order to set aside the rule which had been so long acted on. One was that of the hon. Member for Bolton (Mr. J. K. Cross), who argued that as the constituency was one of very peculiar habits it should be exempted from the ordinary practice. He presumed that the argument prevailed. At any rate, the House, by a narrow majority, refused the Motion for a Commission; and the question now was, what were they to do in consequence of that decision? The Report of the Judges was that corrupt practices extensively prevailed.

Mr. LEWIS begged the hon. and learned Gentleman's pardon; that was not the Report.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, that a Report that corrupt practices prevailed, or that the Judges had reason to believe that they prevailed, had exactly the same effect. There was no difference between the two, except in the hon. Gentleman's view, in the spirit in which he was discussing the matter. The learned Judge gave his judgment, not, as had been said, that there was a small amount of treating, but that there was a deplorable condition of things in the borough of Wigan, one witness proving extensive bribery of 150 voters in one room alone in one public-house. Another witness spoke of 20 persons being bribed; and the result was that the learned Judge, at page 220 of the Report, proceeded to deal with this as one of the gravest cases of corruption, and thought it to be a rare thing if the electors did not receive money for their votes. The House had now to deal with such a Report in such a state of things. The House thought it wise in August last that there should not be a Commission. If they were now to grant a Writ they would be giving great encouragement to corruption. He confessed that it was an inconvenient position to be placed in, because he admitted that the consequence of the Report should have been the issuing of a Commission; but they had deviated from the rule laid down. Ought they to make two mistakes instead of one; or ought they rather to do the best they could in order to remedy the mistake already made? The hon. Member challenged him to give a precedent for the course he (the Attorney General) had taken in suspending the Writ. The hon. Member knew there was no precedent. And why? Because the House had never before arrived at such a vote as that of August last. It always issued a Commission till that time; and this was a case in which a Commission ought to have been issued. He submitted to the House that the House ought to exercise its judgment. He was sorry to see the House placed in this position; but, being placed in that position, it was the duty of the House to treat cases as they arose. It would have been far better to let the Judges' Report have its proper result. The House had sufficient before them on which to act. If there had been a Commission, they would have been able to treat all the constituencies alike. Although a Commission had not issued, the House knew this was a case of considerable gravity. He had not thought it right to include Wigan in the Disfranchisement Bill, as he considered that disfranchisement ought only to be proposed upon such certain information as could be supplied by a Commission. What course ought the House to take? The hon. Member for Londonderry professed to be very anxious on behalf of the electors of Wigan that a Writ should issue; but the electors themselves had made no such demand to the House. Wigan was represented by his hon. Friend the sitting Member for Wigan, and it had able Representatives in the Members for the county of Lancaster. These Members had made no such demand. He could not help feeling that, considering the Report of the learned Judge, the suspension of the Writ should continue for some time longer, for the purpose of showing that the House entirely disapproved of the electoral corruption of Wigan. For this there was a precedent in the case of Gloucester in 1859. At the election which took place there that year it was reported that corruption extensively prevailed; but no step was taken for the issue of a new Writ for Gloucester till 1862, when Mr. Disraeli pointed out that the time had come when the Writ should be no longer delayed. A Writ was then moved for. He was acting within that period now. With reference to the borough of Stroud, he certainly did say the Writ ought to go in that case, because there was no corrupt practice but treating suggested, and he felt there could be no disfranchisement for that offence alone. There was no evidence that there had been bribery in Stroud. In reference to Wigan, however, when the Disfranchisement Bill came on it would be open to any Member to move to insert Wigan in the Schedule. But he did not recommend that course. It was not for him to determine the matter; but he would suggest that the House should not pass over the matter lightly or hastily, and the House should show that it disapproved of what had taken place. He could not fix one time more than another when the House should express its views; but if the House asked him he should say that as in Gloucester the Writ was suspended for three years, in the case of Wigan it might be for two years, and at the end of the present Session a Motion might be made for a new Writ. By taking that course the House would show that they had done something to mark their disapproval of the conduct of the electors, without acting with severity towards the constituency.

Baron DE FERRIERES said, he thought it was not only undesirable, but unfair, that any Member of the House should go on moving for new Writs for different boroughs in which he had no particular interest. He did not think that a place like Wigan could complain if its case were hung up till the whole question of corrupt boroughs had been considered by the House, though that Bill ought not to be delayed any longer than was necessary. He begged to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "no Writ be issued to fill up any vacancy occasioned by corrupt practices until this House has disposed of the Corrupt Practices (Disfranchisement) Bill,"—(*Baron de Ferrieres*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE said, he was anxious to call the attention of the House to the singular position in which it would be placed if it adopted the unconstitutional and arbitrary course suggested by the Attorney General. The precedent which the Attorney General had given for the course he proposed was that of the City of Gloucester. It was true that that unhappy City was found out in 1859, and the Government repeatedly resisted any proposal for a Writ. In 1861 Sir George Grey stated that the Government had resolved to ask the House to withhold the issue of a Writ for the City; but in 1862 the Government changed its mind, and a Writ was issued. It was alleged by the Attorney General that in the debate on the Writ Mr. Disraeli alluded to the suspension of the Writ for three years as a sufficient punishment. That was not a correct statement of his views. He did not say that the three years which had elapsed might be taken as a sufficient punishment upon Gloucester. On the contrary, alluding to the suspension of the Writs for Wakefield and Gloucester, Mr. Disraeli said, "that the suspension of those two Writs had been continuously arbitrary and unconstitutional." He further observed—"In 1861 the Government refused to introduce a Bill for the suspension of the Writ for three years, and that, neither the Government nor any Member making such a proposition, another year had passed, the arbitrary and unconstitutional suspension still remained." No language could more clearly show that it was not accurate to represent Mr. Disraeli as saying that, three years having elapsed, sufficient punishment had been inflicted, but that, on the contrary, from beginning to end, he spoke of the suspension of the Writ, unless it was with the intention of bringing in any measure for disfranchisement, as arbitrary and unconstitutional. There was also the authority of Sir George Grey, who, in the same debate, in consenting to the issue of the Writ, never said that Gloucester had been sufficiently punished, but put it upon Constitutional grounds. He stated that, while adhering to the opinion he had previously expressed, there were serious objections to the suspension of a Writ for a protracted period, without reference to any proceedings or any impending measure. He (Mr. E. Clarke) would ask the Government to act, not upon the suggestion of the Attorney General, but upon the principle laid down by Sir George Grey, that the suspension of a Writ was only to be justified when the Government was prepared to introduce, or the House was considering a Bill to disfranchise the borough. It would be a most serious innovation upon the Constitutional rights of constituencies, which had recently been so loudly and rightly proclaimed, that the majority for the movement should ask the House not to re-try a case, but to deprive constituencies of their representation, even when the Government was not prepared to legislate. Then, the Attorney General based his suggestion upon the fact that the House had refused to issue a Royal Commission. Through that refusal, he said, the matter was in the same form as it would have been before the Corrupt Practices Act had passed. That he entirely challenged. It was clear that upon receiving the Report of an Election Judge the House, if it chose, could vote for the issue of a Royal Commission, and, if that Commission reported against the borough, could proceed to deal with the subject by legislation. But if the House did not think sufficient ground had been shown for the issue of a Royal Commission, how could it be contended that its refusal to impose that penalty upon the borough enabled the majority of the House to inflict punishment as if that inquiry had taken place? Although the House had refused to try the people, it was contended that the House was entitled to punish them. Anything more monstrous could not be conceived. The Attorney General not only asked the House to punish where it had refused to try, but he asked it to form an opinion upon materials which he did not take the trouble to lay before it, and which he did not indicate in his speech. It was quite as arbitrary and unconstitutional to ask for the suspension of the Writ, under the circumstances, for the Session as for any length of time. Immense mischief would be inflicted upon the unhappy borough of Wigan by the course proposed. Till the month of August Wigan would be in the middle of a contested election, which would probably delight those who wished to see that borough disfranchised, as it would then have plenty of time in which to gratify any propensity for corruption it happened to possess, and so to render itself disqualified for the franchise. There was no proposal, either from the Government or from a private Member, for dealing with the matter in a Constitutional way; and the refusal of the Writ had become a matter to be dealt with simply by the arbitrary majority for the moment.

MR. THOMAS COLLINS said, he very much regretted the course the House took last Session on this matter. The position seemed to be that every borough must wait, if it had been guilty of any isolated act of corruption, till the Attorney General's Corrupt Practices Bill passed. He did not think that that was a fair thing to do, especially as many of the charges made were based upon the *ipse dixit* of one or two individuals. As a Representative of a borough, he recently had to pay a rate of 5*s.* in the pound, owing to the erroneous finding of the Judges, because they had no witness of truth. In 1859 there were no Royal Commissions issued for Wakefield and Stroud, and they were worse cases of corruption than some of those which had recently deprived boroughs of their representation. The question the House had to deal with was whether the Writ for Wigan should issue now, or at some future period. He thought the House came to an unfortunate decision last year, for the object of legislation of late years had been to remove these questions out of the hands of the House and treat them in a *quasi*-judicial manner. If, in these cases, the House were to pass over the Report of the Judges, it would revert to the vices of the old system, and the question would lapse into a contest between those Members of the House who wished a new Writ to issue, and to negative the decision of the Judges, and those who wished to support the decision. With regard to a Royal Commission, that could not be issued unless the statutory enactments were complied with; otherwise, it would be an illegal trial from beginning to end. The decision of last year was arrived at at the fag-end of the Session, and in a very thin House; and it was the duty of the Government to have afforded an opportunity of raising the discussion again. The main object of a Parliamentary Commission was not to punish individuals, but to eradicate corruption from boroughs. The House having committed one blunder last year, should be careful not to make another this year. Upon the whole, he thought the House was bound to issue the Writ; and he should, therefore, vote for its being issued.

MR. KNOWLES said, he wished to refer to one or two points raised in the observations of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr. E. Clarke). One was that very few Members of the House had read the Judge's Report. He was quite sure that the Attorney General had read it carefully and thoroughly, as he had acted wisely in not pressing for a Commission. It would have been found a very weak case indeed. Wigan had undoubtedly erred; but it was not so bad as Gloucester, Chester, and other places. No doubt, as the sitting Member was unseated, the constituency was to some extent guilty; but the Judges exonerated him from blame, and said he did all he could to avoid corruption. With reference to the second point, as to the issuing of a new Writ, he trusted that the Attorney General would reconsider his decision, which would be likely to plunge Wigan into a state of turmoil until the end of the Session. The House had not thought it necessary to act on the recommendation of the Election Judges to issue a Commission, and, in doing so, had acted wisely. He himself knew something of Wigan people, and he knew that a Commission would have been unnecessary, expensive, and not worth the trouble. And who were the people said to be guilty of corrupt action? Generally they were enthusiastic and indiscreet shopkeepers, who were giving free breakfasts right and left to everybody, both electors and non-electors, and, to some extent also, because they had an idea that it would afterwards assist their business. There had been a strike amongst the colliers for a long time, and they were then in the middle of it. There was great distress. The weather was very inclement and severe — the worst they had had, perhaps, for 50 years; and nearly all the railways in the Kingdom were snowed up, and what was done was more as an act of kindness than with intent to bribe. With reference to the observations which had been made last Session by the hon. Member for Bolton (Mr. J. K. Cross) as to the habits of the people of Wigan, and that they were a "Church and King loving" people, that was quite true. He (Mr. Knowles) was glad to say that they were. As to his description of their being a cock-fighting people, that was a mistake; and he (Mr. Knowles) did not believe there was any truth in the statement. He had been at some trouble to make inquiries as to this matter, and found it was not so. He had been brought up amongst the people and knew them well; and he thought they would compare favourably with the inhabitants of any similar manufacturing and mining district. The borough, however, was, to some extent, under a cloud; and, under the circumstances, he did not blame the Attorney General for objecting to grant the Writ at the present time. He hoped that the Motion would be withdrawn. He himself had not moved for the issue of a Writ, and would not have thought of doing so until nearer the end of the Session, because he considered that the borough deserved some punishment. He would be very glad, however, if the Attorney General would, without any long interval of time, again agree to issue the Writ, and so put the borough out of suspense, and prevent the turmoil and agitation of an impending election being spread over a long period.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, they found themselves in an unfortunate position. The Judges found there was bribery and treating; but the House refused to issue a Commission, and then arose the question, what was the Government to do? They, no doubt, acted wisely in not renewing the Motion for a Commission, and they were equally well-advised in not including Wigan in their Bill as a place to be punished by disfranchisement. The Attorney General, he thought, had acted very fairly. The question was—What was to be done in the present circumstances? Personally, he would not have moved in the matter at present, and he was very sorry the Writ had been moved for. He should have been content if the Writ had been moved for in the course of the present Session; but they were placed in a different position now that the Constitutional question had been raised and argued. It was a great stretch of power in the House to say, without the consent of the other House in an Act of Parliament, that they would punish a constituency by depriving it of representation. He was sorry the question was raised. He would not have raised it; but as it was raised, unless it was answered by the Government in some form, they would be entering upon a dangerous precedent, for the House would appear to be assuming, of its own authority and without a Bill, to deprive a constituency of a Member. It would have been better that the Constitutional question should have been avoided by acquiescence in the issue of the Writ in two or three months' time. But, the question having been raised, he could have no doubt as to the course that he ought to take.

Mr. MAC IVER said, he charged the Government with doing that in a political capacity which they would have been ashamed to do as private Members. The Government were not in earnest last year in moving for the issue of a Commission. If they had been in earnest they would easily have obtained the inquiry. He happened to know something about the borough of Wigan; and the sole reason why the Government refused to issue a Writ at the present moment was because the Conservatives had prematurely announced the name of the candidate they intended to run at the next election. The object of postponing the issue of a Writ until the end of the Session was obvious. They were prolonging the period over which the election agitation extended, in order that some injudicious agent might do something sufficiently technically illegal as to unseat the newly-elected Member. They knew, too, that if the election were to take place now they would lose the seat; and, like Mr. Micawber, they were waiting for something to turn up. The reasons given by the Attorney General for the postponement of the issue of the Writ were not the real reasons; and they were those which he (Mr. Mac Iver) had described to the House.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, he did not think the debate ought to be allowed to close without a further statement of the views and intentions of the Government. Last year the Government made a specific proposal to the House. The House, in its wisdom or its folly—he did not say which—declined to accede to the proposals. The speech of the Attorney General consisted mainly of the allegation that the House of Commons had last year made a mistake; and, no doubt, the House had made many mistakes; but if it had made one, that would be no reason why it should continue to make another. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr. E. Clarke) had pointed out that there was an essential difference between the case of Gloucester and the proposal now made by the Attorney General. The contention of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite apparently was that the penalty of temporary disfranchisement might be imposed by its own fiat, instead of by Statute. He proposed the disfranchisement of Wigan for a certain definite number of weeks; but what distinction was there in theory between the suspension of a Writ for a few weeks and for a few years? The hon. and learned Gentleman suggested that the Writ in question should issue at the end of the present Session; but could he guarantee that his Colleagues would be in favour of the proposal when the time came? The House ought seriously to consider the position in which it was placed. Two courses were open to the Government in dealing with this question; but they had adopted neither of them. They might have asked the House to rescind the Resolution to which it came last year, but they did nothing of the sort; they might have scheduled Wigan with the other boroughs in the Corrupt Practices Bill; but they preferred to leave it to be dealt with separately. The result, therefore, was the proposal of the Attorney General that the borough should be punished on its own *ipse dixit.* With respect to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Cheltenham (Baron De Ferrieres), he confessed that he could not understand it. The hon. Member asked the House not to issue the Writ for Wigan until the Corrupt Practices Bill had been disposed of. It seemed to him, as the Corrupt Practices Bill in no way affected Wigan, that the hon. Member might with equal relevancy have referred to the Boiler Explosions Bill, or the Churchwardens' Admission Bill. But the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite had said that the borough might, perhaps, be included in the Schedule of the Corrupt Practices Bill. He had heard of Governments fishing for a policy; but for the Government to invite other Members to insert Wigan in the Bill when they themselves had not the courage to include it was without parallel in the history of Parliament. The Bill had more relation to the larger Corrupt Practices Bill, which had been called a Bill for the prevention of Ministerial defeats at bye-elections. The course followed seemed to be adopted for the purpose of preventing constituencies from expressing their opinion of the Government of the day. He was convinced it was not guided by the calm and judicial mind of the Attorney General, but would more appropriately have emanated from the guiding spirit of the Caucuses. He trusted that before the debate closed some responsible Minister of the Crown would announce some definite course which the Government were prepared to submit to Parliament.

Mr. WARTON said, that the right tone had been given to the discussion by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross), who would not have brought forward the matter, but held that it had now become a grave Constitutional question. After what the Attorney General had said, it would be well, perhaps, if on another occasion the hon. and learned Gentleman simply announced, without giving reasons, the decision to which the despotic Government had come. The hon. and learned Gentleman had mentioned the case of Gloucester as a precedent; but he held that if Wigan was to be punished at all, it could not possibly be punished in a more undesirable manner. It was not necessary to punish Wigan, because they had no power to punish Wigan. They were living now in times when they had a despotic Prime Minister and a despotic Attorney General; and he would ask the latter hon. and learned Gentleman, in view of the small allowance for election expenses provided in his Bill, whether it would be wrong for the popular candidate at Wigan to hire a single committee-room, or appoint a single agent, or to issue a statement to the effect that he intended to come forward?

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT cordially supported the Motion, observing that the Motion for issuing a Royal Commission had been defeated last year, almost at the close of the Session, on a Saturday afternoon, by a majority of only 6, in a House of no more than 80 Members; and its decision on that occasion, therefore, did not carry with it very great weight. Since then nothing had been done by the Government, although eight months had elapsed since the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had moved to issue the Writ last August. The constituency of Wigan had, consequently, had no opportunity of defending itself against the charges of corruption made against it; and he (Sir Eardley Wilmot) considered it unjust, under these circumstances, to deprive it of the privilege of returning a Member. It looked as if the Government were applying a Coercion Act to Wigan; and he, therefore, while he considered that a Royal Commission ought to have been again moved for at the beginning of the present Session, should cordially support the Motion of the hon. Member for Londonderry.

MR. LEWIS, in reply, observed, that surprise had been expressed that he should have moved the issue of this Writ. The despotism of the Liberal Party, which had been displayed on so many occasions, now came to this—that a Member of that House was to be told by Members on the other side in bringing forward a grave Constitutional question—"Oh, you are only Member for so-and-so." He was aware that certain Members of the House usually moved the issue of new Writs; but there never was a Rule which prevented any Member of that House, if he thought a particular constituency was being ill-treated by the manner in which its rights were being disregarded by the House, or any Member of the House, from presenting himself as a supporter and upholder, not of a constituency, but of Constitutional Law. The hon. Member for Cheltenham thought it quite right that Cheltenham should interfere, but not Londonderry, though Wigan was on the way to Londonderry. The hon. Gentleman interfered, it would seem, because he (Mr. Lewis) had postponed his Motion from Monday week; but he did that because he did not want to stand in the way of the Budget; and yet the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, in his opening statement, while making pointed reference to the courtesy of another, took no notice of what he had done. He would tell the House very frankly why he had taken up these election cases; and he should take them up until he drove the Government to bring forward the Corrupt Practices (Disfranchisement) Bill. It was this, and he would say it in the face of the House. The Attorney General had deliberately kept that Bill back. Instead of producing that Bill, he had brought forward a general one relating to the future. The truth was, the hon. and learned Gentleman did not like to produce the Bill; but, until the Government did so, he should avail himself of every possible opportunity of challenging their conduct. The whole subject-matter of the Attorney General's speech amounted to this—that he quoted one precedent, a precedent which was totally inapplicable to the circumstances of the case, for which he was obliged to go to a time anterior to the period when Commissions proved to be no precedent at all. It seemed to him that what they had to consider on the present occasion were the rights of the Wigan constituency and the question of Constitutional representation; and consequently, under the circumstances, he should consider it his duty to go to a division.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—

The Tellers being come to the Table, Lord Kensington, one of the Tellers for the Noes, informed Mr. Speaker that an honourable Member had remained in the Right Lobby without voting.

Mr. Arthur Vivian thereupon came to the Table, and said that not having heard the Question put, he had not voted.

Whereupon Mr. Speaker stated to him the Question, and he declared that he voted with the Noes.

The Tellers accordingly declared the numbers Ayes 142; Noes 220: Majority 78.—(Div. List, No. 75.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he hoped, now that the views of the Attorney General had been made known, the Amendment would be withdrawn.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) joined in this appeal. The moment was inopportune for pressing the subject.

MR. SPEAKER said, that, by leave of the House, the Amendment might be withdrawn.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

STATE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS — THE IRISH POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT.—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

MR. GLADSTONE: Mr. Speaker, it had been my intention, on the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Member opposite (Sir John Hay), and as most conformable to the liberty and practice of the House, to advert, during the debate which I believe to be impending, to several matters of importance connected with the condition of Ireland, rather than to touch them in answer to a Question, or still less to seek an opportunity of making a short explanation. In consequence, however, of the difference of the Rules in "another place," and of proceedings which I understand are likely to take place there, it has appeared to me it would be most for the convenience of the House, especially in view of the Notice standing in the name of the right hon. and gallant Baronet, that I should ask permission of the House to make a very short statement, for the purpose of giving to it, I think, in brief compass, all the information which is in my power. Sir, I do not, I may say, on this occasion intend to make any reference to changes in the Land Act, because I have already partially and generally opened the views of the Government on one of the most important points which we think it our duty to open—namely, the question of arrears, a point, I may say, of the most pressing and immediate importance; and I also stated that an early opportunity would arise for touching on another point of great importance and interest—the question of the Purchase Clauses. With regard to other matters, although they are important also, I need not say anything of them. Other opportunities will offer for dealing with them more properly. But the three questions upon which I wish to give some information to the House are, the resignation of the Viceroy, the course which the Government have taken with respect to certain persons imprisoned in Ireland—particularly and primarily the three Members of this House—and the consequence it has entailed upon us (the Government); and, lastly, the intentions we entertain, so far as time permits us at present, to declare and exhibit those intentions in respect to legislation in Ireland. The House already is aware that my noble Friend (Earl Cowper), the loss of whose services we greatly regret, has resigned the Office of Viceroy of Ireland. I was asked yesterday whether he had resigned on political or on personal grounds; and I could not adopt with accuracy, or at least without fear of misapprehension, either of those grounds, for if I had said that my noble Friend had resigned on political grounds, I should have been understood to imply that he had resigned on the ground of policy, and because he differed in view from the Government and his Colleagues on public questions. That is not so, and neither has he resigned, I may say, upon personal grounds. It was his desire to give up his Office; but that desire did not take effect without reference to other considerations, and the consideration which induced the Government to recommend to Her Majesty that my noble Friend's resignation should be accepted was the desire they felt to have the advantage of carrying on the operations of the Executive

Government in Ireland, in the present critical circumstances of the country, with the highest degree of authority that could possibly be made to attach to them—namely, under the direct action and the full responsibility of a Member of Her Majesty's Government. That, I think, is all that I need say on the subject of the resignation of my noble Friend. I proceed to another subject—indeed, to two subjects, both of which are embraced by the Notice which stands on the Paper for to-night. I have to state that directions have been sent to Ireland for the release forthwith of the three Members of this House who have been imprisoned since October last, under the powers given by the Protection of Person and Property Act. The list of persons similarly imprisoned will be carefully examined further, with a view to the release, in accordance with like principles and considerations, of all persons who are not believed to be associated with the commission of crime. This measure has been taken by the Government on its own responsibility—[*Laughter from the Opposition Benches*]—after gathering all the information which it was in their power to extract, either through the medium of debate in this House, or by availing themselves of such communications as were tendered to them by Irish Representatives, and this without the slightest reference to their previous relations to those Irish Representatives, but simply with relation to what they believed to be the public interest. But they deemed it to be a part of their duty to ascertain, so far as might be in their power, the views and intentions of those hon. Gentlemen who are chosen to represent Ireland in this House with reference to the present position of public affairs in that country. I observed that when I said that this action was taken upon the responsibility of Her Majesty's Government, there appeared to be Gentlemen in this House who thought that to be an announcement of very trivial importance. In my view, it is far otherwise. The responsibility is serious, and the responsibility is undivided. Were that release a release determined upon in concert with, or in negotiation with, others, I should not have been able to use, in the full and plenary sense of the view which I have used, the phrase that I have employed and employ again, when I say, Sir, that this is an act taken on our own responsibility alone, and done in the strict pursuance of the principles on which our policy has been founded all along—[*Renewed laughter*]—with reference, and with paramount reference, to the maintenance of law and order in Ireland, which we believe it will promote—a belief in which I can assure hon. Gentlemen we are not likely to be shaken. And, finally, it is, as I have already said, an act done without any negotiation, promise, or engagement whatsoever. This act, Sir, has entailed upon us a lamentable consequence — namely, the resignation of my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. W. E. Forster), who declines to share our responsibility in this matter, and who, in consequence, has tendered his resignation of the high Office which he has held and discharged with such unwearied diligence, and marked ability, and such unfailing patriotism. It is not for me to explain, before my right hon. Friend does so himself, the view by which he has been actuated; and he will not be in a position to explain that view until he obtains the sanction of Her Majesty to his resignation; but he hopes to be able to offer his personal explanation not later than upon Thursday next. Sir, in conjunction with this subject, I think it is right that I should advert to the legislative intentions which Her Majesty's Government entertain—in few words, but, I hope, in words which will not be found deficient in clearness, having regard to the time at which, and the circumstances under which, they are spoken. In the first place, we do not at present contemplate asking Parliament to renew the Protection of Person and Property Act; but it is my duty to point out that no final judgment can be formed at the present date upon a question of this paramount character, with regard to which the contingency immediately embraced in it is still placed at a considerable distance. The second statement I have to make is that, so soon as the necessary Business of the House of Commons will permit, we shall ask leave to introduce a Bill to strengthen the ordinary law, and to meet difficulties such as have been experienced in the administration of justice, and in defending and securing private rights in Ireland. By the necessary Business of the House of Commons, perhaps I ought to say that I mean the

Resolutions upon Procedure, which, in our view, lie at the very root and threshold of the whole performance by the House of Commons of its duty, and the transaction of Business in relation to money, with regard to which, as the House well knows, legal necessities are laid upon us. Anything, in fact, which could not fairly be called of that exceptional character, I do not include in necessary Business. But what I meant to convey to the House is this—that of all the legislation which we have hoped and desired to undertake, and which we have engaged, as far as it is in our power, to undertake, by the Speech delivered from the Throne at the commencement of the Session, no part will be allowed to interfere with the prosecution of the purpose which I have just described—namely, to satisfy what we conceive to be the demands of the necessity with regard to future legal provision for peace and tranquillity, and the enforcement of law in Ireland. I may add that we are now engaged in considering the details of the measure; and it should be clearly understood, after what I have said, that the Business of optional legislation will not be allowed to interfere with our proceedings in this respect. I ought, perhaps, to say, after the expectation that I have expressed—the sanguine expectation, or, at any rate, the very anxious expectation, with regard to the Protection of Person and Property Act—I ought, perhaps, to make one special reservation, not in contradiction, nor even, perhaps, in limitation of what I have said. It has relation to secret societies; and should it unhappily appear to us that the peace and security of Ireland are put in jeopardy by the members of secret societies, in that case, whatever might be our view as to the Protection of Person and Property Act in general, we should think it our duty to propose, as against their members, either a continuance of the present powers, or the enactment of any other powers which we might believe to be more effectual for the securing of life and property. I have only, I think, one word more to say. In expressing the hope and expectation that we may not be called upon to ask the House to re-enact the Protection of Person and Property Act, I do not intend to suggest, on the part of the Government retrospectively, any change in their view. We have no authority, more than others, to speak upon this subject, and many hon. Members in that quarter of the House (the Home Rule Benches)—perhaps some on this side of the House—may differ from us in the opinion we entertain; but we do not agree with those who hold that the Act has failed, for we think that it has served a most important purpose, in enabling us to confront a great crisis, which, without that Act, we do not see in what way we could have had adequate opportunities of meeting. That, I think, is all it is my purpose at present to say, and I hope I have clearly conveyed to the House the intentions we entertain, and I thank the House for the great and kind attention which I have received during this statement from the great body of the House.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Mr. Speaker, I am well aware that it is most irregular to address any observations to the House upon the statement we have just heard, yet I think the House will, under the circumstances, extend its indulgence to me for a very short time. The Prime Minister has, in the closing words of his very important statement, expressed his acknowledgment to the House for the patience and the manner with which it has listened to him, and I can hardly imagine that any statement could have been possibly made that would have more thoroughly have arrested the attention, the breathless attention, of hon. Members on both sides of the House. From word to word, and from passage to passage of the Prime Minister's speech we necessarily hung upon his words, absolutely ignorant of what might be coming next, and feeling that his communication had reference to one of the most important subjects that could possibly be brought before us. I must frankly say that, having listened to the statement that has just been made, I am still more surprised than I was before that that statement was not previously made, and made in a manner independently of the Motion of which Notice has been given. Surely the reasons which have led to that statement being made to-night might have been foreseen, and might have led the Government to take this into its consideration in a more direct manner than they proposed to do, but not, I admit, more frankly than they have now done. There are several parts of that statement on which it would be premature at present for anyone to offer an opinion. We require more information. We require to know the reasons upon which the Government have proceeded in some of the very important steps upon which they have decided, as they tell us, on their own responsibility. The Prime Minister seemed to wonder that there should have been any sensation in the House on his making use of the expression that the Government had taken upon themselves to release certain hon. Members of this House, and to consider the case of certain other persons who are at present imprisoned under the Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, and that they had made that decision on their own responsibility. The House, I think, would have been puzzled to know upon what other shoulders to lay the responsibility. However that may be, the feeling of the House now, I think, is that we should know the grounds on which the decision was arrived at. But there was a very strange light, or rather a very important light, thrown upon the expression used by the Prime Minister by almost the next following words of the right hon. Gentleman, which were to the effect that the late Chief Secretary for Ireland, as I am sorry to say we must now call him, had refused to share that responsibility; and that circumstance, I need not say, intensifies in the most remarkable manner the importance of the step on which the Government have decided. Under any circumstances, to be told, and told without reasons given for the decision, that the Government have decided to make so vital a change, so important a change, in the policy which they have been pursuing for a considerable time, and upon which they have from time to time appealed for the support of the House, would have been startling, and would have required consideration; but when they tell us that a Minister—not only one of their Colleagues, but the special Colleague who has been responsible for the administration of the Act in Ireland, who has had the most intimate knowledge of the state of the country, and who knows not only what the state of the country has been hitherto, but what it is at the present moment—when they tell us that he declines to share that responsibility, they really present to us a condition of affairs so grave that it is quite impossible to exaggerate it. The right hon. Gentleman has said, with perfect truth, that it would but be in accordance with the usual Parliamentary practice and the proper courtesies of official life to give the right hon. Gentleman who has now resigned his Office an opportunity of stating to the House the reasons which have led him to separate himself from his Colleagues; and he has also mentioned, what is perfectly well known to all, that the right hon. Gentleman cannot make such a statement until he has obtained Her Majesty's permission, and we are promised that such statement shall be made on Thursday. At present, therefore, it would be clearly premature for us to come to any final decision or opinion with regard to the conduct of Her Majesty's Government in this matter until we have heard the promised statement on Thursday, that will then be made, and which we shall await with the greatest interest and anxiety; but even now there are one or two points upon which, in the absence of that statement, I think, perhaps, I may be allowed to make one or two remarks. The right hon. Gentleman has told us that it is intended not only to release the three imprisoned Members of this House, but to consider the other cases of persons who are imprisoned under the Act, and who are not associated in the commission of crime. [Mr. GLADSTONE: Not believed to be.] Well, not believed to be. I suppose that is intended to point to the distinction that is to be drawn between a number of persons who are imprisoned on charges of being reasonably suspected of murder, or inciting to murder, or other outrages, and those who are guilty of intimidation or inciting others to desist from the payment of rent. But I should like to know another point with regard to that. There are certain persons in prison on a charge of being suspected of treasonable practices, and I should like to know what category they come under? I should like to know whether that is a charge that is to be treated lightly, or is to be treated seriously? Is it to be treated like a charge of using violent language, or is it to be treated as one of a very serious character? I cannot help observing that that charge is made against two of the Members of this House who are to be liberated; and, therefore, I presume that the mere fact of being reasonably suspected of treasonable practices is not to be held as a ground for retaining those persons in prison; but I shall be glad to know whether the serious charge is to be passed over, or whether any especial notice is to be taken of persons who are so charged; because, when considering the question of law and order, we should know whether that is to be regarded as a serious charge. It is all very well for the Prime Minister to say that the Government are proceeding on the principles which they have always proceeded. In respect to a great many matters, I have no doubt but it will strike many persons as most probable that the Government are making a very serious and extraordinary change—they are, to use an expression that has become familiar to us, swapping horses while crossing the stream in a very strange and inconvenient manner; still, I am bound to say that, to a certain extent, I do admit they are proceeding on the principles on which it seems to me they have all along proceeded. Those principles are somewhat those of a pendulum which swings sometimes to the one side and sometimes to the other. I can conceive nothing more likely to weaken the authority of the Government, in the very difficult and important task on which they have entered in dealing with the state of things in Ireland, than the impression which is likely to be conveyed that they are hesitating and uncertain in their policy—that they are pursuing a policy which they have not themselves thought out to its ultimate issues. Even the manner in which the announcement is made to-day all tends in the same direction. They would not announce it until they had an opportunity—until some independent Member of the Opposition brings forward a proposal to serve as a convenient peg on which they might make their statement. They would not state all their proposals on the Land Act until they had an opportunity of which they could take advantage, and so forth. They are, apparently, without a policy which they have themselves sought and decided on, and which they are prepared to recommend on their own responsibility to the House. They are casting about for opportunities which are offered to them from one quarter and another. I am sorry that is the line they take, for I do not think it is to the advantage of the country. I think we ought to have some further information from the Government. I should like to impress upon the Government, and I think we ought all to press upon them, that they should lose no time in this matter, and that they should take up a decided attitude, and not allow the grass to grow under their feet. The Government, I believe, have been weakened, as I believe we have weakened ourselves, by making demonstrations, and by holding out expectations, and even using threats, and then hanging the matter up for a considerable time until the force of the thing had worn itself out. If the policy is to release not only the large number of persons who are imprisoned under the Coercion Act without any statement to justify it, but with such authority against it as their own Chief Secretary, I say they ought to come forward and make their statement as a whole, and not in piecemeal fashion, pressing it forward in the most vigorous and rapid manner, and in a manner which would give the House an opportunity of considering it fully while they have time and opportunity. Undoubtedly I make that observation with reference to the extraordinary statement of the right hon. Gentleman, when, after he told us he would take the measure to which he refers as the very first measure after those which were of a necessary character, he tells us that among these necessary measures he includes the Resolutions for altering the Procedure of the House. Of course, if that is intended to be a mode of putting pressure upon the House with regard to forcing through the Rules on Procedure, it is very clever. If it is the idea of the right hon. Gentleman that that is a Business which it is necessary to proceed with and to get through with before he can make this statement of the full intentions of the Government, I think the prospect before us is of a very unsatisfactory kind. I apologize to the House for speaking at all. I am sorry to trespass on its time; but I do feel that we require further information on this subject, and I hope that on Thursday an opportunity will be given us of very fully considering the statements which have been made. There is one question which I do not know if I have the right to ask; but which, if I am not wrong in asking it, I should be glad to be informed upon. I was struck with the statement which was made by the right hon. Gentleman with reference to Lord Cowper. Lord Cowper is a Nobleman for whom everyone has the highest respect, and of whom, as a man who is patriotic and thoroughly conscientious, we should all speak with respect and admiration. But the right hon. Gentleman told us that Lord Cowper had resigned the high Office of Lord Lieutenant upon this ground—that he wished that operations in Ireland should be carried on under——

MR. GLADSTONE: No, no.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Because he wished that the Government should have the opportunity of making——

MR. GLADSTONE: No, no.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Well, I have no right to ask on what grounds Lord Cowper gives up his Office, unless the right hon. Gentleman volunteers some statement on the subject. I am not questioning Lord Cowper's conduct; but the point to which I am coming is this—that either Lord Cowper desired, or the Government accepted, his resignation of Office, on the ground that it was desirable they should carry on their operations in Ireland with the highest degree of authority that could be attached to them, by having them under the direct control of the Members of the Cabinet. Well, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had some share in the deliberations of the Cabinet. The point I wished to remark upon was this—Was Lord Cowper's resignation sent in, or accepted, before or after the resignation of the Chief Secretary for Ireland? As long as the Chief Secretary for Ireland held Office he was a man in the highest authority, holding a Cabinet Office in connection with the discharge of his duties. Are we to understand that the object of Lord Cowper's resignation was to supply the way for a Cabinet Minister, consequent upon the loss of one by the intended resignation of the Chief Secretary? [MR. GLADSTONE: No.] I should think not. Then, is it thought desirable—really I do not like to ask many questions about it; but we really ought to know whether it is thought necessary that there should be two Members of the Cabinet—is it thought necessary, for the future administration of Ireland, there should be both the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the Lord Lieutenant in the Cabinet? I need not say that it is a very novel arrangement; but it is so important that we ought to have some explanation on the subject, and I should really be glad to know whether it is intended that the right hon. Gentleman's (Mr. Forster's) place should be filled by the appointment of some other Cabinet Minister, or whether it is intended to dispense with the Chief Secretary in the Cabinet, or dispense with the Chief Secretary altogether? These are matters that I ask about, and I should think they are matters that the House, interested as it is in the maintenance of law and order in Ireland, ought to be informed upon.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he was well aware that the Forms of the House did not permit them to discuss the important statement made by the Prime Minister; but even if those Forms had allowed discussion now, it did not appear to him that there was anything in that statement calling for immediate debate—at least, so far as the Irish Members were concerned. It appeared to him that the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) had gone either a little too far, or not quite far enough, in the discussion. It seemed to him quite plain that if a full and satisfactory debate on the statement of the Prime Minister could not be entered upon now, it would be better to leave the question undebated altogether for the present. They had had from the Prime Minister what were merely suggestions of legislation—they had no material upon which to form any opinion. The right hon. Gentleman told them he intended to deal with the question of the arrears, and with the Purchase Clauses of the Land Act; but, as a matter of course, until they knew what his propositions were, it would be idle to anticipate and discuss them. Then, as regarded his dealings with Coercion, they only knew that, under certain conditions, he would propose certain measures. They did not know whether these measures were to be more sharp or less sharp than those now in existence. Under such circumstances, it would be vain to discuss the subject. But he would take the liberty of asking the right hon. Gentleman three questions. One was in reference to the resignation of the late Chief Secretary for Ireland. He might say for himself and for those around him that they were not disposed to indulge in any unseemly exultation over the fall of the right hon. Gentleman; but he would like to ask the Prime Minister whether a successor had yet been nominated? He would like to ask, also, as the second question, whether the Government intended to attempt the complete re-organization of what he might call the mechanism of administration in Ireland, beginning with Dublin Castle, and going down through all the hierarchy of the magistracy and police? In the third place, he should like to ask, in reference to the announcement which had just been made of that act of mere justice, propriety, and prudence—namely, the release of the State prisoners—he should like to ask whether Her Majesty's Government would not extend the same release to Michael Davitt?

Earl Percy rose to address the House, when——

Mr. SPEAKER, interposing, said, the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government had made a Ministerial Statement; but, there being no Motion before the House, a debate upon that statement could hardly be allowed.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I beg to notice very briefly the questions that have been put to me by right hon. and hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side. I think it is part of my duty to answer the questions which have been put on behalf of a Party or section of this House. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote) asks me whether the date of Lord Cowper's resignation was anterior or posterior to the resignation of my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster). It was anterior to that resignation, and the two resignations are totally disconnected the one from the other. The right hon. Gentleman, I think, also asked whether we had any reasons to give for the release of the "suspects." Defined as it was defined in my statement, we have given the reason which, we think, is the only and the sufficient reason—namely, that, in our belief, it is conducive to the interests of law, order, and security in Ireland. When that proposition is challenged, I shall be prepared to defend it. With respect to the questions of the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy), I may state that no Chief Secretary has yet been named as successor to my right hon. Friend. With respect to the release of Michael Davitt, that is a question totally distinct from the release of the "suspects;" and it is one which it may be right for Her Majesty's Government to consider; but it is one which they have not taken into consideration as a portion of the same subject. In respect to the total and complete re-organization of the Government of Ireland, beginning with Dublin Castle and going down to the magistrates and police, I must confess that when I heard that question put by the hon. Member I blessed the simplicity of mind which could suppose, as I have no doubt he did, in perfect good faith, that the total re-organization of the Government in Ireland is a thing that can be dealt with by the stroke of a pen, or by a particular Resolution. In my opinion, and I think I may say in the opinion of my Colleagues, there is a great deal to be done in regard to the re-organization of the Government of Ireland; and I feel that, without working in that direction and in that sense, we shall not permanently attain the object we have in view; but I cannot state the degree and the time any operation can be made in a matter so difficult and multiform, and I am sure the hon. Member will not press me upon it.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to remind the right hon. Gentleman of the Question which I put to him, as to whether there was to be a Chief Secretary in the Cabinet?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I will make the announcement about the Chief Secretary as soon as possible. I have made the announcement of the resignation of my right hon. Friend; but that is a very recent and extraordinary event indeed. The directions that went to Ireland on this subject only went to-day; and, of course, all I can say is, that it will be our duty, in the present situation of Irish affairs, if on no other account, to proceed with all expedition that the state of Business will allow, and to make what may be deemed to be, on the whole, the best arrangements.

Mr. CHAPLIN begged leave to move the adjournment of the House, in order that he might put a few questions to the Prime Minister. Substantially, the announcement of policy just made was to a certain effect, and he could well fancy how that new hope would be raised in Ireland, and the people would most appropriately sing—

"Sound the loud timbrel o'er Ireland's blue sea;
The Land League has triumphed, the 'suspects' are free."

Such information would be astounding if it came from any Government except the present Government of never-ending vacillation. The question he wished to ask was, if the "suspects" were to be released now, why were they imprisoned at all? He thought he could throw some light upon the question by referring to the authority of the Prime Minister himself. The Prime Minister, speaking at the Guildhall on October 14, 1881, said, in reference to the arrest of Mr. Parnell—

> "Within these few moments I have been informed that towards the vindication of law, of order, of the rights of property, of the freedom of the land, of the first elements of political life and civilization, the first step has been taken in the arrest of the man who has made himself beyond all others prominent in the attempt to destroy the authority of the law, and to substitute what would end in being nothing more nor less than anarchical oppression exercised upon the people of Ireland."

He asked the right hon. Gentleman to consider this question. Had law and order, had the rights of property, was the freedom of the land, had the first elements of political life and civilization been vindicated, or had they not? Had the purpose of that arrest been fulfilled or not? Was the state of things in Ireland better or worse than when that arrest received the commendation of the right hon. Gentleman? If not, then, why were the "suspects" to be released? He did not wish to enter upon a debate now; but he pressed the Government—and after the right hon. Gentleman's assertion that there was other necessary Business standing in the way he had a right to press the Government—for an explicit and early reply to those questions. That answer could not be, and must not be, long delayed, because the Government must remember that, as must be apparent to every section of the House, their policy of to-day was an absolute condemnation of their policy in October, and their policy in October was no less an absolute condemnation of their policy of to-day. He trusted, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman would reconsider his decision. And, really, when the right hon. Gentleman talked of other necessary Business, he (Mr. Chaplin) asked what Business could be more necessary than the preservation of life in Ireland? To talk of proceeding with those Procedure Resolutions of the Government, when such issues of life and death were at stake in Ireland, was like Nero fiddling when Rome was burning. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman, before they separated that evening, would give them a distinct assurance that, on the earliest possible opportunity, that complete and absolute reversal of the whole Irish policy of the Government would be submitted, as submitted it ought to be and must be, to the judgment of the House of Commons.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

Mr. HUSSEY VIVIAN said, he wished to ask the right hon. and gallant Member for the Wigton Burghs (Sir John Hay) whether, after the statement which had been made to the House by the Prime Minister that afternoon, he intended to proceed with the Motion which stood on the Paper in his name with regard to the administration of Ireland?

Sir JOHN HAY said, that, so far as he was at present advised, his intention was to proceed with the Motion at 9 o'clock, if he found a House there at the Evening Sitting willing to listen to him.

Mr. SEXTON said, he could not share in any attempt which might be made to draw from the Government, at the present moment, a more explicit explanation than the Premier had made. The Government had had, in a very difficult crisis, to consider a subject embracing many branches, and one of extreme delicacy and importance; and he could not help declaring his personal conviction that the First Minister of the Crown, in his statement made that day, had been as explicit as could fairly be expected, considering all the circumstances of the case. It might be true, as had been said, that the present policy of the Government was one which was in condemnation of that which they pursued in October last. He was not concerned to drive the comparison home. It was enough for him if the policy which they now foreshadowed was a better policy for his country than that which they had adopted before, and he most certainly believed it was so; and, while following the example of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote), he left in reserve and undiscussed the various branches of the Irish Question that would presently come up for discussion and settlement, he said with all the emphasis in his power that he believed that the one act which had been specifically announced —the release of the three Members of that House who had been kept for six months in gaol—was an act well calculated, in the language of the right hon. Gentleman, to advance the interests of law and order in Ireland. The statement of the right hon. Gentleman on that subject had been received with marked demonstrations of approval in that part of the House; but it had been received with demonstrations of another kind by those whose policy in regard to Ireland was coercion alone. But the right hon. Gentleman, in his long life, and in the many and varied scenes and achievements in which he had taken part, had never spoken truer words than when he said that the release of those three hon. Gentlemen would tend to the advancement of law and order in Ireland. He (Mr. Sexton) invited the right hon. Gentleman to look forward with confidence to the future consequences of that act; he invited him to consider what would be its effect on the minds of the Irish people. He invited him to consider that every day that they detained those hon. Gentlemen in prison was a day added to the inflamed passions and deepening hatred towards the British Government which existed in the breasts of the Irish people; and he asked any man, with the mind of a statesman, what would be the effect of keeping in force such an influence? Unquestionably, the effect of that announcement — though it was a limited and partial one—which had been made that afternoon would, he believed, be immediate and salutary. And he would further say that, for his part, he believed, if the Government only courageously continued in the path in which they had taken the first step that day—if, instead of relying upon repressive laws, opposed to the sympathies of the people, they followed up the axiom long since delivered by the right hon. Gentleman, that this was an Empire which did not rest on repression, but on free opinion; if they applied that axiom to Ireland, if they advanced boldly in regard to the matter of arrears, in regard to the Land Question, and also in the recognition of the national claims of the Irish people, the Government would find that they had taken the first step in a policy that would crown the Ministry which had begun in disgrace with glory, and that would create ties of affection and mutual interest between nations which had been long separated in feeling.

EARL PERCY said, he wished to ask the Prime Minister whether the Business referred to in his statement included the whole of the Resolutions, or only the 1st Resolution; and whether the Corrupt Practices Bill was one of the measures?

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF also wished to ask the Prime Minister whether the release of the three Members of the House who had been confined as "suspects" was entirely unconditional, or whether any condition had been made for the withdrawal of the "no rent circular?"

MR. NEWDEGATE wished to warn the House of the possibility of the released Irish Members renewing their system of Obstruction to the Resolutions as to Procedure now under the consideration of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: I am bound to call the attention of the hon. Gentleman to the fact that the right hon. Gentleman's Resolutions in regard to Procedure are not now under consideration. They are appointed for consideration by-and-bye; but they are not now under consideration.

MR. NEWDEGATE proceeding, said, he hoped hon. Members on that side of the House would take care that they were not involved in the penal consequences of Obstruction, in which two of the hon. Members, who were to be released, rendered themselves particularly conspicuous. He trusted that they would see such a change in the manipulation of the Rules for insuring Order as would secure the House from the annoyance which compelled it to appoint the Committee of 1878. While guarding against the perpetual Obstruction of a small minority, they ought to be careful that they did not involve in the penal consequences of that Obstruction Members who had no responsibility for it.

SIR JOHN HAY said, the hon. Member for Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey

Vivian) had, a short time before, put a question to him (Sir John Hay) which he was unable to answer fully at the time. After consideration, however, and looking to the fact of the resignation of the late Chief Secretary for Ireland, he believed it would not be occupying usefully the time of the House were he to proceed with the Motion of which he had given Notice. He thought it would be more convenient for the House to wait until the late Chief Secretary could make his statement on Thursday; and, recognizing, as he did, the integrity and honour of that right hon. Gentleman, he thought it fair to allow him to make that statement to the House, and not call attention to facts which it would be his duty otherwise to have replied to. Under these circumstances, he thought it would be convenient to the House that he did not proceed at 9 o'clock to the Notice of Motion on the Paper.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, that perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister would state in what form this question would come up for consideration on Thursday? Of course, he quite agreed it would be undesirable that any debate should occur at the present time. On the announcement that the right hon. Gentleman had made, he (Mr. J. Lowther) did not care to say anything, for he had thought that was not the opportunity on which it could be done. He would only say that, altogether apart from the substance of his announcement with regard to the release of certain persons now in custody, he thought the conditions under which that release had taken place must be viewed apart from the release. He believed the general impression that would be produced throughout the country, when the two simultaneous announcements of the throwing overboard by Her Majesty's Government of one of their Colleagues, the release of these men, and of those other acts to which the right hon. Gentleman had referred were put together, would be that there had been an abdication of the Government *de jure* in favour of the Government *de facto* in Ireland. The matter would be regarded as nothing less than an ignominious surrender to the forces of disorder and crime.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, certain questions have been put to me, and I think it due to these hon. Gentlemen to make an answer to them. The noble Earl the Member for North Northumberland (Earl Percy) asks whether, when I spoke of Procedure, I spoke of one Resolution only? I spoke of a series of Resolutions. He also asked, whether the Corrupt Practices Bill is, in my view, included in the necessary legislation? I think I have already fully answered that question by saying that none of the measures to which I had referred at the commencement of the Session, and which belong to the category of optional legislation in a certain sense, however important and urgent they may be, would be allowed to interfere with the consideration of the measures of urgency relating to Ireland. I have only to confirm that answer. The hon. Gentleman the Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate) asks, whether the action of the Government upon Procedure will be more immediate in consequence of this announcement? Our action was as immediate as we could make it before this announcement, and so it will continue. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) asks me, whether this release which has been directed is an unconditional release; and I thought, Sir, I had already answered that and made it clear, when I stated that it was without any negotiation, promise, or engagement whatever. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), and the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down (Mr. J. Lowther), have approached the question in a different manner, and under the name of questions they have put to me inquiries as to what and when the Government proposed to take a debate on the subject. We have stated the issue which we place before the House. We have directed this release upon our responsibility, claiming the support of no one, and the promise of no one, in regard to it. Having done that, we say that we have done it for the public interest, and especially for the interest of peace, order, and security in Ireland. I think that that is a fair challenge; and if the right hon. Gentleman and hon. Gentlemen sitting opposite choose to take up the glove, if they choose to declare that that proceeding is an ignominious surrender, we will defend the position we have taken up. With regard to the remarks of the hon, Member for Sligo (Mr, Sexton), we shall certainly contend that this is no new departure on our part; but that is a question infinitely unimportant, and we shall contend that instead of being an ignominious surrender of the authority of the law, it is the true, wise, and effectual way for its vindication. If the House of Commons does not think so, let it pronounce upon us the condemnation which, in its judgment, it has a perfect right to do.

MR. PLUNKET: Sir, I should not have troubled the House at the present time, if it were only that the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government has thrown down to us this challenge. The right hon. Gentleman thinks he can safely indulge in such gallant and valorous words with his great majority at his back, swelled, as it will be, for the moment, by an accession of Irish Members from below the Gangway. [Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Hear, hear!] The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department loudly cheers that observation—he who, amongst others around him, has spent so many moments and hours in this House, during the present Session and the last, in denouncing those very men whom they now propose to conciliate and to release from prison; but I think the Prime Minister will find by-and-bye some difficulty—not, perhaps, in bringing forward a majority to support what he has challenged us to make a question in this House, but in explaining to the country the consistency of the conduct of the Government. But I desire to ask one question of the Government—a very serious one for one who is a Representative in this House of those loyal men in Ireland whose lives and property have been so long endangered. It is a question which will not bear delay. It is not a question with regard to the "suspects" who are now to be released. They were imprisoned on very solemn grounds, that were stated to this House and the country. They were kept in prison in spite of very solemn appeals that were made to the Government by those Members who call themselves the Irish Party in the House, whose advice was not then taken; but whose advice, apparently, is now alone to be considered. And why are the "suspects" to be released now? No explanation is given. The Prime Minister is asked—"What about the charge of treason?" And no answer is given. There is one answer that might be given in the words of an old and well-known couplet—

> "Treason ne'er prospers: what's the reason?
> That when it prospers, none dare call it treason."

I shall say but one word upon any other topic. As regards the resignation of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, the hon. Member who spoke on behalf of his Irish Colleagues (Mr. Sexton)—on behalf of those who are called the Irish Party—showed, I must say, the generosity to abstain from glorying in the triumph they have succeeded in achieving by the sacrifice of the Minister who has borne the brunt of the day in administering the Act and the policy by which the Prime Minister has admitted that he was alone able to confront—and to what extent he has confronted it we know—the tremendous crisis of affairs with which he had to deal in Ireland. But there was one admission made by the Prime Minister, in reply to the hon. Member for Sligo, which sank into my heart with feelings of the gravest alarm. He has made many sudden and wonderful statements to-day; great surprises have been urged upon us, one after another, until we can hardly say in what position we now really stand as regards those great questions; but on one subject he did exhibit, to an extreme degree, that characteristic of his speeches we have so often before seen proving dangerous to the best interests of the country, in being at once encouraging and indistinct. A question was put to him by the hon. Member who spoke for those who are now to be the main advisers of the Ministry with regard to Ireland—namely—"What are you prepared to do with regard to the re-organization of Irish Administration, beginning with Dublin Castle, and going down through the whole hierarchy of magistrates and Constabulary and other authorities in Ireland?" And what was the answer of the Prime Minister? One would have thought, knowing the dangers to life and all that is dear to the dignity of Government and the well-being of the country which had so long existed in Ireland, that on that subject, at least, there would have been no paltering and no hopes held out. For what is it that maintains law and order at this moment in Ireland? Is it not that very "hierarchy of magistrates and Constabulary" to which the hon. Member referred? I say that those magistrates and Constabulary are entitled to the strongest support of the Government in the position that they are placed. But the Prime Minister passed it off as a joke, saying, in effect—"He wondered at the simplicity of mind that could imagine that all this could be done by a stroke of the Resolution," and holding out the hope that the time would come when it would be necessary to deal with this question. But I want to know what is the present opinion of the Prime Minister, whatever may be his ultimate intentions, with regard to the so-called "Irish Administration, beginning with Dublin Castle, and going down through the whole hierarchy of magistrates and Constabulary."

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have heard no such words, and I do not believe they were spoken.

Mr. PLUNKET: My recollection is different. I distinctly heard them. The meaning of those words, "hierarchy of magistrates and police," is well known. What I want to ask now is not as to the particular manner in which the Prime Minister may by-and-bye propose to deal with the question, but in the interest of those whom I represent—my constituents—I have a right to put it to the right hon. Gentleman, that in the meantime this hierarchy—call it what you please—those who represent the powers of the Government shall remain until you have invented something that you can substitute in their place, and shall be maintained, vindicated, and justified in their efforts to maintain law and order in Ireland.

Mr. MACARTNEY said, he rose for the purpose of asserting that the proposals of the Government would not satisfy the people of Ireland. Every movement made by the late Chief Secretary for Ireland in the administration of Irish affairs was supported by the other Members of the Cabinet, and now he was allowed to retire because his policy was disapproved. He (Mr. Macartney) had been a long time a Member of the House; and he must say he never heard an announcement that made him tremble more for his country than the announcement of the agreement into which the Prime Minister had entered with the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) as to the principle upon which Ireland was to be governed. If that was to be the principle upon which Ireland was to be governed, the sooner the Government made up their minds to provide for the departure of the loyal inhabitants of Ireland to some other portion of Her Majesty's Dominions the better. He believed that the late Chief Secretary ever acted with the best and most honest intentions; and he was sorry to see hon. Gentlemen sitting behind him join in the hue and cry against the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman had been "baited"—most unmercifully he had been "baited"—a short time ago, and not one single Member on the Treasury Bench stood up and said a word in his favour. He (Mr. Macartney) had heard men in that House use words which he would not repeat. He did not wish to use an un-Parliamentary expression; but he could not help saying that it was not courageous, and that it was an un-English proceeding for a Government to allow their Colleague to be treated as the late Chief Secretary had been. The right hon. Gentleman, he believed, would carry into his retirement the respect of every right-minded man in Ireland. He meant of every right-minded man who feared God, who respected the law, who honoured the King, and who supported the Constitution. The right hon. Gentleman would carry into his retirement the respect of every right-minded man, although they did not agree with the policy of the Government which he carried out. During the time the right hon. Gentleman was in Office he (Mr. Macartney) believed he had two foes to fight, one in front and the other behind—one the rebellious people of Ireland, and the other his Radical Colleagues in the Government.

Mr. T. A. DICKSON said, he had listened to no statement in the House of Commons for many years which had given him so much pleasure as that made by Her Majesty's Government; and he had no hesitation in saying that that announcement would do more to restore order in Ireland than a dozen Coercion Acts. He had often said that coercion might repress crime in a temporary manner; but he thought, on the other hand, it was a power that begot crime. He represented as many loyal men in Ulster as the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Macartney); and he would say that the men of Tyrone and Ulster would receive the news with the utmost satisfaction. In September last, in conjunction with the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Givan), he waited on the Chief Secretary for Ireland, representing the loyal farmers of Ulster, to urge the release of the "suspects;" and he thought it would have been better if that advice had then been taken. If that advice had been taken, he believed the best results would have followed. He rejoiced that at last the Government were "clothed and in their right mind;" and he could say that he hoped it was the last time that ever a Liberal Government would be identified with a coercion policy in Ireland. He believed they had burnt their fingers with it that time; and he would ten times rather see the Liberals go to the other side of the House and sit in Opposition, than see them again identify themselves with coercion in Ireland. He had no fear of challenging the loyal men of Ulster, and he could only say that he could await with confidence their verdict upon the policy which Her Majesty's Government had just announced.

MR. GOSCHEN: Sir, I think the House is drifting into a most unsatisfactory position, seeing that we are now having a debate which is no debate. We have not sufficient information before us to pronounce any opinion, and yet some hon. Members have risen and expressed their satisfaction at the announcement; while others have pronounced their disapprobation at the course which the Government proposed to pursue. But what will be the effect of the silence of those who think, like myself, that without sufficient information it is impossible that we can judge of the scheme of the Government? We have much to think over. Till yesterday it was our duty, as it was our pleasure, to deal with the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who represented, not his own policy, but the policy of the Government. Time after time it was our duty to maintain the policy pursued by the right hon. Gentleman—a policy which, so far as we are aware, may be the policy of the right hon. Gentleman at the present moment. He was in communication with the police all over Ireland, and he was in communication with the magistrates of Ireland; and the right hon. Gentleman has not yet had any opportunity of stating in the House the grounds upon which he thinks the release of the "suspects" is impolitic. I think, in justice to the right hon. Gentleman, we ought to restrain the expression of our opinion on the course Her Majesty's Government have thought fit to pursue. My right hon. Friend at the head of the Government has stated his reason for the adoption of that course—namely, that he believes it to be for the maintenance of law and order in Ireland, a reason which will be established in debate. [Mr. GLADSTONE: When challenged.] I do not know whether my right hon. Friend will think he is challenged by the statements which will be made by his late Colleague. I do not know whether Her Majesty's Government intend the Gentleman who has been charged with the administration of Ireland in concert with his Colleagues to state his reasons against the course, and to accept them as a challenge, or to let those reasons pass in silence. For myself, I may say this—that, to my mind, the effect of the release of the "suspects" will depend, in a great measure, upon the fuller arguments which the Government may advance or sustain in defence of that course. ["No, no!"] I do not know whether hon. Members who say "No, no!" are prepared to think that, under all circumstances, and whatever explanations are given, the release of the "suspects" has been desirable. I do not think that there are many on this side of the House who would agree that the release of the "suspects" would be advantageous and expedient, if it had been a surrender prompted by the fear of the Party in Ireland to whom the "suspects" belong. I think a release upon such grounds would clearly be unsatisfactory to those who sit on this side of the House; and, to my mind, it is clear that the language that may be held with regard to the reasons for the release of the "suspects" is an element in the case which we are bound to consider and cannot overlook. We shall hope, in any case, that the anticipations of the Government may be realized, and that the course taken will, as the right hon. Gentleman hopes, tend to increase the prospects of law and order in Ireland. We know that he believes that a social revolution exists in Ireland; and it will have to be proved to us how the release of social revolutionists will increase the prospects of successful resistance to social revolution. It may be so; but that must depend, in a great part, upon the legislation by which the release of the "suspects" is to be accompanied. Will it be thought in Ireland that this is a new departure, in the sense that there will be less security—legal security—taken for the maintenance of law and order and the protection of life and property? It will, I say, depend upon those measures what will be the effect of the release of the "suspects." I am speaking hypothetically when I say that it is possible that the release of the "suspects" will have a beneficial effect in Ireland; but it cannot have a beneficial effect on the fortunes of the Empire, unless all parts of the Empire are convinced that the Executive is strong enough to be able to govern Ireland notwithstanding such concessions. My hon. Friend below me (Mr. T. A. Dickson) has said that he hoped the Liberal Party would never again burn its fingers with a policy of coercion. But if there be in Ireland revolution, agitation, and disorder, it would be the duty of any Party, Liberal or Conservative, again to introduce a policy of coercion. The Liberal Party cannot exist if the idea is to be fostered that we are not powerful enough and not strong enough for the suppression of disorder, and for grappling with these disturbances, and that it is only by retreating, and by concession after concession, that we can govern. Sir, I have occupied the House too long, after what I have stated—that we have not the whole facts before us, and I may have been too warm; but as my right hon. Friend at the head of the Government spoke in warm language when he felt that a challenge had been thrown out to him by the other side, so I may be pardoned if in the face of events as stirring as any that for many days have happened—if in view of the fact that in the midst of the troubles in Ireland, the resignation of the right hon. Gentleman who has been charged with the maintenance of law and order in Ireland should take place, and the release of the "suspects" be announced—I may be pardoned, I hope, if I also speak with some warmth. I need not assure the House that in what I have said I am not animated by the slightest disregard for Her Majesty's Government. I think they will do me the credit of believing that it is not my motive to attack them, and that if I have spoken with feeling, it is because we are in the middle of an important crisis, when we must not mince our words. My hon. Friends around me will not, I am sure, mince theirs, when we all shall be afforded an opportunity of stating, at the proper time, our opinions upon events which must have most grave and important consequences to the country at large.

Mr. CHARLES RUSSELL said, it might be quite right of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), who had been a consistent supporter of what he would call the coercive policy of the Government, to assume a judicial frame of mind, and say he would prefer to postpone uttering a final expression of opinion upon the announcement made by the Prime Minister until further information was before the House; but, for his (Mr. Charles Russell's) own part, believing, as he and those who acted with him did, that the policy of coercion in Ireland was not an aid to law and order—was not in reality suppressive of crime, but really provocative of crime—he did not require to wait, and would not hesitate at once to express his satisfaction at the announcement that the Government did not intend to continue that policy of coercion. He agreed with the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson) that the Prime Minister's statement would be hailed with satisfaction in Ireland; and he believed it would do more to render the task of governing Ireland easy to the Executive than whole regiments of soldiers and troops of Constabulary. He also cordially agreed with the senior hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. Macartney) in what he had said with reference to the late Chief Secretary for Ireland. He fully believed that the right hon. Gentleman went to Ireland with the best intentions, and that he spared no effort to discharge his duty according to his sense of what that duty was; but he felt bound emphatically to say that in a material part of his policy the right hon. Gentleman was acting on a mistaken view, though he was also bound to say that his policy was the policy of the Government, who had made no attempt to shelve it upon the right hon. Gentleman. He was utterly at a loss to understand what was the cause of the exceeding vehemence of the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Plunket). The hon. Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) asked a question of importance, he (Mr. Russell) admitted, and of significance; but what was it? It was—whether there was to be a change in what the hon. Member called the mechanism of the government of Ireland? Did the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin desire to say that the existing form of government in Ireland in its administration was satisfactory? Did the right hon. and learned Gentleman mean to say that if he was in Office he would not admit that there were grave and serious questions as to the Executive Government in Ireland? Was it not a confessed fact that there was not on the face of the world such a centralized and bureaucratic form of Government as that which existed in Ireland, and that there was no country where things were so ordered as to cast so little responsibility on the people? He (Mr. Russell) recognized as an important and necessary principle that the government of Ireland must rest mainly with the Irish people, and that before the Irish people could be expected in their utterances or their public acts to show a due sense of responsibility, they must have the power which brought with it a sense of responsibility. The right hon. and learned Gentleman made another complaint—forsooth, that the Irish Representatives had been consulted in this matter. Who were to be listened to, he (Mr. Charles Russell) would like to know, unless the Representatives of the people? Irish Members below the Gangway might not represent the opinions of his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Plunket), or, indeed, what he (Mr. Charles Russell) himself in all respects wished; but those Gentlemen were, *de facto*, the Representatives of the great bulk of the people of Ireland. Was the government of Ireland to be carried on by the shutting of eyes and ears to facts, and to the opinions, statements, and information of the Representatives of the people? That did not seem to him to be statesmanship. There were other Irish Members besides those opposite; and he (Mr. Charles Russell) would say it was a happy augury if it was the fact that they were consulted—which he did not know. It was a happy augury if the Government were to take into consultation the Members sitting upon all sides of the House, representing all shades of opinion in Ireland—not, indeed, necessarily for the purpose of acting on the opinions of particular Members, but of gathering the sense of those who occupied the responsible position of the Representatives of the people. He believed that it would be found that the announcement of the Prime Minister, if carried out in its spirit, and in the meaning which the House had attributed to it, would work truly for the pacification of Ireland.

Mr. GIBSON: Sir, it is not my intention at all to criticize the remarkable statement which has been made to the House this afternoon by the Prime Minister at any great length. The proper time for doing that will be when we shall have an opportunity of considering the reasons which have induced the grave announcement that has been made—that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland would no longer be answerable for the peace and government of Ireland under the altered condition of affairs. The hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell) has introduced an element which will be jealously scanned—namely, how far and what Irish Members were consulted so as to arrive at an understanding upon this matter. My object in rising now is to elicit a few words from the Government which will enable loyal people in Ireland to feel some sentiment of safety. In the remarkable utterances of the Prime Minister, to which I have listened with a painful interest and close anxiety, I failed to hear one solitary word which would indicate that the Government, although they were about to make a remarkable change in their procedure, would steadily, firmly, and courageously protect the magistrates of Ireland in the discharge of their duties. I failed to hear anything in that direction even, when my right hon. and learned Colleague (Mr. Plunket), in warm and generous words, drew the attention of the Prime Minister to the matter, and asked that he would support the Irish Constabulary in the discharge of their difficult duties, rendered all the more difficult in consequence of the action of the Government. I am entitled to demand from the Prime Minister, before this Sitting closes, that he will, in a few strong, plain words, indicate to the loyal classes in Ireland that they will still be supported by the efforts of the Government, that law will be preserved, that terrorism will be struggled with, and that by what has been announced to-day it is not meant that the efforts of the Government to secure the first ends of government will be weakened or abandoned.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, I absolutely deny that there is any occasion for the assurance which has just been demanded from my right hon. Friend; but I rise for the purpose of saying two or three words in reply to the challenge which has been thrown out by the two right hon. and learned Gentlemen who represent the University of Dublin. The right hon. and learned Gentlemen complained that the Prime Minister, in the important statement which he has made, said nothing about the intention of the Government to support the magistrates and Constabulary in the discharge of the arduous duties which fell to their lot. Sir, why was it necessary that my right hon. Friend should make any statement upon a subject which is absolutely obvious? Who denies—who has ever doubted—that the support of the magistracy and Constabulary in the discharge of their duties is the first duty of the Government? And what is there in what fell from my right hon. Friend to-night which can make any Member of this House doubt for one moment that the Government are alive to the duty, and intend to perform it? On the contrary, my right hon. Friend has done more—he has admitted that the existing powers of the law are not, as they stand, sufficient to give to the magistrates, the Constabulary, and the authorities engaged in the preservation of peace all the power they ought to have in dealing with the question of the suppression of crime. He has announced the intention of the Government to appeal, at the very earliest opportunity, to this House to strengthen the law in these respects. Sir, can it be supposed by anyone who is not animated—I do not want to use strong language—but who is not animated by a strong Party feeling, that the Government, in coming forward and announcing their intention to strengthen the hands of the Constabulary and the magistrates in the discharge of their duty, are, in the meanwhile, going to omit the primary and Constitutional duty of giving them every support which the existing powers of the law will enable them to do? I am not going to enter into any discussion as to the policy which has been announced to the House to-night. Some hon. Gentlemen who have spoken, including, I think, my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), seem to consider that a duty fell upon the Government not only to make a statement of their policy, but also to defend it. I venture to think it is not the duty of the Government to defend its policy until it is attacked. ["Oh, oh!"] I may hold an erroneous opinion in that respect, but that is the opinion I hold. Some hon. Members seem to think it is the duty of the Government first to formulate an attack upon themselves, and then to state the reasons which may be urged against their defence. I can hardly doubt that, after the gallant words which we have heard from hon. Members on the Opposition Benches this afternoon, we shall have that opportunity. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the senior Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket) seemed to make it a matter of some complaint that we challenged him and his Party to attack and impeach our policy if they thought it worth impeachment. I cannot imagine that such an attack will be presented on the part of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, because the circumstances are such that he is no longer to be supported by hon. Members below the Gangway, who have, on previous occasions, connected themselves with the Party opposite so constantly. I do not suppose that it is only an occasion when a majority is expected, or, at all events, a large minority, that the conduct of the Government may be impeached by the Opposition. I conceive that the decision of whether a Motion of Censure is to be brought forward or not would not depend on the number of Members by which such a Motion would be supported, so much as by the justice of the cause. Therefore, I conceive that if the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues think what we have announced to-night worthy of the censure of the House and the country, they will not shrink from the obvious duty of an Opposition, and challenge our policy. I will only say further that I venture to think it is not the duty of the Government to formulate excuses which would throw any doubt on the wisdom of the course they have adopted.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, that he should be sorry if the tepid speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) should go forth as representing in any manner the general feeling of Members on the Liberal side of the House. The Prime Minister had said that the course they had taken would promote law and order. He (Mr. Arnold) felt that the Prime Minister had established a new claim to their confidence by the policy he had now announced.

MR. SPEAKER announced that, according to the Rules of the House, only one minute remained in which to dispose of the Question before the Chair. If it were not withdrawn a difficulty would arise.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

The House suspended its Sitting at Seven of the clock.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

MOTION.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY (JESUS COLLEGE STATUTES).

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

MR. HUSSEY VIVIAN, in rising to move—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty that She will be graciously pleased to withhold her consent from the Statutes proposed by the University of Oxford Commissioners for Jesus College, which Statutes were laid upon the Table of this House on the 7th of February last,"

said, that Jesus College had always been an essentially Welsh College; and the Government, in the Speech from the Throne, had announced their intention of dealing with the question of Intermediate and Higher Education in Wales. He thought, therefore, that that was an inopportune moment for disposing of the revenues of that College, because they ought to be dealt with as a portion of the scheme which the Government was going to bring forward. The large endowment of the College would form an important element in the question of Higher Education in Wales. It was not easy to state what the income of the College was. But from the Report of 1873 it would appear to fall little short of £15,000. The Statute as it now stood proposed that some of the Fellowships should be exclusively Welsh; but with the Scholarships it was different. Formerly there were 20 Welsh and 2 open Scholarships. The Statute proposed that there should be only 12 Welsh Scholarships and 8 open Scholarships, thus 40 per cent were to be open, and no longer Welsh. But there was a provision that, when the funds would admit of it, there should be 24 Scholarships, so that Wales would then only have half the Scholarships. Then there were 30 Exhibitions, which were formerly confined to Wales. Those Exhibitions were now to be in the discretion of the Principal and Fellows, and were in no way confined to Wales. No doubt, it would be said that most of the Colleges in Oxford and Cambridge were originally confined to particular counties, and that it had been found beneficial to throw them open. But the case was not parallel; for the same language was spoken in all the counties of England, whereas in Wales a language prevailed more different from English than any European language, except, perhaps, Sclavonian. It was, therefore, unjust to deprive young Welshmen of the advantage of competing only among themselves for prizes, founded exclusively for their benefit. Jesus College was founded in Queen Elizabeth's Reign on the petition of Dr. Hugh at Rhys, for the benefit of Wales. It was largely endowed by Sir Leoline Jenkins, a great lawyer and a Welshman, born near Cowbridge, in the county of Glamorgan. Sir Leoline Jenkins, who at one time was Principal of Jesus College, endowed Cowbridge School, where he had been educated, and at his death, in 1685, left his property to Jesus College, subject to a large provision for Cowbridge School. By his will Sir Leoline Jenkins had given priority among his bequests to those which referred exclusively to Cowbridge School. Although, in consequence of a decree of the Court of Chancery, Jesus College had legally taken the whole of the surplus money bequeathed under that will, there could be no doubt that morally Cowbridge School was entitled to its fair share; the College had no moral right to deprive the School of its fair proportion of the bequests. The income of the estate of Sir Leoline Jenkins was at the time of his death £407, and of that amount the School was entitled to 21 per cent. The income was now, however, £6,600 a-year, and the estate itself was a largely increasing one. There were minerals under the land of considerable value, and there was also land in London increasing in value. After paying the charges created by the testator, the School ought to receive £1,260 a-year; but it was at present only receiving £100 a-year. It was proposed by the Statutes to empower the Principal and Fellows of Jesus College to give £200 a-year more to Cowbridge School—£100 to the Master, and £100 to deserving boys. This was only a permissive power. The Statutes inflicted a great hardship on the School, for they proposed to perpetuate the injustice of the last 200 years. The Home Secretary would, no doubt, say the School was only entitled to the sum originally left to it. That might be law, but it was not justice; and it was not the testator's intention. He appealed to the House of Commons as a Court of Justice, and not of law. It was from that House alone that redress could be sought. It was as great a case of hardship as had ever come before the House, and if the Statutes were allowed to pass they would be continuing a great injustice. Nothing would benefit Wales, and especially South Wales, more than the erection of this School into a first-class Grammar School in the county which he had the honour to represent. The Welsh desired not to confine their education to technical subjects, but to have the benefit of a sound classical education, which was a matter the Government would have to deal with before long, and it would be advisable to weld this Institution into any measure they proposed. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty that She will be graciously pleased to withhold her consent from the Statutes proposed by the University of Oxford Commissioners for Jesus College, which Statutes were laid upon the Table of this House on the 7th of February last."—(*Mr Hussey Vivian.*)

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT was understood to say that upon the general question of Welsh Education he agreed with his hon. Friend behind him, though upon the question before the House he had expressed opinions at which, if they had proceeded from the Benches opposite, now rather empty, he should have felt no surprise. In these cases a good deal was often said about the intentions of the pious Founder; and no doubt Sir Leoline Jenkins, the Founder of this School, was a man of note, for he was the greatest international lawyer of his day. He thought, however, his hon. Friend had given undue development to the wishes of the pious Founder. The Liberal Party had proceeded on the principle of abolishing close Colleges and close Fellowships; but they were now asked, practically, to adopt an opposite course. He asked on what ground they could keep the Fellowships of this College for a particular part of the country? He was not a particular admirer of the work of the Commission; but it was not possible to review it without destroying it altogether. It was to be deplored that such was the case. He was bound to say that in this matter he did not think the Commissioners were to be blamed. Jesus College was only a constituent part of the Colleges of Oxford; and if one College was thrown out of the whole contributory machine, it would be exempt from any scheme of University reform, and that was not a reasonable proposition. He hoped the House, therefore, would reject the proposal of the hon. Member.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS said, that something, after all, was to be said for local Scholarships, &c., in connection with the Universities. The system ought to be judged by its results; and he did not hesitate to say that the Welsh endowments in Jesus College had been of considerable advantage both to the College and the University. It not unfrequently happened that persons of humble origin, who would otherwise have been unable to obtain an academical education, were enabled, by means of those endowments, to achieve a distinguished University career; and at present there were two striking instances of the service which the endowments of Jusus College had done. Of course, the present question was only the prelude to a more important one. As a matter of fact, Parliament passed an excellent Bill in 1877, by which at least £250,000 a-year was placed at the disposal of the Commissioners. How the Commissioners discharged their office would not then be proper to mention; but of all the Colleges which had come under their notice, Jesus College was the greatest sinner in the whole University. That College proposed to establish one Tutorial Fellow to every seven undergraduates. Each was to have, at least, £600 a-year; in addition to that he was to have, under certain conditions, a capitation fee of £5 per head on undergraduates, which was to come out of the funds for the advancement of Higher Education, so that £4,300 a-year would be absorbed by the Tutorial Fellows. These gentlemen would be engaged in delivering more or less vapid lectures, more vapid as they got older. The Commissioners had established 131 of these abominations, and there was every prospect of the whole University in time becoming absorbed by them. But, to turn to the particular case of Cowbridge School, it might, perhaps, be hard for the Fellows of Jesus to make any contribution to their funds, as was usually the case when the Foundation was rich; but that was not the question. Parliament had dealt thus with Eton College and the Dean and Chapter of Westminster in relation to Eton and Westminster Schools. It had been done in the case of the Regius Professor of Greek at Christ Church, and it was for the House to say whether it should not be done in the case of Cambridge. The present system inaugurated by the Commissioners, who had aimed at establishing a Body of Tutorial Fellows and enlarging the Professoriate, did not work well. The Tutorial Fellows "Boycotted" the Professors. He had lately spoken to Mr. Stubbs, a gentleman who had a reputation beyond the walls of his College, upon the subject. Mr. Stubbs told him some time ago that he had prepared a course of lectures on the Secular and Social Causes of the Reformation, and that the only audience he had consisted of three Masters of Arts and one lady. He believed that the Statutes which the Commissioners had framed for the University of Oxford would involve the irremediable ruin of the interests of Higher Education. He considered that if his hon. Friend carried his Motion — in which he supported him—they would set an example of how they should deal with Statutes like those in which the general interests of local education were sacrificed, and in which the best future of the highest education was, as he believed, not only brought into peril, but irretrievably doomed.

MR. BRYCE said, he must protest against the language which the last speaker had used with regard to some persons at Oxford, and more particularly in regard to certain Heads of Colleges. Those Heads of Colleges who had been masters of schools were among the ablest and most energetic of the Oxford residents. No one among them was more generally respected than the Head of Jesus College, nor had any one shown a more sincere desire to do the best he could for the education of the Principality. The real question, however, now before the House was whether those Statutes should pass or not. The hon. Member for Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey Vivian) had complained that those Statutes did not do as much for education in Wales as ought to be done, and that the right of natives of the Principality to Scholarships and Fellowships was not sufficiently recognized. Now, he thought there was a very strong case for attaching certain special privileges to Welsh schools and Welsh students, and for making grants of money to a country which had been so much neglected, and which was so much in want of those endowments. But if they looked at the Statutes of Jesus College they would find that a good deal was done for Wales and for Welsh students, a considerable proportion of the Fellowships and Scholarships being restricted to natives of Wales or of Monmouthshire. If it was said that more ought to have been done, and that these Statutes ought to have reserved nearly the whole of the Scholarships and Fellowships for the Welsh schools, he replied that that would not be a real benefit to Welsh students themselves. It was far better for them that they should mix in the society of what, more or less, was an ordinary College, and that they should come into contact with young Englishmen, than that they should be confined to a purely Welsh atmosphere while their minds were being formed. In the interests of Wales itself, then, he thought that the Commissioners would have made a mistake if they had given a larger share than they had done of the College endowments to the students from Wales. With regard to the share to which Cowbridge School was entitled out of the endowments of Jesus College, the hon. Member asked them to disturb an arrangement which had existed for 200 years. Under that arrangement, based upon a decree in Chancery made in the Reign of James II.—a decree which was evidently right in law — Jesus College had enjoyed the property given it by Sir Leoline Jenkins without interruption or adverse claim. When the Commissioners came to deal with Jesus College they found certain property; they ascertained that that property belonged to the College in exactly the same way as any other property held by the College; and though they might have thought it would have been a good thing if Cowbridge School could get a larger share of them, they had to carry out an Act of Parliament, and they could not legally do what it did not authorize. There was not a single word in the Act of 1877 which would justify the appropriation of any property belonging to the College to any external Body or person. There was a discussion in that House in 1877 as to whether the Commissioners should have the power to devote a portion of the revenues of any College to purposes not directly connected with such College or with the University, and it was decided that they should have no such power. The Commissioners had done all that they legally could, and one might almost be surprised that they should have been able to go as far as they had gone in favour of Cowbridge School.

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, as a Member of the Commission, said, that he should have been content to have rested their defence upon the speech of the Home Secretary, for what had been said appeared to him to be conclusive. There was nothing that would have enabled them to give money to Cowbridge School; and, therefore, there was no case to answer. It was not their fault that the Act did not enable them to do more. If it was desired that more should be done, as in the case of other public schools, let a Bill be brought in to divert some of the endowments of Jesus College to practical education in Wales, and he would promise all the assistance he could in developing the project; but it was not fair to attack these Statutes or the Commissioners for that which they were unable to do. The result of rejecting these Statutes would be to leave things in the position in which they stood previous to the Act of 1877, and to deprive Cowbridge and other schools of endowments they now had, and to restore the former close and clerical character of the Foundation. Unquestionably, the action of the Commissioners, so far as regarded Jesus College, had not been an unfriendly one towards Wales or towards the School at Cowbridge. For his purpose it did not matter what the figures were; the Commissioners had gone to the full extent of their legal rights in doing what they could to improve and aid Higher Education in Wales. Not very much had been said as to the College Exhibitions; but he supposed that those to which allusion had been made were the Leoline Jenkins Exhibitions, which had been thrown into the general Exhibition fund. He believed, but was not certain, that there was a specific application of part of that fund; but, however that might be, the general policy of the Commissioners had been to enable the Governing Bodies of the Colleges to assist needy and deserving students. Many hon. Members who took an interest in this question would, perhaps, have been glad if some of the money which now brought Welsh students compulsorily to Jesus College had been diverted so as to help them to enter other Colleges; but the Commissioners had not the power of making any such change, and were obliged to confine the school and College endowments to the several schools and Colleges. If there was one set of Statutes which were practically unassailable, it was the Statutes of Jesus College, with respect to which the Commissioners had here and there stretched a point, in the belief that the circumstances of Wales were exceptional, and demanded that the Scholarships and Fellowships should be kept close. In any case, however, the hon. Member for Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey Vivian) was mistaken in supposing that Wales would be benefited by the rejection of the new Statutes. Not only was there no authority now in existence which had the power of re-casting them, but no future Commissioners were likely to relax them in a manner more favourable to the claims of Wales. The Commissioners had made an honest attempt, supported by the Principal of the College, to satisfy the legitimate wants of Welsh Education. If it was alleged that the Church of England religious teaching given in the College kept away Nonconformist students, he could only say that there was now less teaching of that kind than there used to be; that attendance at chapel was voluntary; and that nothing was done to prevent Nonconformists from being on an equality with the other members of the College. The hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers), who, as was well known, had his own views about the University, had made several complaints, but had not made sufficient allowance for the difficulties the Commissioners had had to meet. He (Sir Matthew Ridley) held that, on the whole, they had done their duty well; but it was not easy for them to impress their policy on all the Colleges; and so, wherever they had apparently failed to make reforms, it was to be remembered that they had not been free to act apart from the general feeling of the University. For the sereasons, he could not support the proposal to reject the Statutes of this College.

SIR EDWARD REED said, that the speech of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) was very unsatisfactory; but a more extraordinary answer than that of the Home Secretary to the statement of the hon. Member for Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey Vivian) he had never heard. If Liberal principles were what the right hon. and learned Gentleman stated that night, Welsh Members had a good deal to learn. He (Sir Edward Reed) objected to the alienation of the revenues of Jesus College merely for the sake of bringing the English and the Welsh students into more intimate association with each other. According to the admitted facts of the case, in the original bequest in the 16th century of certain properties in Lambeth, it was provided that two-thirds of the income thence derived should go to Jesus College, and the other one-third to Cowbridge Grammar School. That being the case, the same ratio should be now observed when the property had increased seventeen-fold in value. If that rule were followed, Cowbridge School, instead of being pushed aside with £400 per annum, would be entitled to nearly £2,000 per annum. Within three years of the bequest coming into operation a question arose about a certain small residue, and the Court of Chancery decided that it should become the property of the College to which the whole had been bequeathed in trust, partly for the benefit of Cowbridge School, and now the College appropriated the larger part of the increased value. His contention and that of his hon. Friends was that Cowbridge Grammar School was as much before the mind of the testator as Jesus College. But because, 200 years ago, the Court of Chancery decided that the miserable residue then in question should go to the College, they were told that it was not only legally right that this College should go on appropriating nearly the whole of the property, but that it was absolutely wrong for them to ask that the case should be reconsidered.

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY said, he could not enter into the controversy which had arisen between the hon. Member for Pembroke (Sir Edward Reed) and the Home Secretary as to what were Liberal principles. Nothing could be more difficult than for that House to consider the complicated legal question. The was asked to enter upon that inquiry upon an *ex parte* statement, and to set aside the decisions come to by the Commissioners after the most minute and careful examination; but there was really nothing which the House could do. This money could not be touched without the consent of Jesus College, inasmuch as the legal right of the College to the surplus of the property had been settled and established by law for two centuries. The Statutes could not be altered in part, but must be accepted or rejected as a whole. The hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) had spoken in so vague and discursive a manner that it was difficult to meet his remarks; but as regarded his observations on dogmatic schoolmasters, he (Sir John Mowbray) could say confidently that the present Principal of Jesus College was an able and accomplished scholar, who had been a successful schoolmaster, and was now an energetic Head of a College. He was one of the few Members now in the House who recollected the prolonged discussion which took place upon the University Bills in 1854 and 1877; he remembered the difficulty then experienced in interesting the House, or maintaining its attention to the subject; and he thought even a Select Committee would experience the same difficulty now. If he might venture to make a suggestion, he thought that the University required rest. They had had University Commissions and University Acts in 1850, 1854, and again in 1874 and 1877; and it was most important that the new Statutes should have a fair trial, after which they might, if necessary, be revised. But, if they were to be revised, it would be proper to intrust the task to some Body more competent to deal with the question than that House—and that Body was the Universities Committee of the Privy Council, which ought to be strengthened and made efficient for the work.

Mr. MORGAN LLOYD said, that their case was that Jesus College was a Welsh College, founded and endowed for Welshmen; and the Commissioners, in failing to recognize that fact, had failed to satisfy any class in Wales. Jesus College, though locally situated in Oxford, was as much a Welsh College as Trinity College, Dublin, was an Irish College; and as all the endowments were intended for the Welsh people, and were, in justice, the property of the Welsh people, the Commissioners had no right to divert any portion of those endowments towards any other object. He believed the Commissioners had taken pains to form a fair scheme; but they had adopted a wrong principle, and had dealt with the College revenues as if they had not been the special property of the people of Wales.

Mr. RATHBONE said, he well remembered that the House was assured they might trust the Universities to deal with the Commission in a much more liberal way than they had done. The practical question was how they could best remedy the evil. The hon. Baronet opposite (Sir John Mowbray) had referred them to future legislation as the only means of gaining what was due. They would probably have an opportunity of dealing with the subject when the question of Welsh Education came on; and he would suggest that it would be well to leave this matter to that opportunity.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT said, there had not been a single opportunity for the discussion of the important Statutes connected with the Universities and Colleges, which in a very few days would become law. The intention of Parliament, in providing that they should lie on the Table for a certain time before they became law, would thus be defeated. There was an important Body—the Universities Committee of the Privy Council—to which alone hereafter would belong the revision of any of these University Statutes. Some proposition should be made by the Government for the reconstitution of that Committee before the Session ended. The matter had been brought before Parliament at the end of last Session; but, owing to a disagreement between the two Houses, nothing was done. It was the duty of the Government not to delay in that matter. He hoped that the hon. Member for Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey Vivian) would be satisfied with the discussion, and would not press his Motion to a division.

Mr. HUSSEY VIVIAN said, he could not avoid thanking his right hon. and learned Friend (Sir William Harcourt) for his kind lecture upon Liberalism. His right hon. and learned Friend appeared to be greatly in love with any arrangement, however unjust, which had the prescription of 200 years in its favour. Now, certainly, he (Mr. Hussey Vivian) had learned his Liberalism in a different school. He had always been under the impression that no prescription gave any right to the continued existence of an abuse, if it were an abuse, and he could not help thinking that it was an abuse, when they had a College which educated some 60 students, and which spent in doing so a sum of £15,000 a-year. He did not think that Institutions of that kind could be defended, or that anyone who took exception to Institutions of that kind should be accused of a want of Liberalism. He thought that true Liberal principles would rather lie in the proper use of ancient endowments to develop and extend, as far as possible, the benefits of education in the present day. His right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary said that no property would be safe if a prescription of 200 years was to be attacked. This property was not private property, but a public endowment left for the benefit of the public. That was a doctrine he was astonished to hear come from his right hon. and learned Friend; and it was very much in contrast with the calm and excellent statement made by the hon. Baronet the Member for North Northumberland (Sir Matthew White Ridley). He (Mr. Hussey Vivian) had no wish whatever to attack the Commissioners, nor did he think he had said anything which could be construed into an attack upon the Commission. He had simply taken an exception to a Statute proposed for Jesus College. He did not say that the Commissioners could have proposed a larger provision for Cowbridge School, because he believed that their powers in that respect were limited. He had taken exception to that one Statute becoming the law of the land, because he thought that it was absolutely necessary that they should protest in the strongest manner against the perpetuation of what he still held to be one of the grossest cases of injustice which had ever come under his notice. Certainly, the matter should not rest where it was. It was probable that if he went to a division now, with the combined opposition of the Government and the Conservatives, he would be left in a small minority; but he thought that it would not have been consistent with his duty, if he allowed this Statute to become law without protesting in the strongest manner against it, and bringing forward publicly the gross injustice which had existed for the last 200 years. He was sensible that it was of no use whatever to put the House to the trouble of a division after the declaration of Her Majesty's Government that they did not intend to support him in this Motion. But, at the same time, he wished to state that, whenever an opportunity occurred of redressing this grievance, he should undoubtedly endeavour, to the best of his ability, to do so, and especially when they were afforded an opportunity of discussing the question of Higher and Intermediate Education in Wales. He begged distinctly to give Notice that when that question was brought on he would revert to this subject, and that he would do his very best to obtain for the ancient Grammar School at Cowbridge the full enjoyment of the endowment left to it 200 years ago. He begged now to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

DISTRESS AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 73.]

(*Sir Henry Holland, Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Mr. Joseph Pease, Mr. Cropper.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND said, that in moving that the Speaker should leave the Chair, in order that the House might go into Committee on this Bill, he wished to explain that, as the whole subject of distress was now under the consideration of a Committee upstairs, he did not propose to ask for more than that the Speaker should leave the Chair. What he proposed was that, when the House got into Committee, the formal Motion for postponing the Preamble should be agreed to, and after Clause 1 had been passed he would move to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Sir Henry Holland,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Preamble *postponed.*

Clause 1 *agreed to.*

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Sir Henry Holland,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Tuesday* next.

METROPOLIS MANAGEMENT AND BUILDING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

(*Sir James M'Garel-Hogg, Admiral Sir John Hay, Sir Andrew Lusk.*)

[BILL 107.] COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Sir James M'Garel-Hogg.*)

MR. ALDERMAN W. LAWRENCE said, he thought that, at that hour of the night, it was impossible for the House to discuss the Bill with any advantage. The Bill was a very important one, and the second reading of it was passed without any statement having been made by the hon. Baronet who was in charge of it; and who still, without making any statement with regard to it, now proposed to go into Committee. There were very important matters affecting the City of London raised in the Bill, which he was quite sure the hon. Baronet would consider when his attention was called to them. Therefore, it was probable that they would really gain time by postponing the Committee, because the opposition now raised to the Bill might be disarmed if certain alterations were made in it affecting the Metropolis generally, but affecting also, very materially, the City of London. If the Bill were carried in its present shape those who had the direction of improvements in the City would be prevented from acting, and from using the powers already possessed by them under special Acts of Parliament. The clauses of the Bill certainly required more consideration than could be devoted to them at that hour of the night. There were altogether 25 clauses in the Bill, and most of them affected the City of London. In the City of London, a Body called the Commissioners of Sewers had the management and direction of the laying out of the streets, and the street improvements; but if the Bill passed as it now stood they would be entirely deprived of their authority. That authority was conferred upon them by more than one Act of Parliament, and the passing of this new Bill would prevent them from carrying out those Acts for the benefit of the inhabitants of the City and of the Metropolis generally. It was well known that the City of London still retained many of the peculiarities of all old cities; many of its streets were very narrow, and when improvements were being effected, it would be impossible, in many cases, to make streets where streets were most urgently required, because, under this Bill, no street was to be made that should be less than 40 feet in width. It was well known that in many parts of the City, where new streets and thoroughfares had been most advantageously opened out, it would have been altogether impossible to provide that they should be 40 feet wide. Consequently, if the Commissioners of Sewers were to be controlled by the provisions of the present Bill, many of the improvements, which it was still desirable to carry out, would be prevented. He was afraid that the Bill had been drawn up without proper thought; and it would be improper to call upon the House to consider all the important details at such an hour of the night, when it was impossible to examine them thoroughly. Then, again, as to the question of making thoroughfares. There were many thoroughfares in the City of London that were simply footways, and the Commissioners were constantly extending these footways and opening up new communications; but their future action in that respect would be prevented by one of the provisions of the Bill. As the Bill stood, it would be necessary for the authorities in the City to apply for permission to the Metropolitan Board of Works. Such a provision might be all very well where they were dealing with new districts—where the land had not been built upon already. It was essential that in such a case the streets authorized to be constructed should be wide, and laid out with due regard to all modern sanitary requirements, and to the communication proposed to be effected with existing thoroughfares. But it was impossible to do that in the City of London. The circumstances of the City were exceptional; and, therefore, the City ought to be exempted from the operation of the provisions of the Bill. Hon. Members might feel some surprise that the City should ask for exemption from a measure which was introduced for the general advantage of the Metropolis; but the City already possessed Parliamentary powers fully adequate to enable them to carry out their own improvements, and the authorities ought not to have their efforts crippled by the intervention of another public Body. The Corporation of London were not backward in carrying out necessary improvements. Notwithstanding the difficulties they had to contend with, they had not been deterred by any question of expense from undertaking any improvement that the interests of the public demanded. The present Bill, under the circumstances he had pointed out, would require careful consideration, clause by clause; many of its provisions would require material alterations, fresh clauses would have to be brought up, and the whole framework of the Bill would require reconsideration and considerable discussion. No statement was made by the hon. Baronet the Member for Truro (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) on the second reading of the Bill, beyond a short explanation that it was merely a formal measure to carry out an Order of the House. In moving that the House should go into Committee upon it, the hon. Baronet still refrained from making a full explanatory statement, and moved its committal as a mere matter of form. But he (Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence) was satisfied that when the Bill got into Committee, and the clauses came up for consideration, they would be found to be anything but a mere matter of form; and certainly the hon. Baronet would not have expedited matters by having abstained from making any preliminary statement. In introducing a Bill of this nature, some understanding ought to have been come to between the Metropolitan Board of Works and the authorities of the City of London. There ought to be a mutual good understanding between the two Bodies. It was the duty of both to carry out improvements for the benefit of the Metropolis; but it was not necessary that either should interfere with the action of the other. Both of them had different spheres of action, and both possessed very large powers. Hitherto such powers had been used beneficially for the inhabitants of the Metropolis; and this was not the first time that the Metropolitan Board of Works had introduced clauses into a Bill which would give them the right of interfering materially with the powers possessed by the City. But the House had always declined to sanction such clauses; and he must say that he looked upon the action of the Board of Works, in the present instance, with some surprise and astonishment. The second reading was obtained at the close of the Day Sitting on Wednesday last, and it was obtained rather as a matter of surprise. There were three Motions on the Paper against it; but the hon. Gentlemen who had given Notice of such Motions were not in their places between a quarter to 6 and 6 o'clock, and the second reading was moved and carried without opposition, the hon. Baronet being in his place to watch the interests of the Bill. But the second reading having been accomplished in that way, surely it became all the more necessary that the principle and objects of the Bill should be explained and discussed on the Motion for going into Committee. The hon. Baronet, however, had not considered it his duty to take such a course, and had contented himself with moving, as a matter of form, the committal of the Bill. Some of the provisions were admirable ones. It provided, very properly, that no temporary or permanent erections should be constructed within the district under the control of the Metropolitan Works without an application, in the first instance, to the Board. But was it right that the City of London should be placed in the same position as a private individual in regard to the Board of Works, and that the Board should have power to control and regulate the proceedings of the City in regard to all questions affecting street improvements? At the present moment the City of London was engaged in the erection of additional Courts in connection with their Court of Common Council, and they were carrying out other public buildings. Was it to be tolerated that in regard to similar vented from carrying them out, unless, in works in future they were to be pre- the first instance, they applied to, and obtained the sanction of, the Metropolitan Board. Such an intention was never put forward when the Board of Works was established. He was satisfied that his hon. Friend the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board would say that if that was the meaning of the Bill it was not his intention; but, unfortunately, the House could not take his hon. Friend's intentions. They could only take the provisions they found in the Bill, and in regard to those provisions it was highly essential that so important a Body as the Corporation of the City of London should be fully protected, and should have an opportunity of going thoroughly into the matter. The Bill consisted of three parts, and it raised a great variety of questions. Clause 7 related to the construction of new streets; and as the hon. Baronet had not made any statement whatever in reference to the provisions of the Bill, it was necessary that he (Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence) should do so, in order to justify the course he was now taking. Clause 7 proposed that after the passing of the Act, any person forming a road passage or footway, which did not form a direct communication between two streets, should be required, in the first instance, to obtain the approval and sanction of the Metropolitan Board of Works. [*Cries of* "Divide!"] The impatience displayed by the House to enter into the question at all showed the impropriety of the course pursued by the promoters of the Bill, and quite justified his assertion that this was not the time when the House should be required to go into a discussion of the Bill clause by clause. But he wanted to know if it was more likely, when the Speaker was out of the Chair, that a Committee would feel itself in any better condition to go into the Bill clause by clause? The clause to which he was now referring was one of the most important parts of the Bill. It stated that where any road, passage, or way would not afford a direct communication between two streets, the persons by whom it was proposed to be made should, at least three months before such road, passage, or way was commenced or laid out, make an application to the Board of Works giving notice of the intention, and setting out a plan of the proposed street, with such particulars as the Board might direct; and that the Board might, within such period of three months, lay down any conditions it considered necessary, or might altogether decline to sanction the laying out of such road, passage, or way. The existence of such a clause would prevent the Commissioners of Sewers for the City of London from carrying out any new street improvements, or laying out any road, passage, or way between one street and another, without being delayed in commencing their works for a period of three months. If the clause were carried, the City of London would be required to pray the Board of Works to permit them to make a new street; and if the Board contested the matter, the interests of the public would suffer, and street improvements which, under existing powers of the City authorities, were now making day by day would be entirely stopped. The Commissioners of Sewers met for this very purpose once a fortnight, and their committees weekly, and it was very rarely that a sitting was held without some suggestion being made for opening out a communication between one street and another, and for carrying out other improvements to facilitate the traffic from one part of the City to another. Most hon. Members would be acquainted with the neighbourhood of Throgmorton Street and Drapers' Hall. Large improvements had been carried out there by certain of the City Companies, who possessed the whole of the land between Throgmorton Street and London Wall. The new street—Throgmorton Avenue—was open for carriages between two-thirds or three-fourths of its length, and then came another portion that was not open for carriages, but only as a footway. This large improvement, forming a new communication between the Bank and London Wall, and the Liverpool Street Railway Station, had been effected without any expense whatever to the City, at the cost of two of the City Companies acting under the direction and permission of the Commissioners of Sewers. This important improvement could not have been made under the present Bill. Surely the Commissioners of Sewers were fully adequate to be intrusted with the carrying out of such improvements, which involved the expenditure of large sums of money, and the general convenience of the public, without the interference of the Metropolitan Board of Works. Towards the cost of some of the improvements in the City the Board of Works had themselves contributed, because they believed that they were improvements not for the advantage of the City only, but for that of the whole of the Metropolis. The question, then, was whether the Commissioners of Sewers were to be deprived, by a Bill in which their names were not even mentioned, of the powers which they already possessed under Parliamentary sanction, and which they had exercised for many years to the advantage of the inhabitants of London? Seeing that the second reading of the Bill was carried by a surprise at the close of a Wednesday's Sitting, he did not think his hon. Friend the Member for Truro should persist, at such a late hour of the night, in forcing it through Committee. He believed he (Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence) had made out a sufficiently strong case, at any rate, for the postponement of the Motion, until an opportunity could be afforded for the full and complete discussion of its provisions. He did not deny that many of the clauses contained in the measure were necessary for the Metropolis generally; but what he contended was that the City of London ought not to be included within them, as they would act most detrimentally in hampering the future action of the City, so far as new street improvements were concerned. They would necessarily occasion great delay in the execution of new works, and would assuredly give rise to a considerable amount of friction between two important public bodies—the Corporation of London and the Metropolitan Board of Works. They had already received from the Secretary of State (Sir William Harcourt) an intimation that great changes with regard to both Bodies were looming in the distance, that the Metropolitan Board was not to be placed on a permanent footing, and that the Corporation of London was to be got rid of altogether. The Chairman of the Metropolitan Board, now omnipotent, was hereafter to be placed in a subordinate position. Was it right, then, under the guise of a Bill of this nature, to initiate great and important changes in the management of the affairs of the City. It would be most inconvenient to pass a clause such as that which he had indicated, and to pass it, also, in the absence of anything in the nature of explanation. He had no wish to attribute motives to the Metropolitan Board, or to allege that there was any desire on their part to take advantage of the City of London; but what he wished to point out in reference to this clause was that, in reference to street and footways within the City, it would materially cripple the future beneficial action of the Commissioners of Sewers; and he would leave the House to say whether this was the right time for depriving the Commissioners of the powers they possessed and handing them over to the Board of Works. At the present moment, when the City contemplated important improvements, it was customary to inform the Metropolitan Board, and very frequently the Board were asked to contribute towards the expense. The consequence was that great harmony prevailed between the two Bodies, which would be materially disturbed, if not entirely destroyed, by a proposal to place the Corporation under the control and authority of the Board. The Bill provided that hereafter any proposal to form a roadway should be subject to such conditions as the Metropolitan Board might think it necessary to prescribe; and until the sanction of the Board was given no such road, passage, or way should be laid out or proceeded with. It was also provided that any person infringing the Act should, for such offence, be liable to a penalty not exceeding 40*s*. He would simply ask upon what principle of justice or propriety the House of Commons were to be asked to place the Commissioners of Sewers under the authority of the Metropolitan Board, and to subject them to penalties, for merely carrying out important public improvements to their own satisfaction? He did not think the hon. Baronet the Member for Truro could be aware how the clauses of the Bill would affect the City of London, because, if he were, he would scarcely dream of forcing them through Committee at that hour of the night. Clause 8 said——

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member appears to me to be going through the Bill clause by clause. In so doing he is anticipating the functions of the Committee.

MR. ALDERMAN W. LAWRENCE said, he had no wish to transgress, or to go through the Bill clause by clause; but he must say that the Bill, in many of its clauses, contained provisions that materially affected the City of London; and he did not think the House ought to allow it to go into Committee until some arrangement was arrived at, or, at any rate, until the hon. Member for Truro explained the objects of the measure. [*Cries of* "Divide!"] It might be wise to prevent persons from laying out thoroughfares in other parts of the Metropolis; but regulations that were adapted for the Metropolis generally would not apply to the City.

CAPTAIN MAXWELL-HERON rose to Order. He wished to ask if the hon. Member was not trespassing upon the indulgence of the House, and really wasting intentionally the time of the House?

MR. SPEAKER: I have already pointed out to the hon. Member that it is irregular, at this stage of a Bill, to go through the measure clause by clause, and I trust that the hon. Member will observe the intimation I have made to him.

MR. ALDERMAN W. LAWRENCE said, he would certainly endeavour to comply with the intimation conveyed by the right hon. Gentleman. The Bill dealt not only with the questions he had pointed out, but with the amount of space to be left in the City when new buildings were contemplated. It was not a Bill to give additional powers to the Metropolitan Board of Works to those which they now possessed; but it was an attempt to bring in a Bill to interfere with and obstruct the action of the Corporation of London, and to prevent them from carrying out their own wishes in instituting improvements for relieving the traffic of the City, and to meet the growing wants of the public. It must be borne in mind that the City of London contributed very largely towards the cost of the improvements made outside the City by the Metropolitan Board of Works. For every sovereign expended the City contributed half-a-crown; but towards the improvements effected in the City itself, if the Metropolitan Board of Works considered them local improvements, they did not contribute a farthing. They were made and completed not out of the income from the estates of the City, but out of funds collected by taxes levied on the inhabitants living within the City. Consequently, the Metropolitan Board of Works were not asking for authority over funds which they contributed themselves, but over funds contributed solely by occupiers within the City. The rest of the Metropolis was in a different position, and the two portions of the Metropolis were on a distinct and separate footing. All the City demanded was that they should be allowed to carry out their own improvements without being interfered with by the Metropolitan Board, in the same way as they had carried them out hitherto, at the expense of the citizens themselves. He begged to move, as an Amendment to the Motion of the hon. Member for Truro, that the House should resolve itself into Committee on that day six months.

MR. BOORD said, that, after the exhaustive speech they had just listened to, he did not propose to address many words to the House. He had no doubt that the hon. Member had very forcibly conveyed his views to the House. At any rate, if he had not done so, it was not the hon. Member's fault. He merely rose now to second the Amendment of the hon. Member, in order that, as a Metropolitan Member, he might be able to express to the House the really serious objections that were entertained towards the Bill. He believed that many weighty objections would be urged to it by the Local Boards of the Metropolis. No doubt, the hon. Baronet (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) would attempt to make capital out of the fact that the Bill had already passed a second reading, and, therefore, its principle had already been accepted by the House; but, as the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Alderman Lawrence) had explained, the second reading was obtained at a Wednesday Sitting, between a quarter to 6 and 6 o'clock, when, unfortunately, he (Mr. Boord), and other hon. Members who had given Notice of opposition to the Bill, were accidentally absent. The Local Boards in his district objected very strongly to the Bill, because it altered the Metropolis Management Act of 1862, in a sense injurious to them, and conferred large additional powers upon the Metropolitan Board of Works. It enabled the Board, among other things, to annex conditions to the erection of buildings, which were not required, and which the Local Boards entirely objected to. It prevented the City of London from making a roadway under 40 feet in width. In the suburbs of London that, no doubt, was a moderate restriction; but it ought not to apply to the narrow streets and passages of the City. After what had taken place, he would not weary the House with any further remarks; but he would content himself with seconding the Amendment of the hon. Member opposite, that the Bill be committed on that day six months.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House will, upon this day six months, resolve itself into the said Committee."—(*Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, the discussion, which had occupied the last hour, illustrated two things—first, the mode in which Public Business was conducted in the House; and, in the second place, what chance the Metropolis had of any improvement in its management. In the first place, they saw the manner in which a Bill—not a mere Private Bill, but a Bill introduced by an important local Body—was dealt with. The House might have gone into Committee upon it, and might have made valuable progress with its details. But the worthy Alderman had occupied the greater part of an hour in saying what might have been said in five minutes. [MR. WARTON: Only 20 minutes.] It appeared that the City of London were prepared to object to any Bill brought in by the Metropolitan Board of Works which in any way affected the City of London; and the position was one with which the House had long been familiar. His hon. Friend behind him (Mr. Alderman Lawrence) stated that the Bill might be of advantage to the rest of the Metropolis, and that the whole of the Metropolis, except the City, would be benefited by the adoption of the main part of the Bill.

MR. ALDERMAN W. LAWRENCE said, he had stated that there were certain clauses in the Bill which might be of advantage to the Metropolis generally.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he thought that was a good reason why the House should go into Committee upon it. He believed that out of the 4,000,000 people contained in the Metropolis, the City of London only represented about 50,000; and for the great majority of the 4,000,000 the Bill was, in many respects, a good Bill. Therefore, if they were to have the time of the House occupied in resisting that which was admitted to be for the good of 4,000,000 people, because it was considered possible that in some way or other it might affect the prerogatives of 50,000, they might as well give up the work of legislation altogether. This was a sample of the manner in which the Corporation of London were prepared to deal with legislation for the Metropolis, and to take up the time of the public. There might be objections to some of the clauses of the Bill, as the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Boord) stated; but what was the character of those objections? The hon. Gentleman said the limit of 40 feet was not a limit which ought to be laid down for the construction of streets within the City. But surely that was a matter for the consideration of a Committee. As far as he could learn, no ground of objection had been raised against the Bill which might not easily be disposed of in Committee. He did not intend to follow the irregularity committed by his hon. Friend behind him, and discuss the Bill clause by clause. Anyone could see that the measure was essentially one of details; and if they were to say that at 12 o'clock at an Evening Sitting, upon a private Member's night, they would not go into a Bill of this kind, they might just as well give up doing any Business at all. Nothing, in his opinion, could be more unreasonable than that an hon. Member should get up at 12 o'clock at night and object to proceeding with a Bill in Committee. He expressed no opinion as to the merits of the Bill generally, except that it was a Bill introduced into the House and promoted by a responsible authority, and that it was admitted by his hon. Friend who moved the Amendment to be a Bill which contained many clauses that would be of advantage to the Metropolis generally, and to 4,000,000 people who lived outside the City. Nothing could be more unreasonable than to say that the measure could not be discussed at that hour because the City was affected by it. No question whatever had been raised upon the principle of the measure; and it would be perfectly competent for his hon. Friend, when they got into Committee, to state his objection to the clauses. His hon. Friend could, if he chose, introduce a single clause, stating that the Bill should not in any way affect the prerogatives or rights of the City of London. By that means the whole object for which he sought to throw out what he admitted to be a valuable measure would be accomplished. That seemed to him to be the business-like way of dealing with the matter, and the whole object desired by the Members representing the City of London would be attained by adopting it. It must not be forgotten that the Bill was introduced by an hon. Member filling the responsible position of Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works. He should, therefore, support the hon. Baronet in getting the Bill into Committee, so that the House might proceed at once to consider its details.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS would only say one word. He had been waiting anxiously in the House all night in the hope that he might get a chance of proceeding with the Settled Land Bill—a much more important measure than that which was now under discussion. If he could have obtained the opportunity, he should gladly have welcomed it, in the hope that they might have made some progress. In regard to the present Bill, he agreed with the observations of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary (Sir William Harcourt), that the observations of the hon. Member for the City of London (Mr. Alderman Lawrence) might have been compressed into very much less space, and perhaps the speech itself might have formed a proper subject for the *clôture.* He would not say more upon that subject; but he thought his hon. Friend the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board was entitled to go into Committee upon the Bill. The measure was essentially one of detail, and as the only object of the hon. Member (Mr. Alderman Lawrence) was to amend the provisions of the Bill, he could easily accomplish that object by introducing fresh clauses.

Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG appealed to the House to assist him in the trying difficulties of his position, in endeavouring to bring in measures for the benefit of the Metropolis. He was most grateful to the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, the present Home Secretary (Sir William Harcourt), and to his right hon. Friend the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross), for the assistance they had given to him on the present occasion. His hon. Friend opposite, the worthy Alderman, who so admirably defended the interests of the City of London (Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence) complained that he (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) had not, on the second reading of the Bill, entered at length into any of the details of the measure. His reason for that was that the Bill contained a number of clauses which had already been introduced in a Private Bill. He had explained that those clauses would be withdrawn and included in a Public Bill. It was to give effect to this understanding that the present measure had been introduced. In point of fact, the provisions of the Bill had been before the House for the last six months, because, having been originally contained in a Private Bill, it was necessary that previous Notice of them should be given. [An hon. Member: The Session has not yet lasted six months.] He was quite aware of that fact; but the hon. Member seemed to forget that in the case of a Private Bill it was necessary to give Notice of what was intended to be done. The details of the measure had, consequently, been a long time before the public, and everybody knew what was proposed. He had not, therefore, felt it necessary to enter into a discussion as to the details of the Bill; and he certainly hoped that when any person occupying the position he did came forward with a measure for the improvement of the Metropolis Management Act he would receive the assistance of the House. It was not the first time that the question had been under discussion, and he hoped the House would allow the Bill to go into Committee. It was simply a matter of detail, and if his hon. Friend the Member for the City would bring up a clause it should be fairly considered.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, he certainly thought that the right hon. Gentleman below him (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had shown some ingratitude towards the City of London. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman that when he sat as a Minister upon the Benches opposite, and appealed to the country, the City of London was the only place which gave him a generous and unwavering support. Yet the reward they now received was that the right hon. Gentleman, now sitting on the Front Opposition Bench as the Representative of the Conservative Party, turned against the only constituency that gave him continued support on that occasion. Under those circumstances, he thought he had some reason to complain of the course taken by the right hon. Gentleman on this occasion. It was quite evident that the right hon. Gentleman cared nothing about the City of London. [*Cries of* "Order!" *and* "Question!"] He would turn now to the remarks which had been made by the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Sir William Harcourt). They all knew that he was going to bring in a Bill to abolish the Corporation of the City of London. Of course, he had no claim upon the right hon. and learned Gentleman. The City of London did not support the Government of which the right hon. and learned Gentleman was so distinguished a Member. ["Question!"] He believed that he was speaking to the question. He was speaking upon a Bill which very much concerned the interests of his constituents; and, therefore, he thought he had a right to ask the indulgence of the House. He could not appeal to the Home Secretary to support any Bill which interfered with the ancient duties of the City of London; but he wished to make a remark on the statement which the right hon. and learned Gentleman had made.

The right hon. and learned Gentleman said that the population of the City of London only represented about 50,000 persons. That might be perfectly true so far as regarded those who slept within the City; but he believed that the right hon. and learned Gentleman, before he filled the high and distinguished position he now so worthily held, occasionally went into the City of London, and he must be aware that there was another City altogether by day, and that the number of those who traversed its streets in the day time was very much larger than those who slept in it by night. Therefore, he did not think it was fair to throw in the teeth of the City of London the circumstance of the comparatively small number of persons who slept there. They ought rather to look at the question of the importance and wealth of the City of London, and the large number of persons who entered it for business purposes during the day. If the right hon. and learned Gentleman would only look round the House—not, perhaps, at that particular moment, but when it was fuller than it was now—he would see how very much larger a number of Members of the House were ratepayers of the City of London than of any other constituency of the country. He did not suppose that so large a number of Members of that House were represented by any other hon. Members as those who were represented by his hon. Colleague and himself. Under these circumstances, he thought they were entitled to complain of the way in which the City of London was treated on this occasion. His hon. Colleague had gone very fully into the arguments against the Bill, and he had no wish to repeat what his hon. Friend had so well said; but, at the same time, he thought it was their duty, in the interests of their constituents, to enter a protest against the provisions of the Bill. It had been said that they ought to allow the Bill to go into Committee, and that they could then raise any question in regard to the clauses of the Bill. But he would remind the House of what was well said by an hon. Friend of his—whom he did not at present see in his place—the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis), in regard to another Bill—namely, that when they got into Committee the Government of the day were absolute. He gathered from the remarks which had been made by the right hon. and learned Gentleman that he intended to support the clauses of the Bill; and he felt that it was only the duty of himself (Mr. R. N. Fowler) and his hon. Colleague (Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence) to make representations against the character of the legislation proposed to be introduced. He had no wish to detain the House longer. He concurred cordially in all that had fallen from his hon. Friend. His hon. Friend had ably put the arguments against the Bill; and he would appeal to the House to consider carefully before they passed a measure the effect of which would be to place very great difficulties in the way of those who might hereafter be required to make street improvements within the City of London.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND said, that, before the Bill went into Committee, he should be glad to receive some sort of pledge from the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) that the question of the safety of the theatres would be dealt with. He thought it might be possible to introduce a clause into the Bill giving the Board of Works the power of dealing effectively with the exits of the theatres. In the Act of 1878, which it was proposed by the Board of Works to amend by the present Bill, the word "moderately" was introduced in relation to any structure dedicated to purposes of public amusement; but the law would hold that the word was to be regarded according to the reasonable interpretation of the word, and not in regard to what the public might require. Therefore, before the Bill went into Committee, he should like to have some pledge that it was intended to deal with the exits of the theatres.

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG said, he was afraid that his hon. Friend could not have read the Bill. This subject had been dealt with in a Bill which had already gone up to the House of Lords, and in which he had inserted the clause he had promised. In due course he hoped that that Bill would become an Act of Parliament.

MR. WARTON said, that in the peculiar circumstances under which the Bill had been brought in, seeing that its provisions had not been explained, and that there was no discussion upon the second reading, the other stages ought not to be hurried through. [*Cries of* "Divide!"] He intended, in spite of the cries he heard, to make a protest on this occasion. They had been taunted by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary in the most supercilious style. ["Order!"] He believed that the word was quite Parliamentary, although the word "bare" might not be. They had been taunted as to the way in which the Public Business of the House was carried on; and he presumed that the right hon. and learned Gentleman proposed to found upon what had taken place a fresh argument in favour of the *clôture;* but even the *clôture,* when introduced by Her Majesty's Government, would not apply to a case like this, because there were not 100 Liberal Members calling out for it. ["Question!"] If hon. Members opposite would only remember that fact they would see that their efforts to silence a Member under the *clôture* might be as little successful then as it was now. Of course, it was not for him to dispute any ruling of the Chair; but he thought it was right he should know what the Rules of the House were. It was extremely inconvenient, when it was proposed that the House should go into Committee upon a Bill, to be told that they were not able to discuss the clauses of the measure. They had often been told that they must not, upon such a question, go back upon the principle of the Bill, and therefore it was difficult to discover what it was they ought to do. He could not for the life of him see what the principle of the Bill was, except that it was to do away with the authority and rights of the Corporation of the City of London. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary was always fond of doing everything in his power to injure the prestige and destroy the rights of the Corporation of London. It was perfectly certain that at the last General Election nothing gave more umbrage to the Leader of the Government than the fact that the great and important constituency of the City of London, by an overwhelming majority, asserted their belief in Conservative principles. He hoped hon. Members would give due Notice when Bills of this kind were coming on, so that he might take care to be in the House. The opponents of the measure had been misled by the fact that certain of the clauses to which objection had been taken had been struck out of the Private Bill, the officers of the House having stated that they could not be allowed to remain in a Private Bill. They had not anticipated that those clauses would be inserted in a Public Bill. The opponents had, therefore, been misled, not that he was hinting at anything like a breach of faith on the part of the promoters.

Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: I beg leave to state most distinctly——

Mr. WARTON claimed to be in possession of the House. He said again that he was not, in the slightest degree, attributing anything like impropriety to the promoters. One danger might pass and another might crop up, it seemed; and whilst this was very inconvenient he did not say there was anything wrong in it. No doubt, the Chairman of Committees or the Clerks at the Table had told the promoters of the Private Bill that the clauses could not be introduced. He did not blame those in charge of the Public Bill for taking advantage of every opportunity they had for advancing it; but, in the present instance, the result of that course had been that there had been no statement made as to what the measure was. Was it a trifling Bill or an important one? It was a long one, having no fewer than 26 clauses, some of them 30 or 40 lines in length. It was not, therefore, a measure to hurry through Parliament. He should recommend the opponents to the Bill to divide, not because he thought there was any chance of their being successful, but as a protest against the measure. He trusted those in charge of the Bill would be satisfied with moving the Speaker out of the Chair, and the House into Committee, and that he would say he would not go on with the Bill until the House had had reasonable time to consider it. If they would adopt this course, no doubt the opponents of the Bill would be equally reasonable, and would give ample and fair consideration to the clauses, and amongst the "opponents" he clearly ranked the Home Secretary, who gloatingly delighted in seizing every opportunity that presented itself for showing hostility to the City of London.

Mr. Alderman W. LAWRENCE said, it was not his intention to trouble the House to divide.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 to 3, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Metropolis Management Acts and Part II. of Act to be construed as one Act).

MR. WARTON said, he wished to put a question to the highest legal authority of the Government at present in the House—namely, the Attorney General for Ireland, whose experience and knowledge of the City of London was not extensive. ["Order!"] He meant no disrespect. He had always admired the right hon. and learned Gentleman's statements in regard to Ireland; but it was not to be expected that the Attorney General for Ireland should be familiar with the law relating to the City of London, and he had made the allusion to which exception had been taken because there was no English Law Officer in the House. He would ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman if he could inform the Committee, before they passed this clause, whether "Metropolis Act" included the City?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Yes, Sir; it does.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

MR. ALDERMAN W. LAWRENCE said, he did not wish to impede the progress of the Bill in Committee. He did not object to this clause passing; but he put it to the hon. Baronet (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) whether it would not be well, after passing Clause 5, to agree to Progress being reported? He felt convinced that when the Bill came into Committee again—if the course he suggested were adopted—that all differences would be arranged, and there would be no opposition. ["No, no!"] He was only suggesting a means by which the Bill could be got through. There was no disposition, at any rate on his part, to impede the Bill.

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG said, that if Clauses 4 and 5 were passed, he would agree to Progress being reported on Clause 6, which, he thought, was objected to.

MR. WARTON said, that, on the understanding that they did not go beyond Clause 5, he would withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 5 *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday.*

MOTION.

SUNDAY CLOSING (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. RICHARDSON, Bill to renew and amend the Sunday Closing (Ireland) Act, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. RICHARDSON, Mr. EWART, Mr. CORRY, Mr. REDMOND, Mr. THOMAS DICKSON, Mr. MELDON, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR, and Mr. BLAKE.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 148.]

House adjourned at a quarter before One o'clock.

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TO

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

VOLUME CCLXVIII.

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EXPLANATION OF THE ABBREVIATIONS.

In Bills, Read 1°, 2°, 3°, or 1ª, 2ª, 3ª, Read the First, Second, or Third Time.—In Speeches, 1R., 2R., 3R., Speech delivered on the First, Second, or Third Reading.—*Amendt.*, Amendment.—*Res.*, Resolution.—*Comm.*, Committee.—*Re-Comm.*, Re-Committal.—*Rep.*, Report.—*Consid.*, Consideration.—*Adj.*, Adjournment or Adjourned.—*cl.*, Clause.—*add. cl.*, Additional Clause.—*neg.*, Negatived.—*M. Q.*, Main Question.—*O. Q.*, Original Question.—*O. M.*, Original Motion.—*P. Q.*, Previous Question.—R. P., Report Progress.—*A.*, Ayes.—*N.*, Noes.—*M.*, Majority.—1*st. Div.*, 2*nd. Div.*, First or Second Division.—*l.*, Lords.—*c.*, Commons.

When in this Index a * is added to the Reading of a Bill, it indicates that no Debate took place upon that stage of the measure.

When in the Text or in the Index a Speech is marked thus *, it indicates that the Speech is reprinted from a Pamphlet or some authorized Report.

When in the Index a † is prefixed to a Name or an Office (the Member having accepted or vacated office during the Session) and to Subjects of Debate thereunder, it indicates that the Speeches on those Subjects were delivered in the speaker's private or official character, as the case may be.

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- Agricultural Holdings, Notices of Removal (Scotland), 2R. 237
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- Oxford and Cambridge Universities Commission — Statutes — Religious Teaching and Worship, 1794, 1795
  - Lincoln College (Oxford) Statutes, 1918

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- Select Committee appointed, "to inquire into the condition and the position of the Canals and internal navigation of the Country, to report thereupon, and to make such recommendations as may appear necessary" (*Mr. Salt*) *April* 20

CANTERBURY, Archbishop of
- Oxford and Cambridge Universities Commission — Statutes — Religious Teaching and Worship, 1792
  - Lincoln College (Oxford) Statutes, 1919

CARBUTT, Mr. E. H., *Monmouth, &c.*
- Cooper's Hill College, Res. 1114
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CARNARVON, Earl of
- Oxford and Cambridge Universities Commission —Statutes — Religious Teaching and Worship, 1788, 1795
  - Lincoln College (Oxford) Statutes, 1919
- Public Affairs, State of—Irish Policy of the Government, Ministerial Statement, 1924

CAVENDISH, Lord F. C. (Secretary to the Treasury), *Yorkshire, W.R., N. Div.*
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c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" (*Mr. Dodds*) *April* 28, 1644
Amendt. to leave out "now," and add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after short debate, Question put, and negatived; words added; main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to; 2R. put off

CHAMBERLAIN, Right Hon. J. (President of the Board of Trade), *Birmingham*
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Chaplains to Workhouses, &c. Bill
(*Mr. Byrne, Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. Richard Power, Mr. Redmond*)
c. Bill withdrawn * *Mar* 31 [Bill 10]

CHAPLIN, Mr. H., *Lincolnshire, Mid*
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Cheetham, Mr. J. F., *Derbyshire, N.*
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Childers, Right Hon. H. C. E. (Secretary of State for War), *Pontefract*
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Civil Imprisonment (Scotland) Bill
(*Dr. Cameron, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Mackintosh*)
c. Read 2°, and committed to a Select Committee, after debate *Mar* 29, 241 [Bill 19]
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Clarke, Mr. E. G., *Plymouth*
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Abram Colliery Explosion, Question, Mr. Burt; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *May* 2, 1929
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Collings, Mr. J., *Ipswich*
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Colthurst, Col. D. La Zouche, *Cork Co.*
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(*Mr. Cheetham, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Buxton*)
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l. Read 1ª * (*Lord Mount Temple*) *May* 2 (No. 73)

Commons Regulation Provisional Orders Bill (*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Mar* 30 [Bill 117]
Read 2°* *April* 28

Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill (*Earl Granville*)
l. Read 2ª*; Committee negatived; read 3ª *Mar* 25
Royal Assent *Mar* 29 [45 *Vict.* c. 4]

Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts
Foot-and-Mouth Disease, Questions, Mr. Blennerhassett, Mr. Chaplin; Answers, Mr. Mundella *May* 2, 1936
Restrictions on the Movement of Cattle, Question, Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence; Answer, Mr. Mundella *April* 24, 1251
Returns of Infected Areas, Question, Mr. Hussey Vivian; Answer, Mr. Mundella *Mar* 27, 29
The Crewe Cattle Market, Question, Mr. Knowles; Answer, Mr. Mundella *Mar* 30, 303

Conveyancing Bill [H.L.] (*The Earl Cairns*)
l. Read 3ª* *Mar* 28 (No. 20)
c. Read 1°* (*Mr. Henry Fowler*) *Mar* 31 [Bill 121]

Cooper's Hill College
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *April* 21, To leave out from "That," and add "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working and expense of Cooper's Hill College, and to report if it is desirable, for the public service, to retain the present system, or whether any and, if so, what changes and modifications should be made" (*Mr. Gibson*) *v.*, 1111; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 78, N. 27; M. 51 (D. L. 68)

Copyright (Works of Fine Art, &c.) Bill (*Mr. Hastings, Viscount Sandon, Mr. Hanbury-Tracy, Sir Gabriel Goldney, Mr. Agnew*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Mar* 30 [Bill 119]

CORBET, Mr. W. J., *Wicklow Co.*
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  Local Contracts for Uniforms for Army and other Services—Manufacture of Uniforms in Ireland, 24
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Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, The Attorney General *Mar* 30, 296

Corrupt Practices (Disfranchisement) Bill (*Mr. Attorney General, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Mar* 30 [Bill 118]
Suspended Boroughs, Question, Mr. Lewis; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *April* 20, 1035; Question, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington *April* 28, 1784

County Courts Act (1867) Amendment Bill (*Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Monk, Mr. Reid*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *May* 1 [Bill 146]

County Government Bill
Local Option, Question, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 28, 1678

COURTNEY, Mr. L. H. (Under Secretary of State for the Colonies), *Liskeard*
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COWEN, Mr. J., *Newcastle-on-Tyne*
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Criminal Law
Case of Jane M'Evoy, Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 27, 20
The Magistracy — Flogging, Question, Mr. P. A. Taylor; Answer, Mr. Hibbert *April* 25, 1400

Criminal Law—The Condemned Convict Lamson
Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *April* 3, 551; Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 4, 670; Questions, Mr. Lewis; Answers, Sir William Harcourt *April* 18, 872; Question, Observations, The Earl of Milltown, Earl Granville *April* 21, 1082
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for copies of all the correspondence that has taken place with the United States Government on the subject of the postponement of the execution of the sentence passed upon the convict Lamson" (*The Earl of Milltown*) *April* 25, 1383; after short debate, Motion agreed to

Cropper, Mr. J., *Kendal*
Parliamentary Elections Expenses, 2R. 967
Slave Trade in Asia and Africa, 1727
Walton Vicarage, 2R. 1096

Cross, Right Hon. Sir R. A., *Lancashire, S.W.*
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Lunacy Laws, Res. 1460
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Parliament—Wigan New Writ, Res. 1960, 1965
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Cross, Mr. J. K., *Bolton*
Municipal Corporations, Comm. 1773

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(*Mr. John Holms, Lord Frederick Cavendish*)
c. Read 3°* *Mar* 27 [Bill 94]
l. Read 1ª* (*Lord Thurlow*) *Mar* 27 (No. 51)
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Drainage (Ireland) Provisional Order Bill—cont.
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c. Read 2º * *Mar* 27 [Bill 112]
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Ecclesiastical and Mortuary Fees
Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the Law which authorizes the demanding of Mortuary Fees, and into the Ecclesiastical Fees levied by Ministers of Religion upon the occasion of Burials and the erection of Monuments in Cemeteries and Parish Churchyards; and to report to the House whether any legislation is desirable with a view to their regulation or reduction" (*Sir Alexander Gordon*) *Mar* 28, 211; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Committee nominated *April* 3; List of the Committee, 221

Ecclesiastical Commission
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *Mar* 31, To leave out from "That," and add "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the position of the Ecclesiastical Commission with reference to the Lands and other Property vested in the Commissioners, and also into the work, in connection with real property, of the Church Estates Commissioners and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England and Wales" (*Mr. Arthur Arnold*) *v.*, 495; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Amendt. withdrawn

Ecroyd, Mr. W. F., *Preston*
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Educational Endowments (Scotland) Bill
(*Mr. Mundella, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*)
c. Motion for Leave (*Mr. Mundella*) *May* 1, 1916; after short debate, Motion agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1º * [Bill 147]

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Electric Lighting Bill
(*Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Ashley*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 3 [Bill 122]
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(*The Lord President*)
l. Presented; read 1ª*, and referred to the Examiners *April* 20 (No. 63)
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Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Sandhurst*)
l. Presented; read 1ª*, and referred to the Examiners *Mar* 30 (No. 56)
Read 2ª* *April* 24

Elementary Education Provisional Orders Confirmation (West Ham) &c., Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord Sandhurst*)
l. Presented; read 1ª*, and referred to the Examiners *Mar* 30 (No. 55)
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- *c.* Ordered; read 1°* *April* 20 [Bill 136]
- Read 2°* *May* 2

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(*The Earl of Camperdown*)
- *l.* Read 2ª* *April* 21 (No. 48)
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c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 26, 1478
After long debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Justin M'Carthy*); after further short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned

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(*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 1 [Bill 144]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill
(*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*)
c. Ordered * *April* 18
Read 1° * *April* 19 [Bill 131]
Read 2° * *April* 25

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill
(*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 1 [Bill 145]

Local Government Provisional Order (Highways) Bill
(*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*)
c. Ordered * *April* 18
Read 1° * *April* 19 [Bill 129]
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Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill
(*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*)
c. Ordered * *April* 18
Read 1° * *April* 19 [Bill 130]
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Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order Bill (*Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Lord Frederick Cavendish*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 21 [Bill 138]
Read 2° * *May* 2

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l. Presented; read 1ª *, and referred to the Examiners *Mar* 30 (No. 57)
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- Oxford University (Jesus College Statutes), Motion for an Address, 2006
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Mundella, Right Hon. A. J. (Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education), *Sheffield*
- Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Miscellaneous Questions
  - Crewe Cattle Market, 303
  - Foot-and-Mouth Disease, 1936
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  - Phonetic System in Board Schools, 545
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  - Wales — Report of Departmental Committee, 1245
- Educational Endowments (Scotland), 544; Leave, 1916
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- Provincial Art Galleries and Museums, Res. 592
- Supply—Public Education in England and Wales, 648, 655, 656
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Municipal Corporations Bill
(*Mr. Hibbert, Secretary Sir William Harcourt*)
- c. Committee; Report *Mar* 27, 114 [Bill 61]
- Order for Committee (*on re-comm.*) read; Moved, "That this House will, upon Tuesday next, at Two of the clock, resolve itself into the said Committee" (*Lord Richard Grosvenor*) *April* 21, 1183
- Amendt. to leave out "Two of the clock" (*Mr. Chaplin*); Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 100, N. 50; M. 50 (D. L. 70)
- Main Question proposed, 1202; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" *Earl Percy*); Motion withdrawn
- Main Question put, and agreed to; Committee deferred
- Order for Committee (*on re-comm.*) read; Moved, "That this House will, upon Tuesday next, at Two of the clock, resolve itself into the said Committee" (*Lord Frederick Cavendish*) *April* 28, 1752
- Amendt. to leave out "at Two of the clock" (*Mr. Chaplin*); Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. R. N. Fowler*); after further short debate, Question put; A. 36, N. 90; M. 54 (D. L. 73)
- Question again proposed, "That the words, &c.," 1777; Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Biggar*); after short debate, Motion withdrawn
- Question, "That the words, &c.," put, and agreed to
- Main Question put, and agreed to; Committee deferred
- Committee* (*on re-comm.*)—r.p. *May* 2 [Bill 113]

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Miscellaneous Questions
- *Chatham Dockyard Workmen*, Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *April* 20, 1030
- *The National Defences—Chatham Dockyard*, Questions, Mr. W. H. James, Colonel Stanley; Answers, Mr. Childers *April* 27, 1558
- *Portsmouth Dockyard—Discharge of Workmen*, Question, Mr. T. C. Bruce; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *Mar* 27, 27
- *The Dockyards—The Bank Holidays*, Questions, Mr. Gorst, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan *Mar* 27, 18

- *Indian Troopships—Chatham*, Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *April* 18, 874
- *Troopships*, Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *Mar* 27, 22
- *The Troopship "Assistance,"* Question, Lord Claud Hamilton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *Mar* 27, 27
- *Launch of H.M.S. "Colossus,"* Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *April* 4, 676
- *Naval Barracks at Portsmouth*, Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *Mar* 27, 23

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- *Payment of Naval Pensions,* Questions, Mr. Gorst, Mr. Puleston, Mr. Macliver, Baron Henry De Worms; Answers, Mr. Childers *April* 24, 1259
- *Roman Catholic Chaplains for Troopships,* Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 27, 32
- *The "Satellite" Class,* Question, Captain Price; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *Mar* 30, 292
- *The Shipbuilding Programme,* Question, Captain Price; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *April* 27, 1563

Navy—Strength of the Navy
- Amendt. on Committee of Supply *April* 20, To leave out from "That," and add "owing to the enormous increase in the Ironclad Navies of the World, the Trade and Commerce of the Empire is endangered, and that it is desirable that steps should be at once taken to make an adequate addition to the strength of the Navy" (*Lord Henry Lennox*) *v.*, 1037; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after long debate, Question put, and agreed to

NEWDEGATE, Mr. C. N., *Warwickshire, N.*
- Papal See—Diplomatic Communications, Res. 903
- Parliament—Business of the House (Putting the Question), Res. 340, 409, 1882, 1892, 1894
- Public Affairs, State of—Irish Policy of the Government, Ministerial Statement, 1982

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- Ireland—Miscellaneous Questions
  - Irish Political Prisoners—Sir John Hay's Motion, 1945
  - Poor Law—Gort Board of Guardians, 985
  - Potato Crop Committee, 1880, 1408
- Land Law (Ireland) Act (1881) Amendment, 2R. 1554
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- Ireland—Crime, 698
  - Mr. Clifford Lloyd—Circular by the Inspector of Police, Co. Clare, 1008, 1017
- Parliament—Business of the House, 492, 1108, 1680, 1840, 1945
- Parliament—Business of the House (Putting the Question), Res. 391, 393, 400, 1896
- Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices), 2R. 1361
- Public Affairs, State of—Irish Policy of the Government, Ministerial Statement, 1970, 1975, 1978
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  - Senior Majors—Extra Pay, 1244
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  - Magistracy—Captain Plunket, R.M., 1825
- Ireland—Protection of Person and Property Act, 1881—Miscellaneous Questions
  - Hoolihan, Mr. J., 667
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  - Treatment of Persons arrested under the Act—Cahill, Mr., 19;—Limerick Gaol, 17, 18
- Municipal Corporations, Comm. 1201
- Parliament—Business of the House (Putting the Question), Res. 109
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- Customs Department—Recent Appointments —Mr. Walpole, 677, 678
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  - Finance, &c.—Import Duties on Indian Products, 7, 8
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  - Crime, 711
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  - Irish Land Commission—Estate of Mr. Talbot-Crosbie, 14
  - Land Law Act, 1881—Assistant Sub-Commissioners (Kerry and West Cork), 1158; —Land Courts—Expenses, 33
  - Magistracy—Major Traill, R.N., 1668
- Ireland—Protection of Person and Property Act, 1881—Miscellaneous Questions
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  - O'Connor, Miss, Arrest of, 558
  - Prisoners detained under the Act—Mr. M'Carthy and others, 1663
- Land Law (Ireland) Act (1881) Amendment, 2R. 1553
- Law and Police—Riots at Camborne, Cornwall, 1673, 1674

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Official Salaries—Mr. Algernon West
Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *April* 20, 984

One-Pound Bank Notes
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *April* 28, To leave out from "That," and add "in the opinion of this House, the prohibition of the issue of bank notes of £1 each in England and Wales is unreasonable and ought to be removed, and that all needful steps should be forthwith taken to authorise the issue of such notes" (*Mr. William Fowler*) v., 1682; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put, and agreed to

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Post Office—The Parcel Post, 542

Oxford and Cambridge Universities Commission
The Statutes—Religious Teaching and Worship, Observations, The Earl of Carnarvon; debate thereon *May* 1, 1788
The Oxford Statutes, Question, Mr. Thorold Rogers; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 1, 1840
Lincoln College (*Oxford*) *Statutes*, Observations, Question, The Earl of Camperdown; Answer, The Lord Chancellor *May* 2, 1918

Oxford University (*Jesus College Statutes*)
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty that She will be graciously pleased to withhold her consent from the Statutes proposed by the University of Oxford Commissioners for Jesus College, which Statutes were laid upon the Table of this House on the 7th of February last" (*Mr. Hussey Vivian*) *May* 2, 1997; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Paget, Mr. R. H., *Somersetshire, Mid*
Lunacy Laws, Res. 1467
Turnpike Roads (South Wales), 3R. 1908

Palmer, Mr. J. H., *Lincoln*
Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices), 2R. 1334

Papal See (*Diplomatic Communications*)
Moved, "That, while recognising the value of a good understanding between this Country and the Papal See, this House is of opinion that all communications between any of Her Majesty's Ministers and the authorities of the Vatican should be placed on official record in accordance with the constitutional practice in diplomatic affairs, and should be conducted with the cognizance of Parliament" (*Sir Henry Wolff*) *April* 18, 887; after debate, Question put, and negatived

Parish Registers Bill (*Mr. Borlase, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Mellor, Mr. Cochrane-Patrick*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *April* 19 [Bill 132]

[*cont.*

Parliament

LORDS—

Speaker of the House April 24, 1204

Claims of Peerage, &c., The Earl of Milltown, the Lord Kintore, and the Lord Oxenfoord added to the Select Committee in the place of the Marquess of Abercorn, the Earl of Mansfield, and the Lord O'Hagan

Parliament—Representative Peers of Ireland

Moved, "That the Clerk of the Crown and Hanaper do make a Return of the dates of the issue of the writs for the election of all Representative Peers of Ireland who have been elected since the year 1850; and also of the dates of the receipt of the latest return in each case which has been sent in to the Hanaper Office in obedience to such writs" (*The Earl of Belmore*) *Mar* 27, 4; Motion amended, and agreed to

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had received (by post) from the Clerk of the Crown and Hanaper in Ireland (pursuant to order of Monday last) Return respecting the election of Representative Peers of Ireland: Ordered, That the said Return be printed (No. 54) *Mar* 30

COMMONS—

Order—The Precincts of the House—The Home Secretary and Mr. Anderson, Notice of Question, Mr. Callan; Questions, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Speaker; Observations, Mr. Anderson, Sir William Harcourt *April* 3, 556

Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills

Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92. and 93. be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Easter, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the recess *Mar* 30

Private Bills

Ordered, That Standing Orders 129 and 39 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, be extended to Monday the 17th instant *April* 4

Standing Order 167

Select Committee appointed, to consider and report whether Standing Order 167, prohibiting the payment of interest or dividend on calls during the construction of a Railway, shall be retained or modified; List of the Committee *April* 4, 659

[cont.

PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—*cont.*

Private (Hybrid) Bills—Forth Bridge Railway Bill, Question, Mr. Bolton; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *April* 21, 1101; Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *April* 28, 1668

Business of the House

Arrangement of Public Business, Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Lord George Hamilton, Sir George Campbell; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, Lord Frederick Cavendish *Mar* 31, 492; Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Gorst, Mr. Hussey Vivian; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington *April* 21, 1108; Questions, Mr. R. N. Fowler, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Childers, Mr. Speaker, Lord Frederick Cavendish *April* 27, 1631; Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, Lord Frederick Cavendish *May* 1, 1840; Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *May* 2, 1945;—*Opposition to Motions*, Question, Mr. Rylands; Answer, Mr. R. Power; Question, Mr. R. Power; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *Mar* 30, 304;—*The "Count Out" on Friday, March* 31, Question, Sir John Hay; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 3, 553;—*Tuesdays—Morning Sittings*, Questions, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Gorst, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington *April* 20, 1036;—*The Jesus College Statutes*, Observations, Mr. Hussey Vivian *April* 21, 1110;—*Corrupt Practices (Disfranchisement) Bill*, Questions, Mr. Lewis; Answers, The Attorney General *April* 3, 554; *April* 18, 876;—*The Settled Land Bill*, Observations, Sir R. Assheton Cross *April* 21, 1110;—*Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill*, Question, Sir Baldwyn Leighton; Answer, Mr. Hibbert *April* 27, 1571;—*Tuesday Sittings*, Questions, Mr. Macfarlane, Mr. R. N. Fowler, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Chaplin, Mr. Joseph Cowen; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *April* 28, 1680

East Cornwall Election—Speech of Mr. Courtney, Observations, Mr. Gladstone; Question, Mr. Callan; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 30, 310

Interference of Peers in Parliamentary Elections, Postponement of Notice, Mr. Joseph Cowen *April* 21, 1151

Palace of Westminster—The Clock Tower, Questions, Mr. Spencer, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *Mar* 27, 28

Parliamentary Oath (Mr. Bradlaugh)—"Gurney v. Bradlaugh," Question, Mr. P. A. Taylor; Answer, The Attorney General *April* 20, 1033;—*Northampton Borough*, Question, Mr. Firth; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 28, 1678

Parliamentary Representation—Return No. 88 *(Revenue, Taxation and Population)*, Question, Sir John Hay; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *April* 20, 979

The Easter Recess—Adjournment of the House, Moved, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn until Monday 17th April" (*Mr. Gladstone*) *April* 4; after long debate, Motion agreed to

Parliament—Business of the House (Putting the Question)

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendt. proposed to Question [20th February], "That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, to be the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House, or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members" (*Mr. Gladstone*)

And which Amendt. was, to leave out from the first word "That," and add "no Rules of Procedure will be satisfactory to this House which confer the power of closing a Debate upon a majority of Members" (*Mr. Marriott*) *v.*; Question again proposed, "That the words 'when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker,' stand part of the Question;" Debate resumed *Mar* 27, 35; after long debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. John Bright*); after further short debate, Motion agreed to; Debate further adjourned

Amendments, Question, Lord George Hamilton; Answer, Mr. Speaker *Mar* 30, 313

Debate resumed [Fifth Night] *Mar* 30, 314; after long debate, Question put, "That the words 'when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker,' stand part of the Question;" A. 318, N. 279; M. 39

Div. List, A. and N. 422

Main Question again proposed; Debate further adjourned

Observations, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 31, 491;—*The Division on Thursday Night*, Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 31, 494; Question, Mr. Pemberton; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 24, 1269

Debate resumed [Sixth Night] *May* 1, 1842

Amendt. in line 1, after the words "Mr. Speaker," to insert the words "after an appeal to his judgment by a Minister of the Crown" (*Mr. O'Donnell*); Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted"

Amendt. to said proposed Amendt. To add, at the end thereof, the words "or by the Member in charge of the subject under discussion" (*Lord George Hamilton*); Question proposed, "That those words be there added;" after long debate, Amendt. to proposed Amendt. withdrawn; Question put, "That those words be there inserted;" A. 164, N. 220; M. 56 (D. L. 74); Debate adjourned

Parliament—Gloucester Writ

Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown to make

[*cont.*

Parliament—Gloucester Writ—cont.

out a new Writ for the election of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the City of Gloucester, in the room of Thomas Robinson, esquire, whose election has been declared to be void" (*Mr. Lewis*) *April* 27, 1574; after debate, Question put, and negatived

Parliament—Mr. Clifford Lloyd—Circular by the Inspector of Police, County Clare

Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *April* 20, 988; Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Sexton*)

Mr. Redmond, Member for New Ross, having been named by Mr. SPEAKER as disregarding the authority of the Chair, after debate, Moved, "That Mr. Redmond be suspended from the service of the House during the remainder of this day's sitting" (*The Marquess of Hartington*), 1016; Question put; A. 207, N. 12; M. 195 (D. L. 66)

Mr. SPEAKER then directed Mr. Redmond to withdraw, and he withdrew accordingly

Parliament—Wigan New Writ

Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery to make out a new Writ for the election of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the Borough of Wigan, in the room of Francis Sharp Powell, esquire, whose election has been declared to be void" (*Mr. Lewis*) *May* 2, 1946

Amendt. to leave out from "That," and add "no Writ be issued to fill up any vacancy occasioned by corrupt practices until this House has disposed of the Corrupt Practices (Disfranchisement) Bill" (*Baron de Ferrières*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 142 N. 220; M. 78 (D. L. 75)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added;" Amendt. withdrawn

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF LORDS

New Peer

April 24—The Right Honourable Sir George William Wilshere Bramwell, knight, late a Lord Justice of Appeal, created Baron Bramwell of Hever in the county of Kent

Sat First

April 20—The Lord Boston, after the death of his father

April 27—The Lord Hopetoun (*The Earl of Hopetoun*), after the death of his father

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF COMMONS

New Writs Issued

April 4—*For* the County of Meath, *v.* Michael Davitt, who, having been adjudged guilty of felony and sentenced to penal servitude for fifteen years,

[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT — COMMONS — *New Writs Issued*—cont.
and being now imprisoned under such sentence, is incapable of being elected or returned as a Member of this House
April 19—*For* Somerset County (Western Division), *v.* Vaughan Hanning Vaughan Lee, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds

New Members Sworn
Mar 30—Thomas Love Duncombe Jones-Parry, esquire, *Borough of Carnarvon*
April 3—Charles Thomas Dyke Acland, esquire, *County of Cornwall* (*Eastern Division*)
April 18—Edward Sheil, esquire, *Meath County*
April 27—Edward James Stanley, esquire, *Somerset County* (*Western Division*)

Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Bill
(*Mr. Attorney General, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Chamberlain, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Solicitor General*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 24, 1327
Amendt. to leave out from "That," and add "considering no corruption has been proved to exist in the larger town constituencies, or in any county constituency, it is inexpedient to adopt such uniform restrictions and punishments as will render the fair conduct of an election in a great constituency perilous and penal" (*Mr. Robert Fowler*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. A. J. Balfour*); after further debate, Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned
Debate resumed *April* 25, 1421; after debate, Debate adjourned
Debate resumed *April* 27, 1581; after long debate, Question put, and agreed to
Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2°

Parliamentary Elections Expenses Bill
(*Mr. Ashton Dilke, Mr. Barran, Mr. Burt*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 19, 944; after debate, Question put; A. 87, N. 85; M. 2 (D. L. 65)

Partnerships Bill (*Mr. Monk, Mr. Gregory, Mr. Barran, Mr. Lewis Fry*)
c. Committee*; Report; re-committed to a Select Committee *Mar* 27 [Bills 27-114]
Select Committee nominated *April* 3; List of the Committee, 658

Patents for Inventions (No. 2) Bill
(*Sir John Lubbock, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Compton Lawrance*)
c. Read 2° *April* 28, 1785 [Bill 104]

Payment of Wages in Public-houses Prohibition Bill [H.L.]
(*The Earl Stanhope*)
l. Read 2ª, after short debate *May* 2, 1925 (No. 41)

PEASE, Mr. A., *Whitby*
Supply—Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, 1165

PEASE, Mr. J. W., *Durham, S.*
Ecclesiastical Commission, Motion for a Select Committee, 516

PEDDIE, Mr. J. DICK-, *Kilmarnock, &c.*
Landlord and Tenant (Scotland)—Evictions in the Island of Skye, 1675, 1822
University Reform (Scotland), 1827

PELL, Mr. A., *Leicestershire, S.*
Ways and Means — Financial Statement — Local Taxation, 308
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Report, Res. 2, 1419

PEMBERTON, Mr. E. L., *Kent, E.*
Harbours of Refuge (Scotland), 1242
Parliament — Business of the House — New Rules of Procedure, 1269

PENNINGTON, Mr. F., *Stockport*
Ways and Means — Financial Statement—Carriage Duties, 1677

PERCY, Right Hon. Earl, *Northumberland, N.*
Municipal Corporations, Comm. 1201; Motion for Adjournment, 1203
Public Affairs, State of—Irish Policy of the Government, Ministerial Statement, 1982
Revenue—Wine Duties, 1829

PHIPPS, Mr. C., *Westbury*
Education Department—Board School Grants, 295

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders Bill
(*Mr. Ashley, Mr. Chamberlain*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *April* 27 [Bill 142]

Pilotage Provisional Order (Tees) Bill
(*Lord Ramsay*)
l. Royal Assent *Mar* 29 [45 *Vict.* c. i]

Places of Worship (Sites) Bill
(*Mr. Summers, Mr. Richard, Mr. William M'Arthur, Mr. Alderman Cotton*)
c. Committee deferred *Mar* 27, 135 [Bill 97]
Committee—R.P. *April* 25, 1476
Committee; Report *April* 27, 1635
Considered* *May* 1
Read 3°* *May* 2

Playfair, Right Hon. Mr. Lyon (Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker), *Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities*
  Army (Annual), Comm. 734; *cl.* 4, *ib.* 735
  Central Metropolitan Railway, 2R. 1653, 1655
  Herring Brand Committee, Res. 528
  Lynn and Fakenham Railway, 2R. 475
  Municipal Corporations, Comm. 114, 115, 116
  Supply — Public Education (England and Wales), 655
    Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, 1166, 1171, 1173
  Walton Vicarage, 2R. 1095, 1096

Plunket, Right Hon. D. R., *Dublin University*
  Cooper's Hill College, Res. 1127
  Parliament—Business of the House (Putting the Question), Res. 1875
  Poor Law Guardians (Ireland), 2R. 934
  Public Affairs, State of—Irish Policy of the Government, Ministerial Statement, 1985, 1987

Pluralities Acts Amendment Bill [H.L.]
  (*The Lord Bishop of Exeter*)
l. Presented; read 1^{a*} *May* 1 (No. 74)

Poor Law (England)—Oldham Board of Guardians
  Question, Mr. W. Lowther; Answer, Mr. Dodson *May* 1, 1811

Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill
  (*Mr. Leahy, Mr. Gray, Mr. O'Sullivan*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *April* 19, 924
  Amendt. to leave out "now," and add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Tottenham*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 95, N. 31; M. 64 (D. L. 64)
  Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2°

Porter, Mr. A. M. (Solicitor General for Ireland), *Londonderry Co.*
  Ireland—Miscellaneous Questions
    Civil Service—Appointment of Mr. Croker, 671
    Crime—Murder of Mrs. H. M. Smythe, 554
    Criminal Law—Riot at Kilross—Sentences upon the Prisoners, 541
    Evictions—Mrs. Irwin, Case of, at Brootally, Co. Armagh, 663
    Land Law Act, 1881—Assistant Sub-Commissioners (Kerry and West Cork), 1156; —Sec. 10, 1816
    Landlord and Tenant—The Mercers' Company and their Tenants, 669
    Peace Preservation Act, 1881—Returns as to Number and Cost of Arms Surrendered, 647
    Poor Law—Ballycary Dispensary District and Larne Workhouse, 664
    Prisons — Clonmel Prison — Outbreak of Fever, 559, 679

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Porter, Mr. A. M.—*cont.*
  Ireland—Protection of Person and Property Act, 1881—Miscellaneous Questions
    Arrest of Miss O'Connor, 558
    Healy, Mr. J., 660
    Holden, Mr. J., 660
    Hoolihan, John, 668
    Messrs. Cullen and Lynott, 665
    Messrs. Gannon and Rynolds, 661
    O'Brien, Mr. J., 664
  Ireland, State of—Miscellaneous Questions
    "Emergency" Men—Assault at Manulla Station—Decision of Major Bond, 662; —Case of J. Carson, 661
    Juries in the King's Co., 668
    Wexford County—Alleged Outrage, 664

Post Office
Miscellaneous Questions
  Bank Holidays, Question, Mr. Schreiber; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *April* 3, 545
  Contracts—The Mails between London and Dublin, Question, Mr. Findlater; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *April* 4, 665
  Convention of Paris—Seizure of the "Irish World" Newspaper, Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland *Mar* 28, 148
  Post Office Annuities—Legislation, Question, Mr. H. G. Allen; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *April* 28, 1665
  Parcels Post, Question, Mr. Monk; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 27, 6; Questions, Sir Matthew White Ridley, Colonel Makins; Answers, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 30, 298; Question, Mr. O'Sullivan; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *April* 3, 542;—*Obligations of British Shipowners*, Question, Mr. Dillwyn; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *April* 18, 875
  The American Mails, Question, Mr. Thorold Rogers; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *April* 4, 659; Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *May* 2, 1946
  The Australian Mails, Question, Mr. Stewart Macliver; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *April* 18, 873
  Transmission of Land League Portraits, Question, Mr. Redmond; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *April* 21, 1098
  Detention of Land League Letters, Question, Mr. Redmond; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *April* 21, 1099

Telegraph Department
  Disclosure of Telegrams, Question, Mr. Montagu Scott; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *April* 3, 545
  Telegraph Extension, Question, Mr. Round; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *April* 3, 542
  The Telegraph Service in Ireland, Question, Mr. Callan; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *April* 4, 672

Power, Mr. J. O'Connor, *Mayo*
  Ireland—Miscellaneous Questions
    Evictions—Carnacum, Co. Mayo, 533
    General Prisons Act—Conveyance of Prisoners, 1678
    Mr. Clifford Lloyd—Circular by the Inspector of Police, Co. Clare, 1018

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POWER, Mr. J. O'Connor—*cont.*
Peace Preservation Act, 1881—Search for Arms—Sub-Inspector Ball, 1144
Poor Law—Relief of Distress—Swinford Union, 1401
Protection of Person and Property Act, 1881—Release of Prisoners under the Act, 1929;—Treatment of Prisoners under the Act, 290
Land Law (Ireland) Act (1881) Amendment, 2R. 1552
Prisons (England) Act, 1877—Cost of Conveying Prisoners, 1402

POWER, Mr. R., *Waterford*
Inland Revenue—Beer Licences (Ireland), 150
Ireland—Abolition of the Viceregal Office, 1656
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POWERSCOURT, Viscount
Public Affairs—Irish Policy of the Government, Ministerial Statement, 1924

PRICE, Captain G. E., *Devonport*
Merchant Shipping Acts—"Albert Edward" Channel Steamer, 1815
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Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany
The Queen's Answer to the Address [March 21] reported *April* 24, 1204

Prisons (*England*) *Act*, 1877
Cost of Conveying Prisoners, Questions, Mr. O'Connor Power, Colonel Colthurst; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland *April* 25, 1402
Gaol Dietary, Question, Mr. R. N. Fowler; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *April* 28, 1657
Tothill Fields Prison, Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *May* 2, 1942

Provincial Art Galleries and Museums
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *April* 3, To leave out from "That," and add "in the opinion of this House, grants in aid of Art and Industrial Museums should not be confined to London, Edinburgh, and Dublin, but that a special grant should be made to the Science and Art Department, South Kensington, to enable them to supply Provincial Art Galleries and Museums with original examples and reproductions of Industrial Art adapted to their special local acquirements, and also to maintain and to still further develop the circulation system now administered by the Department; that gifts or loans of such articles and works as may be available from the National Art Collections, and from the British Museum, should be made to Provincial Art Galleries and Museums; and that such aid be confined to those towns or localities which are rated under the Free Libraries and Museums Act, and that the amount of such aid be proportioned to the sum raised and spent in each locality; and that, in order to give due effect to these proposals, it is desirable to place the whole of the National Art and other Collections, including the National Gallery and British Museum, under the direct control and administration of a Department of the Government" (*Mr. Jesse Collings*) *v.*, 576; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put, and agreed to

Public Health (Scotland) Act Amendment Bill (*Dr. Cameron, Mr. James Cowan, Mr. Mackintosh*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Mar* 29 [Bill 115]
Read 2°* *May* 1

Public Health—Sheffield Small-pox Hospital
Question, Mr. W. Lowther; Answer, Mr. Dodson *May* 1, 1810

Public Worship Regulation Act—The Rev. Mr. Green
Question, Mr. J. G. Hubbard; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *April* 4, 673

PUGH, Mr. L. P., *Cardiganshire*
Cooper's Hill College, Res. 1130
Ecclesiastical Commission, Motion for a Select Committee, Amendt. 515
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Roorkee College, 1104
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PULESTON, Mr. J. H., *Devonport*
Education (Wales)—Report of Departmental Committee, 1245
Navy—Payment of Naval Pensions, 1260
Opium Trade—Chefoo Convention, 1244
United States—Trial of British Subjects, 1406

Queen, The
Attempt upon the Life of Her Majesty—The Prisoner M'Lean—Questions, Mr. Healy, Mr. Callan; Answers, Sir William Harcourt *April* 3, 541
Royal Passengers—The "Albert Victor" Channel Steamer—Question, Mr. Arthur Arnold; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *April* 27, 1564

RAIKES, Right Hon. H. C., *Preston*
Parliament—Business of the House—Debate of Tuesday, Personal Explanations, 310

RAMSAY, Mr. J., *Falkirk, &c.*
Medical Grant (Scotland), 1407
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RATHBONE, Mr. W., *Carnarvonshire*
Oxford University (Jesus College Statutes), Motion for an Address, 2007

Rating—Valuation of Government Establishments
Question, Mr. Boord; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *April* 24, 1270

REDMOND, Mr. J. E., *New Ross*
Ireland—Miscellaneous Questions
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Land Law Act, 1881—Land Court, New Ross, 869
Landlord and Tenant—Marquess of Ely's Estate—Interference of Police, 1931
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Magistracy—Captain Plunket, R.M., 1824
Mr. Clifford Lloyd—Circular by the Inspector of Police, Co. Clare, 1014, 1016, 1933
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Prisons—Enniskillen Gaol—Regulation as to Visitors to Prisoners on St. Patrick's Day, 871;—Omagh Gaol, 305
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Ireland—Protection of Person and Property Act, 1881—Miscellaneous Questions
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Holden, Mr. J., 660
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REED, Sir E. J., *Cardiff*
Oxford University (Jesus College Statutes), Motion for an Address, 2005

Regent's Canal, City, and Docks Railway Bill
c. Select Committee nominated *Mar* 30; List of the Committee, 283

Reserve Forces Acts Consolidation Bill
(*Mr. Secretary Childers, The Judge Advocate General, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *April* 3 [Bill 124]

RICHARDSON, Mr. J. N., *Armagh Co.*
Ireland, State of—Use of Dynamite, 1239

RIDLEY, Sir M. W., *Northumberland, N.*
Oxford University (Jesus College Statutes), Motion for an Address, 2003
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Steamship "Victoria"
Moved for, "Passenger certificate granted to the South-Eastern Railway Company's steamship 'Victoria' by the Board of Trade" (*The Earl of Dunmore*) *Mar* 28, 139; after short debate, Motion agreed to (No. 53)

Stolen Goods Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Chancellor*)
l. Presented; read 1ª *April* 21, 1082 (No. 64)
Read 2ª, and referred to a Select Committee *April* 25, 1371

Story-Maskelyne, Mr. M. H. N., *Cricklade*
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STUART, Mr. H. VILLIERS-, *Waterford Co.*
  Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881—Labourers' Cottages, 1817

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SULLIVAN, Mr. T. D., *Westmeath*
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  Supply, Report, 203, 206

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Sunday Closing (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Richardson, Mr. Ewart, Mr. Corry, Mr. Redmond, Mr. Thomas Dickson, Mr. Meldon, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Blake*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *May* 2 [Bill 148]

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  Resolution [24th March] reported *Mar* 28, 152
  Said Resolution read a second time
  Amendt. to leave out "£3,631,600," and insert "£3,630,100" (*Mr. Mac Iver*) *v.* ; Question proposed, "That '£3,631,600' stand part of the said Resolution ;" after short debate, Question put, and agreed to ; Resolution agreed to
  Considered in Committee *April* 3, 648—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART
  Resolutions reported *April* 20
  Considered in Committee *April* 17, 802—ARMY ESTIMATES, Vote 10 (Provisions, Forage, &c.)
  Resolution reported *April* 19
  Considered in Committee *April* 21, 1159—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS
  Resolutions reported *April* 24

  Army Estimates—Vote 23—Pensions, Question, Colonel Barne ; Answer, Mr. Childers *April* 18, 876

SYDNEY, Earl (Lord Steward)
  H.R.H. Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany—Queen's Answer to the Address, 1204

SYKES, Mr. C., *York, East Riding*
  Fisheries—Trawling, 1664

TALBOT, Mr. J. G., *Oxford University*
  Burial Fees, 2R. Amendt. 259
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TAYLOR, Mr. P. A., *Leicester*
  Army (Annual), Comm. *add. cl.* 752
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TORRENS, Mr. W. T. M'C., *Finsbury*
  Central Metropolitan Railway, 2R. 1654
  Parliament—Business of the House (Putting the Question), Res. 1868, 1878, 1889

TOTTENHAM, Mr. A. L., *Leitrim*
  Ireland—Crime—Alleged Outrages, Co. Limerick, 1940
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Tramways Provisional Orders Bill
(*Mr. Ashley, Mr. Chamberlain*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *April* 27 [Bill 141]

TREVELYAN, Mr. G. O. (Secretary to the Admiralty), *Hawick, &c.*
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    Naval Barracks at Portsmouth, 24
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  Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Easter Volunteer Review, 460, 1640, 1642
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Cession of Esparto Grass Districts, Question, Observations, Earl De La Warr; Reply, Earl Granville *Mar* 27, 2
Compensation to British Subjects, Question, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 4, 676

Tunis—Bombardment of Sfax—Indemnity to British Subjects
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for papers and correspondence relating to the International Commission held at Sfax in August 1881 to inquire into the pillaging and destruction of property after the entry of the French troops; also for the reports of M. Galea and M. Leonardi on the same subject; and for papers and correspondence relative to the affairs of Tunis since the last papers were presented" (*The Earl De La Warr*) *May* 1, 1801; after short debate, Motion withdrawn
Question, The Earl of Bective; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *May* 1, 1841

Turkey
MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS
Administrative Reforms, Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *May* 1, 1829
Albania—The Death of Captain Selby, Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Mar* 27, 5
Asiatic Turkey—Smyrna Quay, Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Mar* 27, 30;—*The Papers*, Question, Mr. M'Coan; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 4, 679
Midhat Pasha, [Question, Mr. M'Coan; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 25, 1407
Passage of the Bosphorus—Russian Armed Ships, Observations, Questions, Lord Stratheden and Campbell, The Marquess of Salisbury; Answers, Earl Granville *Mar* 30, 279

Turnpike Acts Continuance Act, 1881
Select Committee appointed, to inquire into the Fourth and Fifth Schedules of "The Annual Turnpike Acts Continuance Act, 1881" *Mar* 30; List of the Committee, 427
Further Instruction *April* 20, 1081

Turnpike Roads (South Wales) Bill
(*Mr. Dodson, Mr. Hibbert*)
c. Report * *Mar* 28 [Bill 101]
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3°" *May* 1, 1901
Amendt. to leave out "now read 3°," and add "re-committed" *v.* (*Mr. Hussey Vivian*); Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Hibbert*); after further short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned

TYLER, Sir H. W., *Harwich*
Hall of Science, Old Street, E.C., Notice of Motion, 294, 543

Union of Benefices (London) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Bishop of London*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *Mar* 31 (No. 61)

United States—Trial of British Subjects
Question, Mr. Puleston; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *April* 25, 1406

Vaccination Act (1867), *Sec.* 31
Question, Mr. Burt; Answer, Mr. Dodson *Mar* 31, 479

VERNEY, Sir H., *Buckingham*
Army (Annual), 2R. 567
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VIVIAN, Mr. A. P., *Cornwall, W.*
England and France—The Channel Tunnel Scheme, 1270

VIVIAN, Mr. H. Hussey, *Glamorganshire*
Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Returns of Infected Areas, 29
Oxford University (Jesus College Statutes), Motion for an Address, 1997, 2008
Parliament—Business of the House—Arrangement of Business, 1109
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Parliament—Business of the House (Putting the Question), Res. 43
Public Affairs, State of—Irish Policy of the Government, Ministerial Statement, 1980
Turnpike Roads (South Wales), 3R. 1912

Wales (*South*)
Road Acts — Maintenance of Main Roads, Question, Sir Joseph Bailey; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 30, 307
General Superintendent of Roads, Question, Viscount Emlyn; Answer, Mr. Dodson *April* 3, 559; Observations, Viscount Emlyn; Reply, Mr. Dodson; Observations, Mr. Sclater-Booth, 645

WALPOLE, Right Hon. Spencer H., *Cambridge University*
Science and Art—H. B.'s Caricatures, 547

WALROND, Colonel W. H., *Devon, E.*
Army Estimates—Provisions, &c. 843
Ireland—Irish Policy of the Government—Alleged Negotiations, 1939

Walton Vicarage Bill (*by Order*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" (*Sir Charles Forster*) *April* 21, 1084
Amendt. to leave out "now," and add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Caine*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after short debate, Question put; A. 160, N. 76; M. 84 (D. L. 67)
Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2°

Warton, Mr. C. N., *Bridport*
Bills of Sale Act (1878) Amendment, Consid. Amendt. 121, 127 ; 3R. 427
Burial Fees, 2R. 262
Civil Service Appointments—Private Secretaries to Cabinet Ministers, 1738
Fires in Theatres (Prevention), Res. 793
Judgments (Inferior Courts), Comm. *add. cl.* Amendt. 1634; Consid. *add. cl.* 1785, 1786
Liberal Association of Ipswich and Irish Landlords, 1839
Lunacy Laws, Res. 1476
Metropolis Management and Building Acts Amendment, Comm. 2020, 2026, 2028 ; *cl.* 4, Motion for reporting Progress, 2029, 2030
Municipal Corporations, Comm. 1758
£1 Bank Notes, Res. 1709
Papal See (Diplomatic Communications), Res. 908, 909
Parliament—Business of the House (Putting the Question), Res. 47
Parliament—Wigan New Writ, Res. 1962
Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices), 2R. 1333, 1361
Poor Law Guardians (Ireland), 2R. 939, 940
Supply, Report, 169
Turnpike Roads (South Wales), 3R. 1915
Walton Vicarage, 2R. 1089

Water Provisional Orders Bill
(*Mr. Ashley, Mr. Chamberlain*)
c. Ordered ; read 1°* *April* 20 [Bill 135]
Read 2°* *May* 2

Watney, Mr. J., *Surrey, E.*
Ways and Means—Financial Statement, Comm. 1311

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Considered in Committee *April* 24, 1273—Financial Statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on moving the first Resolution (Income Tax); after long debate, Resolution agreed to
Other Resolutions moved, and agreed to
Resolutions reported *April* 25, 1410; after debate, Resolutions agreed to
Ordered, That a Bill be brought in upon the said Resolutions
[See title *Customs and Inland Revenue Bill*]

WAYS AND MEANS
Miscellaneous Questions
Revenue and Expenditure—The Finance Accounts, Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet ; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *May* 2, 1939

The Financial Statement
The Revenue, Question, Mr. W. H. Smith ; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *April* 27, 1564

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The Carriage Duties, Questions, Sir Baldwyn Leighton, Mr. Schreiber, Mr. Pennington ; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *April* 28, 1676
Resolution 3—*Coffee,* Question, Mr. Stewart Macliver ; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *May* 1, 1813
Local Taxation, Question, Mr. Pell ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 30, 308
Question, Mr. R. N. Fowler ; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *April* 28, 1784

Inland Revenue
Beer Licences (Ireland), Question, Mr. R. Power ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 28, 150 ; Question, Mr. Biggar ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *April* 3, 549
Duty on Silver Plate, Question, Sir Joseph M'Kenna ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Mar* 30, 306
Grocers' Licences (Ireland), Question, Mr. Biggar ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *April* 3, 549
Income Tax and Brewery Licences, Question, Sir Baldwyn Leighton ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *April* 3, 550
Railway Passenger Duty—The Cheap Trains Act, 1844, Questions, Mr. Buxton, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Thorold Rogers, Mr. R. Biddulph Martin ; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *May* 1, 1830
The Income Tax (Schedule B)—English and Scotch Farmers, Question, Mr. Biddell ; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *April* 20, 1036
The Wine Duties, Question, Earl Percy ; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *May* 1, 1829

Webster, Mr. J., *Aberdeen*
Civil Imprisonment (Scotland), 2R. 251

Wedderburn, Sir D., *Haddington Burghs*
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Whitbread, Mr. S., *Bedford*
Central Metropolitan Railway, 2R. 1647
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